Generation Z Influence to Corporates Management and Communication Practices

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Summary: The article emphasizes the entry of Generation Z into the labor market through the perspective of a Human Resource specialist and displays the important role of recruiters and managers in how to handle the challenge of diversity management in the organization. Regarding Generation Z, the author identifies the main characteristics of this generation by evaluating HR professionals, including the needs and expectations of Generation Z in the workplace. Later in the article, it mentions the managerial action of leaders in the organization to attract, motivate, and retain Generation Z workforce and analyzes the positive and negative impact of Generation Z.

Relevance: This article provides HR's perspective of taking into account Generation Z in the workplace environment, creating an impulse to make changes to adapt to the age-diverse workforce. It relates to my topic of emphasizing the reaction and action of organizations in adapting the Generation Z worker during recruiting and managing.

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Source 2 (Scholarly)

Citation:

Generation Z in the Workplace through the Lenses of Human Resource Professionals – A Qualitative Study

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Abstract

The emergence of Generation Z inside the workforce represents an important shift in how the organizations function, communicate, and solve problems. The main aim of this paper is to identify the readiness of today's organizations to face the changes and challenges that Generation Z brings to the workplace, and analyze how the human resource specialists deal with Gen Z in the workplace. Research is based on a qualitative approach, namely individual interviews, applied to four human resources professionals from Romania. The respondents work in companies with a total number of employees ranging from 50 to 700, whereas generation Z represents between 11% and 58%. This study indicates that according to the interviewed human resource professionals, their organizations are ready to face the changes and challenges that Generation Z brings to the workplace. Efficient management of the changes brought by Generation Z to the workplace is closely linked to the level of knowledge and openness that both managers and HR specialists detain about the new generation. In order to attract, motivate and retain the young employees, the abilities, values and perspectives of Generation Z must be harnessed and transformed into opportunities.

Keywords: *generation Z; workplace diversity; organisational behaviour; human resource management; Romania.*

1. Introduction

The contemporary organizations are exposed daily to a great deal of change given mainly by workforce diversity, the continuous innovations and technological evolutions. Retaining Generation Z employees is becoming an increasingly difficult task, as the new generation is far more demanding than previous generations. Prossack (2019) believes that one of the main reasons behind Generation Z behavior is the unique desire to drive change and not settle for the status quo. The main focus of the paper on Generation Z in the workplace through the lenses of Human Resource (HR) specialists is chosen because this cohort represents today's major influencer inside all types of organizations, and we find it essential to observe the perspective of the people who, starting with the recruitment phase, work directly with the new generation, having the duty to understand, motivate and retain this new critical generation.

There is no consensus between academics regarding the starting point for the development of Generation Z, however, Wood (2013) suggests that Generation Z is formed of those individuals born in the decade after the emergence of the World Wide Web phenomenon, approximately in the period 1995-2010. Generation Z represents the most connected and educated generation in the world. Demographically, there are over 2 billion people who belong to the Generation Z, and it is forecasted that in the next decade, this cohort will represent the largest professional segment on an international scale (McCrindle & Wolfinger, 2014). Today, there are four different generations active within an organization, namely: Baby Boomers, Generation X, Y and Z. Nowadays, the workforce is undergoing major changes, one of them being the fact that Baby Boomers are in the process of retiring from their professional careers, being replaced by Generation Z (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011). Therefore, due to demographic change, age has become one of the most relevant diversity dimensions, the handling of age-diverse workforce is seen as a new challenge for companies. Diversity management advocates for confronting with the differences and capitalize on them, in order to obtain positive results for both the individual and the team, as well as for the organization as a whole (Barak, 2017). The author also suggests that managers and HR specialists must capitalize and maximize their employee potential, as it represents the main driver for business performance. Organizations with a high level of performance and the least performing ones differ on the ability to manage diversity, and not on the exclusive focus on the presence or absence of diversity (Leca & Vrânceanu, 2014). The previous reasoning explains the motive of following the process of diversity management when taking into account Generation Z, their specific needs, the changes they implement and lastly how HR specialists perceive these young individuals entering the workplace.

This paper aims to answer the following research question: How do HR professionals deal with Gen Z in the workplace? The main objectives of this paper are: (i) Identify the main characteristics of Generation Z employees, according to the HR professionals. (ii) Identify the managerial actions taken by managers in order to attract, motivate, and retain Generation Z workforce. and (iii) Identify the impact of Generation Z in the workplace (positive or negative).

In order to answer this question, we made a literature review on the characteristics, needs and expectations of Generation Z at the workplace. We also refer to diversity management as an important aspect of present-day organizations. The practical part of this research is based on a qualitative method (interview). In-depth interviews were conducted with four Romanian HR professionals, to investigate their perspective on the

following aspects: the main characteristics of Generation Z, the managerial actions taken by them in order to attract, motivate, and retain Generation Z and the impact of this generation in the workplace (positive or negative).

The paper is structured as follows: Section 2 provides the literature review on the main characteristics, needs and expectations of Generation Z, and a brief presentation of the diversity management in organizations. Section 3 is concerned with the methodology of the study. The qualitative research and results are presented in Section 4, followed by discussion and limitations in Section 5 and lastly, in Section 6, the conclusions of the paper will be presented.

2. Literature Review

Generation Z is formed of those individuals who were born in the period after the emergence of the World Wide Web phenomenon, between 1995-2010 (Wood, 2013). This cohort is known by many other names and the majority are directly related to technology and implicitly to the Internet and social media, such as Internet Generation or IGen (Dorsey, 2016), Post Millennials, Centennials (Dorsey, 2016), Digital Natives (Mohr & Mohr, 2017; Seemiller & Grace, 2016), Plurals, Gen Wii, Generation Text (Flippin, 2017). The use of such names for Generation Z can be explained by the fact that this is the first generation born in an integrated and internationally connected world, where the Internet has always been present and is considered an indispensable tool in everyday life (Turner, 2015). Moreover, the way Generation Z learns and behaves as employees, respectively, is influenced by a number of events that are strictly specific to this generation, namely the lack of experience when entering the labor market, the emergence of mobile phones and social media, social justice movements and the fact that they have grown up in a culture of security (Schroth, 2019).

The entry of Generation Z into the labor market means candidates with specific characteristics, regardless of whether we refer to their skills and needs, expectations from employers, or behavior at work.

Those who are part of Generation Z are truly global (Bolser & Gosciej, 2015). These individuals are characterized by flexibility and independence, they are more open to diversity compared to previous generations, learning to accept differences related to religion, social class, race, or ethnicity (Kapil & Roy, 2014). Those in Generation Z are pragmatic, and have the status of digital natives (Grow & Yang, 2018; Lanier, 2017). Representatives of Generation Z manage to avoid more successfully the barriers related to cultural differences in the professional environment, compared to previous generations (Bharat & Rajendra, 2018). According to Half (2015) Generation Z members are good listeners, creative, constantly learning-oriented, accustomed to providing input, but have poor writing skills (growing up in an era of shorthand via social media: abbreviations, emoticons and lack of punctuation marks are advantageous on social media but can raise issues at work). They are aware of the importance of in-person communication and their shortcomings in this area (Jan Ferri-Reed, 2016 quoted by Deloitte's Center for Integrated Research, 2017). All these characteristics of Generation Z have an impact on their behavior at work, and the degree to which employers take these aspects into account decisively influences whether their presence in companies is an opportunity or a challenge for those who work with them.

Regarding the work schedule and the activities that Generation Z have to undertake at work, we note the lack of limits on the location of the workplace, they easily accept the geographical distance or different time zones in the work they do, or in relation to the team/company in which they work (Seemiller & Grace, 2016). Moreover, compared to previous generations, members of Gen Z are the first to expect and embrace diversity in the workplace, whether we bring into question cultural, ethnic, generational, or gender differences (Lanier, 2017). The main aspects that Generation Z representatives consider when looking for a full-time job are: "opportunities for career growth, generous pay, making a difference or having a positive impact on society, structured/stable work enviroment/ job security, good healthcare benefits/insurance, flexible hours/ remote work options" (Half, 2015, p. 16)

Scientific studies on Generation Z in Romania provide a number of relevant information for those studying this subject. Thus, the representatives of Generation Z present in the companies on the Romanian market are characterized by conscientiousness, individualism, flexibility, perseverance in the tasks they assume when they are motivated, but also the fact that they get bored rather quickly in their activities (Bunei, 2016). According to the same source, Generation Z has well-defined criteria for professional choices. For those in Generation Z in Romania, free time and personal experiences play a very important role in their development (Sandu, Stoica & Umbreş, 2014). Taking into account the aspects that they consider important for the development of their professional life, Gen Z members value soft skills more in comparison to hard skills (Iorgulescu, 2016). The author states that, paradoxically, members of this generation face difficulties in the case of soft skills, such as time management and teamwork, but want to attend various training programs to master these skills. Regarding the presence of Generation Z on the Romanian labor market, there is a lack of easy compliance with a standard work program, the main argument being the existence of access to technology anytime and anywhere, which allows communication and remote activities (Sandu, Stoica & Umbreş, 2014). The need of Generation Z for a flexible work schedule (Bunei, 2016) underlies this characteristic, a need that we associate with the context in which this cohort grew and live, namely a dynamic and globalized society. Those in Generation Z rarely work overtime compared to other generations on the labor market, either due to the types of work performed or due to higher education concomitant with the professional occupation (Sandu, Stoica & Umbreş, 2014).

According to the same source, in the process of choosing a job, the most important factor is the salary, followed by the safety offered by the job and the satisfaction for the work that this generation performs. They were observed to have a permanent need for development, alongside the expectation to be mentored by superiors, the desire to develop good working relationships, and the need for security (reflected in their desire for secure and well-paid jobs) (Sandu, Stoica & Umbreş, 2014).

The presence of several generations in contemporary companies is one of the many aspects of diversity in organizations, a diversity that refers to visible and less visible personal traits such as age, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, education, work experience, physical appearance, socio-economic past, personal abilities and any other characteristics that could represent a difference between individuals (Jones & George, 2011). In this context, diversity management advocates for confronting differences and capitalizing on them, in order to obtain positive results both for the individual and for the team/group and the organization as a whole (Barak, 2017). Moreover, diversity management involves the integration of all ideas and practices of diversity in managerial processes, so members of a company can develop through communication and learning, but only by accepting all the differences and similarities of all people in the professional environment (Micu, 2009).

Thus, companies that integrate diversity management as a basic organizational strategy, taking into account the differences between employees and their needs, will be able to meet their organizational objectives more easily, presenting a high level of performance, being able to obtain competitive advantages (Keil et al., 2007). The focus of an organization on diversity management brings a multitude of advantages to the organization,

such as numerous perspectives and diverse information that lead to an increased level of customer satisfaction, positively influencing the company's financial gains; greater creativity due to the heterogeneity of team members; attracting valuable candidates due to its reputation for diversity management; the defeat of resistance to change and greater flexibility of internal policies, which can be considered outdated and unproductive; improving the motivation of existing staff. (Aninoșanu, Marțiș & Sorescu, 2008).

In addition to the series of benefits mentioned above, in the organizational framework, diversity can be associated with certain problems, such a lack of team cohesion due to conflicts, the common example being distrust of others; the existence of stereotypical preconceptions about different cultures or other personal differences; different work styles; communication difficulties due to differences in vocabulary and different interpretation of certain situations (Luthans & Doh, 2015). All this leads to various challenges and barriers in communication and collaboration in organizations that can be characterized by diversity.

As with previous generations, hiring Generation Z brings both challenges and opportunities that can forever change the field of organizational work (Lanier, 2017). The impact of Generation Z on the workplace is a positive one, knowing that new employees are characterized by “new levels of digital competence, dedication, and drive to achieve a goal” (WGU, 2019).

3. Methods

As we state in the Introduction, the research question of this study is: How do HR professionals deal with Gen Z in the workplace? The main objectives of this paper are: (i) Identify the main characteristics of Generation Z employees, according to the HR professionals. (ii) Identify the managerial actions taken by managers in order to attract, motivate, and retain Generation Z workforce. and (iii) Identify the impact of Generation Z in the workplace (positive or negative).

The theoretical part of the present study, consisting of the review of the specialized literature, represents the reporting framework of the practical part. Therefore, to achieve the research objectives, we used the qualitative method of semi-structured interviews. Therefore, the present paper is based on qualitative research because, compared to the quantitative research methods, we focus on a small number of subjects, from which we obtain a substantial amount of information (Șandor, 2013), acquiring the ability to get a deeper understanding of the literature review and the chance to highlight the similarities and differences of the obtained responses. The semi-structured interview is a versatile and powerful qualitative research method (Giletta, 2013) being the best option for the present paper, addressing a series of key questions in accordance with the theoretical framework, allowing new ideas to be brought up during the interview, removing any possible limitations in answering the presented questions.

A first step in collecting the primary data was to develop the data collection tool, namely the Interview Guide. Thus, it included a number of 13 questions, of which only one was a closed question, the aspects concerned being those that fall within the research objectives of the present study. The next step was to identify suitable candidates to take part in the interview. To be eligible, the subjects had to be HR specialists with more than 3 years of working experience with individuals from Generation Z and their organization must have at least 10% of employees part of Gen Z. We chose these coordinates for the profile of the interviewees considering that experience in the HR field is important to understand the issues involved in this complex activity and reporting about Generation Z is relevant when working with employees from this generation. Thus, a series of four interviews were conducted with four HR specialists, all within the established profile (see Table 1). The interviews were taken personally by one of the authors, in February-April 2019, except for one interview which was conducted online, in April 2019. The four respondents were HR specialists, having a working experience ranging from 3 to 18 years. All were employed in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, being part of four different organizations, each having a different field of activity, but all in the field of services. The interviewees were themselves part of Generation Z, Y and X. In their organizations, the average age of employees was under 40 years in 3 out of 4 organizations and the percentage of employees’ part of Generation Z ranged from 11% to 58%. We remark the fact that 3 out of 4 HR professionals are employed in large companies (see Table 1), therefore their opinions are based on their great experience collaborating with this generation.

The research was completed with the analysis of the data collected through interviews. In the next section of the paper, we are directly oriented towards the answers received to the applied interviews. The results are interpreted drawing conclusions and answering the research question. To get the most relevant information we used content analysis where we examined the interviews to identify the key concepts and characteristics regarding Generation Z, alongside the managerial actions taken to attract, motivate, and retain Generation Z and the perceived impact of Generation Z in the workplace (positive or negative). We have decided to conclude our research with the fourth interview because the information started to repeat itself revealing the final deductions and leading concepts.

4. Results

In this part, the results of the semi-structured interview are being shared. The summarized responses of the four interview respondents (all HR specialists) are presented in Table 1.

Respondent identification data	**Data collected**		
	The characteristics of Generation Z in the workplace (Abilities, Needs & Expectations, Behaviour)	**The managerial actions (attraction, motivation, and retention of Generation Z)** • **Meeting Generation Z demands (Training Opportunities & Work Schedule)**	**The impact of Generation Z in the workplace (Positive or Negative)**
Respondent 1. • Part of Generation Y; • 4 years of working experience in HR; • Sector: Engineering and Technical Consultancy; • 350 employees; • 35% Generation Z.	Open-minded, communicative, tolerant, risk-taker, involved, transparent, dependant on support; Resistant to standard procedures; Unrealistic wage expectations.	Advancement opportunities; transparent communication; delegation of activities; internal job transfer; public recognition; recurring feedback; challenging projects. • Periodic external training; • Flexible worktime & telecommuting between 2 and 5 days a month.	Positive, unique perspectives and abilities; efficient problem solver; innovator, “out of the box” thinker.
Respondent 2. • Part of Generation Y; • 3 years of working experience in HR; • Sector: Recruitment; • 50 employees; • 58% Generation Z.	Energetic, flexible, creative, avid technology user, multitasker, knowledgeable, resistant to standard procedures; Unrealistic wage expectations.	Personalized communication; Periodic meetings with the manager; Failure-tolerant leader; Employee benefits; Recurring feedback; Events; • Workplace mentorship programs; • Flexible work arrangements.	Negative in the accommodation period (6 months up to 1 year) – The need to assimilate organizational values; Positive after shared values; Creative and innovative; Ability to reach new markets.

Respondent 3. • Part of Generation Z; • 3 years of working experience in HR; • Sector: Software services; • 700 employees; • 25% Generation Z.	Passionate about technology, ambitious, knowledgeable, individualist; Seeking a tolerant, progressive and eco-friendly environment; Resistant to repetitive tasks; Unrealistic wage expectations.	Focus on social responsibility; Challenging projects; Career advancement opportunities; Personalized career plan; Recurring feedback; Involved management; Employee benefits. • In-House training; • External training; • Flexible work arrangements.	Positive Interest in engaging automation design for work; Efficient problem solver
Respondent 4. • Part of Generation X; • 18 years of working experience in HR; • Sector: Security Services; • 360 employees; • 11% Generation Z.	Dynamic, adaptable, emotional, reckless; Integrated into an internet and social media communication environment; Unrealistic wage expectations.	Detailed working tasks; Transparent communication; Leadership skills; Focus on aligning personal and organizational goals; • On-the-Job Training; • Specific external training; • Fixed working schedule.	Positive; Innovator, efficient problem solver, fast learner.

Table 1. Content analysis of the data obtained from the semi-structured interviews
Source: the authors

4.1. Characteristics of Generation Z in the workplace

Based on the interview responses (see Table 1), Generation Z is seen as dynamic, transparent, creative, innovative, involved, tolerant, socially responsible, emotional, knowledgeable, and individualistic. Two out of four respondents consider that the attitude of Generation Z in the workplace is inconsistent, and they also argued that Gen Z employees need a long period of accommodation in order to assimilate the values, organizational culture and work style adopted by their company.

All the interviewed HR specialists believed that Generation Z members have unrealistic wage expectations, especially if we consider those without working experience seeking their first employment contract. According to them, besides wage, among the most expected elements from the workplace include flexible work program (the main argument being that most Generation Z employees are enrolled in a higher education program), transparent communication, other salary benefits, the opportunity to advance in the company and access to challenging projects.

Regarding the style of work, all the respondents considered that members of Generation Z entering the contemporary companies are inexperienced, but nevertheless, they want to receive feedback after each activity is undertaken (2 out of 4) and at the same time they want to express their opinions openly and directly (2 out of 4). Also, half of the respondents believed that Generation Z employees are resistant to standard procedures and authority.

The interviewees mentioned that the work style of Generation Z is strongly influenced by technology and the internet (including social media). Half of the respondents observed this influence as a constant desire for progress and change, explaining why the repetitive tasks are not to the liking of Generation Z, opting for a new employer in a short period of time when their needs are not satisfied.

A characteristic considered negative identified by one of the respondents is the constant need for support, feedback and training, Generation Z becoming the most difficult generation to retain and to motivate. Two out of four interviewed specialists found that most of the time, those in Generation Z find it difficult to work according to the standard procedures of the organization.

4.2. Managerial actions (Attraction, motivation and retention of Generation Z)

The respondents offered a significant number of managerial activities that lead to attracting, motivating and retaining the employees of Generation Z (See Table 1). Most commonly, the concept of transparency appears, both in the communication with the members of this generation and in the transparency related to the way the activities are carried out. As reported by the interviewed HR specialists, for Generation Z, the power of example is considered to be extremely important to motivate; from this point of view the quality of the leader, their behavior and actions can represent an ideal code of conduct example for the young employees. Other mentioned actions include public recognition for the Z employee, a failure-tolerant leader, involvement in challenging projects and delegation of activities. And finally, the four HR specialists believed that to motivate this generation, there is a need for a personalized career plan, the support to pursuit personal and professional goals and how they can be achieved effectively. At the same time, wage and extra-wage benefits such as recurring feedback and flexible working hours are methods imposed in the companies of which the respondents belong.

In the event of an inter-generation conflict at 3 of the 4 companies (represented by the 4 HR specialists), there are specific procedures aimed at diversity management. In all 3 examples, the activities undertaken to resolve inter-generational conflicts involve the intervention of the manager, the HR department, or the team leaders. The actions undertaken by the three companies include one-to-one meetings with the manager, process improvement practices, or diversity training. In order to increase the degree of empathy and understanding between the values and characteristics of each generation at 2 companies, a special diversity training is used in order to reduce prejudice and discrimination, but also to highlight the characteristics of each generation and the added value brought by each individual, regardless of culture, age, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation or religion.

The majority of the respondents (3 out of 4) believed that recurring feedback is very important in order to keep Generation Z focused and motivated. The HR specialists also realized that the constant need for support and feedback is one of the main characteristics of the generation. The reasoning of this perspective is given by the fact that those in Generation Z, compared to previous generations, want constant support, and the annual or biannual feedback is no longer sufficient for them. In the case of organizations in which the respondents operate, one-to-one feedback methods or 360-degree evaluation are used. A positive aspect, from a respondent point of view, is that those in Generation Z are receptive to feedback and observations, whether they refer to work processes, inter-generational relationships or attitude towards organizational culture, however, he/she suggested that the feedback should be personalized and transmitted in an informal manner.

When asked about turnover rates, all respondents said that reducing staff turnover has been a problem they have been struggling with for years, especially when considering employees from Generation Z. At the time of the interview, only one respondent stated that the turnover rate of Generation Z

employees is very high in his/her organization. Among the actions of the 3 companies that managed to significantly reduce turnover rates of Generation Z the respondents mentioned: granting an attractive extra-salary package, internal job transfers, advancement opportunities, involvement in activities meant to offer the sense of belonging at work or engaging in manager-employee meetings in order to identify specific needs. Another respondent mentioned his/her company's efforts to provide niche benefits for Generation Z, such as ticket discounts for access to music festivals, as well as activities that promote social responsibility.

In the general context given by the managerial activities at the level of the companies of which the 4 interviewed HR specialists are part, we followed the way in which two of the most specific needs of those from Generation Z are met, namely training programs and work schedule. According to the collected data (see Table 1), 3 out of 4 of the HR specialists mentioned that in their company there is a special budget for external training programs, but the way in which they are granted and their purpose differs in each case. In the first respondent organization, the process of accessing a training program is an annual event, in which each employee sets out their training needs, and if there are a significant number of people who wish to participate in the same type of activity, the human resources department contacts a specialized training company that offers its services. The second respondent revealed that no external training is funded in the organization. We have the organization of the third respondent that offers periodically a variety of professional training programs, with a focus on the development of personal skills. In the fourth respondent organization, where only 11% of the employees are part of Generation Z, there is an extremely small number of training requests, but, within the budget, they have the opportunity to participate in different training specific to their professional responsibilities. Among the training programs that the Generation Z employees require are: specialized training on improving language skills, such as English, or German (mentioned by 2 out of 4 interviewees); specific programming languages (2 out of 4), personal skills improvement, respectively soft skills, such as time management, conflict management, and communication skills (3 out of 4), training to improve digital skills, for example, using Microsoft Excel (2 out of 4). Most respondents (3 out of 4) mentioned that they use internal training programs, as workplace mentorship and On-the-Job training, where experienced employees transfer know-how and provide support to new employees or those who moved to different departments.

Referring to the work schedule, three respondents mentioned that Generation Z had specific requests for a flexible work schedule. The fourth respondent stated that there were only a few requests to change the work schedule, the program in the organization being a fixed one, considering the field of activity (security services), and the fact that the highest percentage of employees belongs to the Generation X. One respondent believed that the flexible program from 8-10 AM is not sufficient for the needs of the new generation, and from this point of view, his/her company created the option of working from home (Telecommuting) within the limit of two days per month, with the mention that this term can be extended depending on experience and individual performance. For this last example, we emphasize that the activity of the organization is the implementation of software programs, which is why in the case of this organization it was easier to implement such drastic changes in the work program.

4.3. The Impact of Generation Z in the workplace

According to the gathered data (see Table 1), most respondents (3 out of 4) believed that Generation Z can improve the level of professionalism and productivity in the company, resulting in a positive impact. The reasoning behind this view is given by the attractiveness of young people in technology and innovation, which gives them a different view from the other generations when companies are faced with solving problems or finding new methods of resolving a task that is no longer considered to be efficiently solved. The difference in vision helps the entire company to overcome certain organizational obstacles, including reporting on innovation, technological progress and targeting new market segments.

The HR specialist who gave a different answer, a member of Generation Y, argued that in order to contribute to increasing productivity and professionalism, the members of Generation Z require an accommodation period from 6 months to 1 year, in order to allow sufficient time for integration into the professional team and for assimilating organizational values. Half of those interviewed believed that the level of professionalism can be heavily improved at the organizational level by Generation Z if they receive support and guidance from colleagues with more professional experience or leaders who can familiarize them with internal procedures.

In the series of opportunities that Generation Z could bring to the company, the interviewees included: openness to change and acceptance of change as part of the organizational culture of the company (2 out of 4), the introduction of technological elements that can help to automate and replace some activities/positions considered inefficient (2 out of 4), as well as the enthusiasm, ambition, and dynamism specific to the age of this generation (2 out of 4). According to the interviewed HR specialists, the other generations can learn from Generation Z the ability to adapt, innovate, be more flexible and think "out of the box". An element found throughout all the interviews is the indisputable ability of Generation Z to connect to technology and to use the benefits of technology, which is why all interviewees believed that other generations can learn from Generation Z how to more easily achieve professional goals using technology.

Taking into account all the above-mentioned information, we consider that we achieve the research objectives (see the section Discussion).

5. Discussion

The presence of Generation Z on the labor market is a reality at the level of contemporary companies, age diversity being one of the primary dimensions of diversity. Those of this generation, born between 1995-2000 (Wood, 2013) were the first to grow up in an integrated and internationally connected world. Dorsey (2016) mentions that although millennials, also called Generation Y, were the first generation to develop alongside digital evolution, Generation Z is made up of young people who grew up surrounded by these "I-everything" devices, thus assuming the role of person focused on continuous development with the help of information from technological sources. Thus, according to the same author, those in Generation Z are the promoters of smart devices and trendsetters among the new ways of integrating into the digital world. The reference to technology also emerges from the name given to this generation, namely Technoholics, the other generations being called digital natives for Generation Y and digital immigrants for Generation X (Vilas, 2016).

Employers must be prepared for the presence of Generation Z on the labor market (Schroth, 2019). This involves adapting organizational processes and policies to this new global reality (Lanier, 2017). In this context, the present study aims to identify the methods by which HR professionals deal with Gen Z in the workplace. The primary research consisted of semi-structured interviews conducted with a number of four HR specialists from 4 companies based Romania (of which 3 are companies with over 350 employees) and it aims to achieve the three proposed research objectives, namely: (i) Identify the main characteristics of Generation Z employees, according to the HR professionals. (ii) Identify the managerial actions taken by managers in order to attract, motivate, and retain Generation Z workforce. and (iii)

Identify the impact of Generation Z in the workplace (positive or negative).

Regarding the first research objective, from the perspective of the four HR specialists interviewed (see Table 1), Generation Z employees are dynamic, transparent, creative, innovative, involved, tolerant, socially responsible, emotional, knowledgeable and individualistic. Considering that the HR specialists interviewed are the ones who hire and work with those from Generation Z, we appreciate that this result is a useful one, bringing relevant information about Generation Z employees. The opinions of the four HR professionals are largely in line with those identified in the literature, as follows. Seemiller and Grace (2016) characterize Generation Z as dynamic, active, and that they can produce more in a shorter amount of time compared to other generations. Vilas (2016, p. 12) mentions that the need for transparency of this generation is due to the fact that they "grew up in a world that's more transparent than ever". We observe, thus, that this characteristic of Generation Z influences the way they choose their employers. Creativity is another characteristic of Generation Z (Mohr and Mohr, 2017; Half, 2015), those in Generation Z describing themselves as being creative (Flippin, 2017). Creative employees are wanted by contemporary companies, regardless of industry (Lee and Tan, 2012), and a work environment in which creativity is capitalized leads to innovative solutions to achieve the desired organizational goals (Fischer and Montalbano, 2014). Regarding Generation Z, innovation is both a feature (Merriman, 2015) and one of the values, along with being entrepreneurial and passionate (Half, 2015). Involvement, another characteristic of Generation Z is seen in the context of other traits, namely the tendency to offer suggestions, being good listeners, and being learning-oriented (Half, 2015). Human resources specialists are concerned with obtaining and maintaining employee involvement, this aspect having a positive impact on the implementation of change and innovation (Brzeziski & Bak, 2015). Tolerance is an important feature of Generation Z and we associate it with the fact that diversity in the workplace is an expectation of this generation (Kapil & Roy, 2014). Generation Z grew up in an environment characterized by access to information, the learning of global history, and also by the phenomenon of social networks, which meant connecting with people from different cultures, who have a different past and who developed in different circumstances (Lanier, 2017). We associate the integration of diversity in the life of Generation Z with the fact that they grew up being taught that all people are equal and therefore the opinion of each individual is valid and worthy of consideration (Saldek & Grabinger, 2013). Social responsibility is one of the actions that Generation Z values (Half, 2015; Mohr & Mohr, 2017) and as a result, it has become a feature of this generation. Individualism, another characteristic of those in Generation Z (Bunei, 2016; Iorgulescu, 2016) can be explained by the adoption of virtual communication by this generation, a mode of communication that affects their social skills (Iorgulescu, 2016).

Given the above, we note that the results of this study are consistent with studies already established. Thus, this study contributes to the consolidation of knowledge about the characteristics of Generation Z, as a workforce.

Regarding the expectations at work of those in Generation Z, we note the unanimous opinion of the HR professionals interviewed regarding the unrealistic expectations of salary. The information is useful, knowing that the salary is mentioned as the most important factor in the process of choosing a job (Hăhăianu & Tudose, 2017), respectively on second place after "positive workplace culture" (Deloitte, 2018). For Generation Z "value earning power and job security" is also important (KPMG, 2018, p. 6). This unrealistic expectation at work is mentioned in various articles by those working in the field of human resources (Lam, 2019; Dune, 2020) but we do not find it in scientific studies. As a result, this article complements the level of knowledge in the field with this result. One possible explanation could be that "Gen Z is not as prepared for the realities of the workplace as past generations" (Schroth, 2019, p. 14) implicitly in terms of salary expectations. Returning to the data collected in this study, the other job expectations of Gen Z employees are in line with the results of studies already published, namely flexible work program (Saldek & Grabinger, 2013; Bunei, 2016) , transparent communication (Adecco, 2016), other salary benefits (Hăhăianu & Tudose, 2017), the opportunity to advance in the company (Iorgulescu, 2016).

Referring to the second research objective, namely to identify the managerial actions taken by managers in order to attract, motivate, and retain Generation Z workforce, the data collected (see Table 1) indicate the following. Considering the specific features of Gen Z employees, in the companies of which the interviewees are part, a series of managerial decisions are adopted and implemented, which aim at attracting, motivating, and retaining young employees. Thus, transparency characterizes these companies, both in terms of communication and the way in which activities are carried out. The result obtained by us is in line with the already existing results, so, according to a survey conducted by Glassdoor quoted by Vilas (2016), 90% of respondents said that it is important for them to work for a company where there is transparency. Other factors that motivate young employees are the importance of the power of example, mainly of the leader (in terms of qualities and behaviors), public recognition, tolerance of failure of the leader, involvement in challenging projects, the delegation of activities, a personalized career plan, salary, and a flexible work schedule, respectively. All these managerial actions are also found in the literature, which indicates that the results of this study strengthen the studies already conducted. Thus, 3 of the 4 respondents to the interview mention the importance of providing permanent feedback to young employees to keep them focused and motivated, the interviewees prove that they know that the constant need for support and feedback is an important feature for Generation Z. Within the organizations of which the respondents are part, a series of measures are adopted that lead to the reduction of the turnover rate of the employees, especially focused on those who are part of Generation Z, namely: attractive extra-salary packages, the possibility of internal transfers, opportunities for advancement, involvement in the life of the company in order to offer them the feeling of belonging, respectively the development of individual meetings with the leader to identify specific needs.

Regarding the training need of young employees (see Table 1), the existence of a budget for external training programs for the company where 3 of the 4 interviewees work is another aspect that shows the adaptation to the needs of Gender Z. In the case of the work schedule, 3 out of 4 companies offer the possibility of a flexible working schedule, thus responding to the needs of Generation Z.

Regarding the third research objective, namely to identify the impact of Generation Z in the workplace (positive or negative), the data collected (see Table 1) indicate the following. Most of the interviewees (3 out of 4) appreciate this impact as positive, the arguments being that the young employees improve the level of professionalism and productivity in the company. The ease with which Gen Z uses technology, the openness to innovation and the involvement of young employees which makes them contribute to overcoming various organizational challenges are some of the arguments given by the respondents on why this generation can improve the level of professionalism and productivity in their firm. Other positive aspects associated with the presence of young people employed in companies are openness to change and acceptance of change, orientation towards new technologies that contribute to the automation and replacement of inefficient activities/positions as well as enthusiasm, ambition and dynamism. Added to this is the fact that other generations in the company can learn from young employees to connect with technology, use its benefits, adapt, be innovative, be more flexible and think "out of the box".

According to the HR specialists interviewed, these elements associated with the Z generation at work have an impact on the organizational culture and on the company in general. The positive impact of Gen Z on the workplace, which is mentioned by 3 of the 4 interviewees, leads us to the idea that the companies in question are prepared for this generation, adapting to its needs and expectations.

Thus, the respondents to the study mention an organizational culture in which change is encouraged, in which there is support and guidance of young employees by more experienced colleagues and in which a good relationship with leaders is important in order to familiarize them with internal procedures. The results of this paper are in line with the studies already published, the support and guidance of Gen Z employees by colleagues but especially by managers being ways that employers can adopt to attract, develop and retain young employees (Grow & Yang, 2018; Schroth, 2019; Workforce Institute at Cronos, 2019)

We acknowledge the fact that over-generalizing a certain generation may be harmful, this being the reason why we consider it necessary to address that the perspectives of the respondents together with the research analysis and results may be prone to stereotypical views that clearly not apply exclusively to all individuals, being aware that individual needs may differ from generational characteristics.

One of the difficulties of the paper is related to the process of gathering relevant data considering the lack of references at the national level on the topic of Generation Z, in particular how the Romanian employers relate to Generation Z entering the workforce. As such measurements are not available, as far as we know, in Romania from the perspective of the employers (in our case HR Specialists with the duty to employ members of Gen Z) a limitation of this paper concerns the fact that findings cannot be backed up by statistical data.

Another limitation of the present paper is that the interviews were conducted in Romanian, thus appearing certain concepts and terms difficult to translate/interpret in another language.

6. Conclusion

The high interest regarding the presence of Generation Z in companies is explained knowing that this generation will represent 36% of the global workforce, in 2020, according to a projection from 2014 (Link, 2014). Our concern is to identify and analyze the perspective of HR professionals on the presence in contemporary organizations of the young generation. We appreciate that the opinion and experience of the HR specialists is very important as they represent the first in a company that approach and collaborate with those in Gen Z.

In this context, this paper aims to answer the following research question: How do HR professionals deal with Gen Z in the workplace? The obtained results indicate that the interviewed HR professionals are aware of the main characteristics of Generation Z employees, their organization has adapted in order to attract, motivate and retain the young employees and the general impact of this generation on organizations is positive.

According to the interviewed HR specialists, the main characteristics of Generation Z employees include ambition, dynamism, creativity, resistance to standard procedures, interest in innovation and social responsibility. As reported by the respondents, Generation Z is characterized by unrealistic wage expectations and the need for continuous development, through various internal or external training programs.

Most of the HR professionals (3 out of 4 who took part in the semi-structured interview) are ready to attract, motivate and retain those from Generation Z, as they focus on learning about the specific characteristics and demands of the new generation. An indicator validating our opinion is their point of view according to which the general impact of Generation Z in the workplace is positive. We consider that the HR professionals 'openness to young employees is a reality in today's organizations. Moreover, their organization has adopted a number of issues that are very important for Gen Z, such as transparency (in terms of communication and activities), public recognition, involvement in challenging projects, the delegation of activities, opportunities for promotion, a personalized career plan, salary, and a flexible work schedule, respectively. To these is added the provision of trainings that respond to the need for professional development that characterizes Gen Z. Generation Z is focused on career advancement, and this desire may be influenced by the constant need for change that Generation Z manifests. When their needs are not met, the tolerance of Generation Z is reduced, and the probability of searching for another employer is very high. Generation Z needs constant evaluation and feedback, does not work without the help of technology, and focus on solving problems using the most efficient and creative methods.

Generation Z will soon be the most active age group present on the labor market, and from this point of view, managing all the changes in the professional environment depends on the behavior, expertise and activities that the management and HR specialists undertake in order to ensure a productive, motivating and smooth transition for all parties involved in the professional framework.

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The authors contributed equally to this work.

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Summary: The article mentions the context of the global population with a substantial increase in Generation Z globally. Along with that, they are particularly researched and analyzed to estimate the percentage number of Generation Z workers who will contribute to the global workforce in the coming years. Most importantly, the research focused on the perspective of Generation Z regarding their present or future occupation, in parallel with the kind of organizational environments that they prefer to work in and how they expect their professional career to look in their job resume.

Relevance: The article shows an in-depth exploration of Generation Z's expectations before entering the labor market, including specific details of what organizational environment Generation Z prefers to work in. This research will help align the workplace mindset between Generation Z and other generations in organizational communication and management.

Place in Paper: Introduction, literature review

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GEN Z PERCEPTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS UPON ENTERING THE WORKFORCE

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Abstract

This article focuses on examining Gen Z-ers' opinions and expectations regarding their present or future jobs, as well as their views on their future careers. The exploratory study performed on members of this cohort revealed, among others, that Gen Z-ers appreciate a secure job, financial stability, and prefer working for big companies. They choose jobs which reflect their passions and look for informal and relaxed environments, where they can have their own well defined office space. This cohort wishes to be mentored at work and is brutally aware that success must come with career-long learning. Despite being said to be digital natives, they feel the need to bond with colleagues and to freely speak their mind.

Keywords

Generation Z, labour market entry, career expectations, job expectations

Introduction

The global media coverage, as well as the empirical and academic research interest in the workforce traits of Millennials, has set in motion a phenomenon that also affects Generation Z. To shed light on this new cohort is on the agendas of employers, governments, and marketers, even more now, that Gen Z has already entered the labour market.

Born beginning with the year 1995 (Adecco, 2015; Bartold, 2015; Fedock, 2017; Black et. Al, 2017; Accounting Principals, 2017; Villa & Dorsey, 2017), this is the generation which, together with the Millennials (Generation Y), will soon make up most of the workforce and consumers.

Managers, realizing that ensuring sustainable business targets requires strategic skill management (Davies, 2011; Hecklau, 2016; Schwartz, 2017), are beginning to emphasise career and learning strategies (Schwartz, 2017), focusing on improving and/or reshaping the skills set framework they operate on.

A Bloomberg analysis on United Nations data concluded that the global population share of Generation Z has, in 2019, already surpassed that of the Millennials. It is assumed that Gen Z comprised 2.47 billion people, or 32% of that year's population, while Millennials accounted for 31.5% (Miller & Lu, 2018; Wood, 2018). It is to be noted that the demarcation used by the UN is the years 2000/2001, contrary to the years 1995/1996 held by general perception. According to the same UN data, Gen Z accounted for 18% of Europe's total population. In Romania, between 2015 and 2018, this cohort of around 3.5 million persons made up 17% of the total population. 49% of them are women. Less than half (47.6%) of

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Romania's Gen Z population lived in urban areas in 2015, which is 6 percent less than the national urban population (INSSE, 2018).

It is expected that Gen Z will make up 27% of the global workforce by 2025; an average Gen Z-er is projected to work 17 different jobs, experience 5 career shifts and change 15 homes during his/her entire life (McCrindle, 2018).

Additionally, today's job market is more diverse and heterogeneous than ever, bringing together representatives of four or five distinct generations (Accounting Principals, 2017). Shortly enough, Millennials and Gen Z-ers will, naturally, make up most of the workforce.

Older generations are searching for ways to attract youngsters, to, on the one hand, help themselves adapt, and, on the other hand, to shape younger people and bring them closer to what is familiar to them. These approaches are innate to humans, belonging to 'cognitive biases': predilections or prejudices not belonging to rational thinking (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974). Their consequences include irrationality and erosion of reality perception (Ariely, 2008). The concept of dividing the population by generations may belong to biases such as the fundamental error of attribution or group attribution error. The former describes the tendency to evaluate an individual in terms of their character and not in terms of the external factors which could have shaped that character; the latter describes the practice of judging an entire group by the actions of one particular member (Bicchieri, 2017; Hamill et al., 1980). There are, however, certain circumstances in which they can help us make quicker decisions in cases of uncertainty (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974).

Consequently, talking about generations can be a useful endeavour, as managers, companies or HR specialists are in need of a collection of general traits of Gen Z-ers to help them adapt to the new wave of employees (Twenge, 2010). The same might apply to marketing or sales specialists, whose better knowledge of the younger generation may help tailor advertising campaigns in order to boost revenues and profits.

For a preliminary assessment of Gen Z's expectations and perceptions about career and the workplace, the following research questions were proposed: [1] What kind of organizational environment do Gen Z-ers prefer? (by which means physical place, management and personal interactions); [2] What are their expectations of a good job?; and [3] How do they project their professional life to be going to be like?

Literature Review - Gen Z traits & career expectations

Generation Z has become of most interest a few years ago, both in media and research fields. A short literature review on its traits and perceptions regarding the labor market can be found below.

Some employers believe that Gen Z-ers will, on average, enter their first internship earlier than other generations, at 16 years old (Jenkins, 2015b; Villa & Dorsey, 2017). A more recent study disproves these statistics, showing that half of all teenagers have not had their first job yet (Twenge & Park, 2017).

In the USA and Canada 41% of Gen Z-ers leant towards middle-sized organisations, and 38% towards corporations (Half, 2015). In Romania however, most (42%) opted for corporations, 21% an entrepreneur's company, and only 19% would head towards entrepreneurship or the public sector (Ernst & Young, 2017).

Generation Z is also characterised as entrepreneurially minded, innovative, more open towards business and international activities than previous generations, thanks to their bond with the digital (William 2,016). 32% expects to hold a managerial position within 5 years of graduating (Half, 2015). Opinions regarding this cohort's willingness to start an own venture are divided. Robert Half projects a percentage of 20%, Deep Patel 72%, while the Accounting Principals study puts forth a possibility 55% greater than that of Millennials (Half, 2015; Patel,

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2017, Accounting Principals, 2017).

Entrepreneurship, however, implies a high appetite towards taking certain risks, and other authors (or, in some cases, the same) argue that Generation Z is more inclined towards stability and security, being more temperate and calculated, more risk-averse than Millennials (Jenkins, 2015; Weller, 2017).

22% of Gen Z-ers wish their professional life to be 'an expression of their personalities' (Arnett, 2004, 143; Kantar, 2017). Action-oriented, eager to innovate and to impact the world (Kingston, 2014; Jenkins, 2015a), Gen Z-ers are creative and open to improvement and change. The same Robert Half who praises this generation's entrepreneurial tendencies reminds that for them, globally, good pay and job security rank on the second and fourth place, respectively. Only 13% of young people would prefer working in start-ups (Half, 2015). In Romania, for example, 80% of interviewed Gen Z-ers opt to place job security on the higher second tier, as opposed to its international relegation on the fourth (Ernst & Young, 2017).

On the other hand, Generation Z is driven by money and security, believes everything to be possible and achievable, and prefers instant gratification (Patel, 2017; Accounting Principals, 2017) [n. a. multiple authors believe the same about Millennials]. Opinions regarding fundamental traits of the generations are so diverse that other authors argue, on the contrary, that Generation Z is less dreamy, fears for tomorrow and has more modest expectations than Millennials, as a result of having lived in a post-9/11 era and having known the 2008 Recession (Tulgan, 2013; Jenkins, 2015b; Patel, 2017) [n.a. The same argument can be brought for Millennials].

Regarding entering the workforce, 64% of responders in the USA and Canada rate short-term career opportunities as highly important. In the case of Romania, 94% of responders consider promotion and training opportunities within their company as the most important, as does the rest of the world. Workplace stability comes up in second place (80%), as opposed to fourth in North America. Tied for places 3 and 4, with 79%, are fairness of pay and promotion, and respect for personal privacy respectively, showing flexibility regarding time and place of work. Furthermore, 60% of Generation Y and Z responders consider an employer's inability to offer training and growth contracts a major drawback (Earst & Young. 2017).

Opinions regarding communication diverge as well. Despite being digitally connected, it seems that most of Gen Z-ers prefer face-to-face communication, seeking authentic and real relationships (Half, 2015); human relationships are more important than ever to them (Tulgan, 2013). Other authors consider them much more isolated than previous generations (Weller, 2017); along with Millennials, they consider themselves lonelier and less healthy (Cigna, 2018). The Z cohort wish to work in a relaxed, informal or amusing environment (47%), and they also have a preference towards flexible working hours (44%) (Villa & Dorsey, 2017). Gen Z members seem not to draw such a clear distinction between the workplace and personal life, which may have great consequences on the job market (Patel, 2017).

The wish to be mentored by the manager (21%) also correlates to the expectation of being guided, especially at the outset of their career (to be treated in a following section of this paper). While at first sight we might see this fact as contradictory to another conclusion of the same study—their wish to be independent and stronger entrepreneurial thinking (Half, 2015)—a closer interpretation shows that this entrepreneurial thinking offers them the maturity necessary to accept guidance, thus creating the expectation of having the know-how required in their job description at their disposal. Additionally, Paul McDonald, Executive Director of a renowned consulting firm, emphasises Gen Z's openness to receiving, as well as giving, constant feedback (Half, 2015). This aspect, perhaps less visible in Romania than in the USA, may vary widely from one company's culture to the next. Companies can make the most of this generation's desire to learn rapidly, by creating an adequate workplace and organizational

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structures through mentoring, coaching, shadowing and, most importantly, authentic, and honest feedback (Tulgan, 2013; Half, 2015; Accounting Principals, 2017; Ronnie, 2017).

Generation Z is seen as competitive (Patel, 2017), determined to leave its mark on the world (Jenkins, 2015a), pragmatic, independent and obstinate (Accounting Principals, 2017).

Further still, considering that most of the jobs are based upon human interaction, one cannot neglect Generation Z's perception regarding this subject. 38% appreciate the direct manager's sincerity and integrity the most, 21% his ability to coach, while compassion and intelligence rank the lowest among the preferences (7% and 6% respectively) (Half, 2015). In Romania, good communication and respect shown by the direct manager prove to be major factors in retention. To these one might add traits such as keeping promises or acknowledging one's own merits and point of view (Earst & Young, 2017). These results are correlated to this generation's expectations regarding career opportunities and the role of the workplace in its life.

Generation Z seems to be shifting its approach to professional life, tending to evaluate 'the role a workplace plays in the context of their personal life and n,ot that of the individual within the company they work for' (Bruce Tulgan, quoted in Half 2015). This is why it is no surprise that, unlike their parents or grandparents, they expect to work for four companies throughout their life (Half, 2015) or change 17 jobs (McCrindle, 2018). Their entrance into the job market, additionally, is delayed compared to the previous generations, according to an extensive study of the USA population (Twenge & Park, 2017). We expect Generation Z to experience a 60-to-70-year long career, with 4.5 years, on average, spent in one single job (Gratton, 2016); 38% of its members expect to work during their college studies (Villa & Dorsey, 2017).

Generation Z witnessed, as children or teenagers, the hardships endured by their parents during the 2008 Recession. Consequently, its members expect to need to work harder than previous generations in order to succeed—77% hold this stance (Half, 2015).

The Z cohort seems to be more aware than its predecessors that lifelong learning and continual development is paramount to staying relevant in the job market (Jenkins, 2015b; Iorgulescu, 2016; Patel, 2017; Accounting Principals, 2017).

Generation Z might be the most tolerant one to date, ethnically, racially, or culturally, having become truly global (Accounting Principals, 2017). The diversity it displays when it comes to social inclusion, marriage liberalisation (Kane, 2017), equality of opportunity between ethnicities, or the international workplace, will become a constant throughout Gen Z-ers' life.

64% of them would rather work in small teams in a closed office, as opposed to the open offices used by many companies (Tulgan, 2013; Half, 2015). They are, additionally, much more oriented towards individual work than towards teamwork, as opposed to, for example, Millennials; they expect a team with widely specialised members and an undeveloped hierarchy—a 'flat'[*] organisation (Patel, 2017; Accounting Principals, 2017).

Data and Methods

This research aimed to be an exploratory one. It integrated a quantitative method, which operated data collected from members of Gen Z using a self-applied online survey, CAWI - Computer Assisted Web Interviewing. The survey was randomly distributed to

[*] 'Flat organisation'—an organisation in which middle management has been eliminated, and top management is in direct contact with the organisation. The number of positions and managers is usually limited, members are seen as equals, and the workflow is entrepreneurial.

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students from Timișoara and Bucharest, Romania.

The inquiry consisted of 25 questions: the types of questions were single-selection, multiple-answer, and ranking or rating various statements. Data was processed using Microsoft Excel.

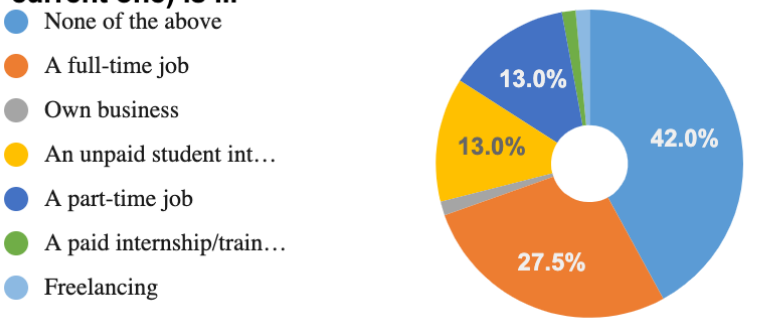
Results and Discussions

A total of 69 members of Gen Z answered the survey. Being an exploratory study, this does not claim to be wholly representative of this cohort in Romania. Its scope was a preliminary assessment of people's perceptions and desires, in a broad, descriptive, and exploratory way. Therefore, the results should be interpreted with caution.

71% of the respondents of this survey were females. The highest education level completed for 81% of the Gen Z-ers answering this survey was high school, while 14.5% had completed their bachelor's degree. This means that the vast majority of this survey's respondents are female university students.

The level of experience on the labor market was assessed using two single-selection questions. The first one asked participants to indicate the type of their last job, if any. Almost half of them (around 45%) declared having had at least one job experience, 42% of the respondents lack any contact with the job market, and very few of them are entrepreneurs or freelancers (see Graph 1).

Graph 1. My latest professional experience (including the current one) is ...



The second question asked respondents to indicate the age of their first financially rewarded professional experience. Around 7% reported having begun earning money between 14 and 15 years of age, and almost 22% of them when 16–17 years old. In Romania, the legal age for entering the labor market is 16, and the official minimum age for drinking alcohol, having a driving licence, or voting is 18. Therefore, 18 is symbolically regarded as the final milestone to legal adulthood—11.6% of the Gen Z-ers who answered this survey had their first job experience at this age. On the other hand, in Romania, young people usually finish high school when around 19-20 years old; it is no surprise, therefore, that almost 16% of them took up some sort of work at this age. More than a third of the respondents said they had not yet entered the labor market.

Another question asked youths to estimate the amount of time it would take them to search for their next job, regardless of whether or not they were looking for one at the moment. It seems that the majority has a moderate to optimistic outlook, as 31.5% of them estimated it would take them between 1 and 3 months, and 20.4% said less than a month. However, on the opposite side, a significant 20% of the respondents think they will spend more than a year in search for their next professional endeavour.

In order to answer the first problem posed in this paper, which is**: [1] What kind of**

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organizational environment do Gen Z-ers prefer?, several questions were formulated**.**

The broad scope of the next question was to identify Gen Z's preference regarding the type of organization they wanted to work for in the future. This question also had two secondary objectives: (1) to differentiate between preferences towards working for the public, private or non-profit sector respectively, and (2) to identify the predisposition towards entrepreneurship. 29% of the respondents declared that they wish to work for a big, corporate-like company, while almost 16% opted for a small start-up company. 20% of the respondents stated their wish to start or have their own company; 18% preferred the public sector. These findings broadly align with the results provided by an Ernst & Young study in Romania (2017) and with Robert Half's (2015) findings.

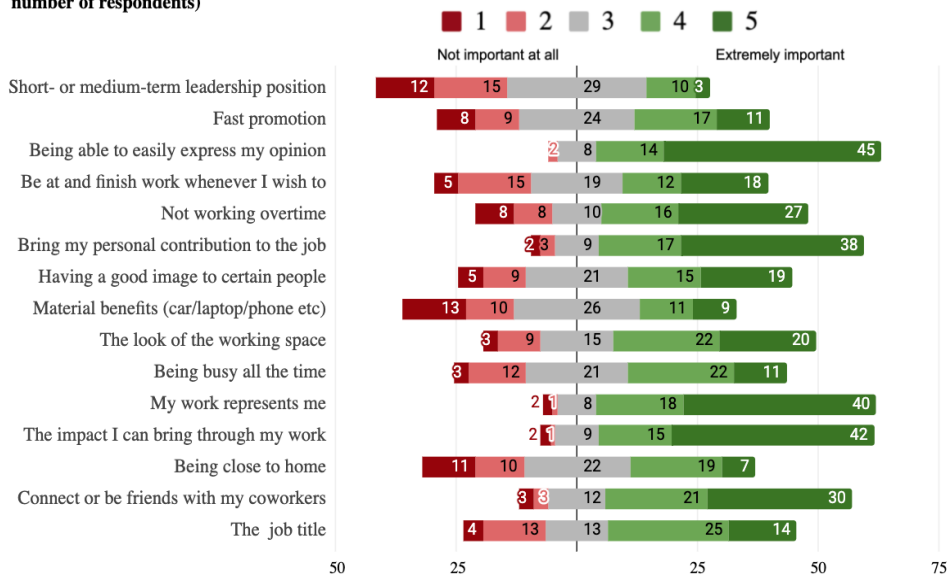
Interestingly, when comparing the Gen Z members who have not had any work experience yet with those who have, a much greater proportion out of the first group wish to work in the public sector—27% vs. 14%. One notices yet another noticeable difference when it comes to entrepreneurial perspective: only 10% of those without previous experience would like to run their own business, as opposed to 30% of the rest. However, working for a small, start-up-like company is similarly appealing for both groups, with 17% and 14% respectively.

The next question asked Gen Z members to evaluate several different items, using a system of points ranging from 1 to 5, meaning "not important at all" and "extremely important" respectively.

As elaborated in the literature review, some researchers opinionated that Gen Z desires their job to be "an expression of their personality" (Arnett, 2004, 143; Kantar, 2017). There are 2 items in the present research that also seem to support that statement (see Graph 2). 85% of the respondents rated the statement "My work represents me" as being extremely important (5 points) or very important (4 points), while 8% were neutral (3 points). Moreover, 85% of the Gen Z-ers see liking what they do on the job as of the greatest importance, rating it with 5 points; the rest of them, 15%, rated the same statement with 4 points (Graph 3).

Gen Z also seems to be extremely willing to make an impact through their jobs. Almost 61% of them marked this item as being extremely important, and 22% as important. Their action-oriented and energetic character, as described by Kingston (2014) and Jenkins (2015a), seems not to come through in this research, given that only 46% of them declared they wanted to get into the job's tasks as soon as possible once employed.

Graph 2. Evaluate the following criteria according to their importance in your (future) professional life. (absolute number of respondents)



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Although Gen Z is regarded as being a tech savvy cohort, which may prefer digital interaction over physical one (Weller, 2017), almost 74% of the respondents greatly value the possibility to bond with colleagues; this is more in line with Tulgan's opinion (Tulgan, 2013). It is of note that this measurement does not specifically mention what type of interaction Gen Z prefers. Moreover, 85% of them state their wish to freely speak their mind.

Almost half of this questionnaire's respondents believe that having a mentor to pass on the know-how is of extreme importance (rating it 5 points), while almost 40% rated this item with 4 points, similarly to Half's findings (Half, 2015). In the same vein, 60% of the respondents would very much wish to be encouraged even if they make mistakes (see Graph 3).

A relaxed, informal working environment was regarded as being very important by 71% of the respondents. However, fewer Gen Z members (49%) wish not to have a stressful job; 30% are neutral in this matter (see Graph 3).

It is said that this cohort is more tolerant in more ways than the previous ones (Accounting Principals, 2017; Kane, 2017; Jenkins, 2015b). This questionnaire tackled Gen Z-ers' willingness to work with people of different age, gender, culture, and race. 50% of them declared being in favour of having colleagues of various ages in their team, while over a quarter of them would rather work only with people under 30 years of age. On the gender side, the vast majority, 87%, state that they feel comfortable with working with either males or females. Finally, on the cultural and racial side, almost 90% of the respondents said they either enjoy or would like to have co-workers from a different country and race than them.

The opinions of Gen Z answerers are divided in 3 when it comes to teamwork. 36% of them would rather work individually, and 30% did not express their preference. Another question, regarding the hierarchical type of organization Gen Z would prefer to work for, registered almost similar percentages—39% favoured a "flat" company and 35% a hierarchical one; the rest displayed no preference.

The desirable physical working environment is also of interest to this research, especially in the present global health situation. If they were to choose the location for their daily work, almost 60% of the respondents would combine remote and on-site work. Around 19% prefer working at the office, while only 9% choose complete remoteness. Another topic this study tackled is the predilection towards different types of physical offices. 45% of the respondents would rather have their own enclosed desk or workspace, while only 22% of them like coworking spaces or the open-office areas currently used by many companies.

Following the second query, **[2] What are Gen Z expectations regarding a good job?,** the next question asked Gen Z members to evaluate several different items using a system of points ranging from 1 to 5, with '1' meaning "not important at all" and '5' "extremely important".

Job security is of considerable importance to Gen Z members. 65% of the respondents gave it 4 or 5 points (see Graph 3), which is in line with other research or opinions describing this cohort as risk-averse, oriented rather to financial and professional stability (Jenkins, 2015; Weller, 2017). Job security is ranked in 4th place in an international study; in Romania, however, 80% of youths placed it in second place (Ernst & Young, 2017; Half, 2015).

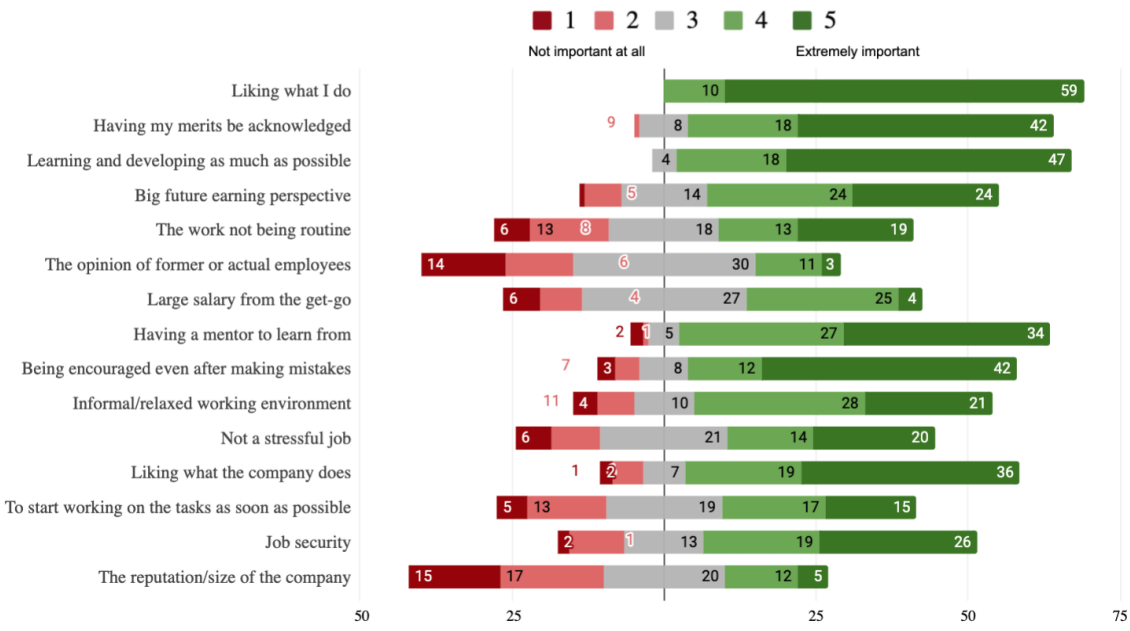
Financially speaking, although it is difficult to draw conclusions, one can argue that pay is of significant value, though not at the top of the list, as other authors have also mentioned (Patel, 2017; Accounting Principals, 2017). When asked to rate the importance of earning a big salary from the outset of their career, 36% of the respondents awarded it 4 points, 39% were neutral (marking it with 3), and only 18% considered it not that important or not important at all (see Graph 3).

On the other hand, the perspective of a solid salary in the near future is of high

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importance to Gen Z-ers. 69% of the respondents rated this matter with 4 or 5 points, 20% were neutral, and only considered it unimportant (see Graph 3). Speaking of job opportunities in the near future, two other items are worth mentioning: the possibility of being awarded a managerial spot, and to be promoted, respectively. Gen Z is not in a hurry to lead others, seeing that for 39% of them this matter is not of much importance, and insignificant to 42%. However, a promotion is seen as more valuable, with the statistics in opposition to the previous: 40% place considerable importance on it, while 34% are not certain about it. Additionally, having one's accomplishments acknowledged is paramount for 87% of this cohort. A study by Ernst & Young (2017) revealed that promotions and fairness are of the greatest importance to Gen Z, both globally and locally.

Graph 3. In general, how much do these aspects of professional life matter to you? (absolute number of respondents)



Learning opportunities on the job have also scored very high in significance for Gen Z members, as 94% of them have rated them as important or extremely important, in line with Ernst & Young findings (2017) (see Graph 3).

Gen Z-ers' relationship to their direct manager is another topic worth exploring. When asked what they appreciate about their manager, 59% of the respondents declared that they do not have such a figure. Analysing the responses of the other Gen Z members proved to be both difficult and intriguing, possibly indicating their lack of work experience. They had the option to choose as many items as they considered applied, from a total of 11. The most desired characteristics for a manager were: the ability to mentor/teach, intelligence, keeping promises, and acknowledging team members' merits (26%), very closely followed by their sincerity and being close to the team (25%).

Finally, several questions were posed in order to reveal Gen Z-ers' attitude towards their professional future, thus answering the third question of this study, **[3] How do they project their professional life?**

Looking at the Gen Z-ers' expectations regarding their career perspectives over the years, most of the respondents of this exploratory study reported expecting to work for 2 to 6 companies in their entire professional life. Robert Half stated that working for 4 companies aligns to their expectations (Half, 2015). Those who think they will work for only 1 company

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account for 7%, equivalent to those expecting to work for more than 10 entities. It is to be noted that the respondents who wish to or already have entrepreneurial or freelancing careers had a separate item to choose from ("None, I am going my own way").

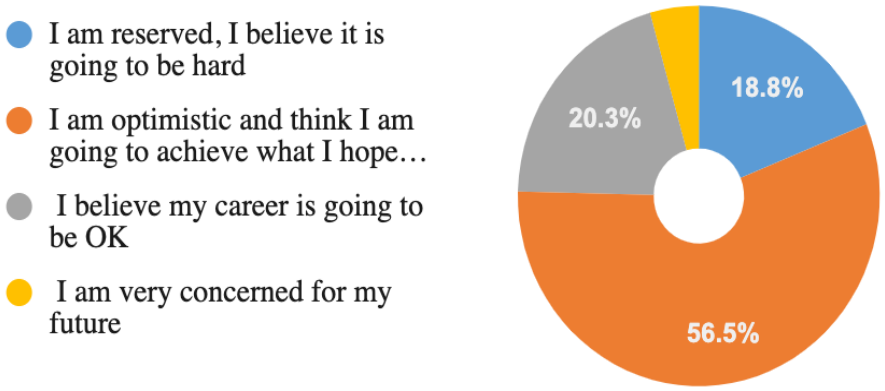
Furthermore, 50% of respondents expect to switch between 2 and 6 job types throughout their career, contrary to what other studies found - around 17 different jobs in a McCrindle study (2018). 17% of Gen Z-ers reported intending to stick with the same job type, whether in the same company or not. The question referred to a job type, not a specific position within a company.

Gen Z members who answered this questionnaire are almost evenly divided in their opinion whether they will work harder than their parents in order to achieve career success—49% agree with this statement, 51% disagree with it. Half's study found the "yes" opinion to be the majority one, at 77% (Half, 2015).

Another item of the same question sought to measure Gen Z's opinion regarding the need for continuous improvement and lifelong learning when it comes to career success. Almost all of the respondents agree to this statement, in line with what other researchers have found (Jenkins, 2015b; Iorgulescu, 2016; Patel, 2017; Accounting Principals, 2017).

When it comes to career success, this study asked the respondents to rank at least 3 items in order of importance, starting with the first as the most important, out of 9 items in total. More than half chose “liking what they do” as the most valuable criterion, 12% ranked the size of the income in first place, and a professional skill was ranked on the top by 14% of respondents. Interestingly, 20% of respondents ranked effecting an impact through their profession on second place.

Graph 4. How confident are you in your career success?



Another question evaluated the general confidence level of Gen Z-ers about their eventual career success (see Graph 4). Over half of respondents are very optimistic about it, while almost 19% among them tend to doubt a favourable outcome, being concerned about their difficult journey.

Conclusions

As this exploratory study concludes, Gen Z-ers proved to be pragmatic, valuing both job security and financial rewards right from the outset of their career, while not being in a hurry to take leadership positions. They have a pronounced appetite for mastering new skills, as they regard learning opportunities and being mentored on the job as extremely important.

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Gen Z-ers choose jobs that suit them, being concerned about effecting an impact through their career. They wish to work for corporations, rather than small companies, although a significant percentage declared they were inclined towards jobs in the public sector. Interestingly, they wish to have their own enclosed workspace, despite the setup many offices currently have, and would gladly work both on site and remotely.

The members of Gen Z greatly value the opportunity to bond with co-workers in a relaxed, informal environment, and may prove more tolerant than previous generations, seeing that they would enjoy having co-workers of different nationality or race.

When it comes to their perspectives of their entire career, more than half of the respondents are optimistic, and think they are going to work for 2–6 companies throughout their professional life.

This exploratory study opens the path to more in-depth and representative research concerning the expectations of Gen Z-ers upon entering the labour market, as it has the potential to challenge the current beliefs about the new wave of young professionals.

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Source 3 (Scholarly)

Citation:

Bencsik, Andrea & Juhász, Timea & Dr. Horvath-Csikos, Gabriella. (2016). Y and Z Generations at Workplaces. *Journal of Competitiveness*. 6. 90-106. 10.7441/joc.2016.03.06.

Summary: The article has surrounded the idea of how different two generations Z and Y in the working environment. The study delved into the reflection of corporate success through the behavior of generations Y and Z in the long term, which emphasizes the differences of how two of these generations show in the fields of knowledge sharing and knowledge transfer. Substantially, the article presents quantitative research to find out managers' standpoints in managing these two generations and identifying difficulties happening when Generation Y and Z cooperate. The article focuses on pointing out the difficulty between generations in corporation and analyze the level of how significant these difficulties impact on the organization sphere.

Relevance: With the topic of Generation Z's influence in changing management and communication practices in the workplace, the article gives awareness of the difficulties of Generation Z and other generations in an environment that may need group work commitment.

Place in the paper: Literature review

Y and Z Generations at Workplaces

▪ *Bencsik Andrea, Horváth-Csikós Gabriella, Juhász Tímea*

Abstract

At present, more and more researches deals with the characteristic features of generation Y and generation Z. As it is about the present and future generations, corporate success and the competitive operation are determined by the behaviour of these generations in the long-run. Researches justifies that there are significant differences between the two generations despite the similarities. These differences appear rather emphasized in the corporate environment when several questions arise at workplaces in the process of cooperation – especially in the field of knowledge-sharing and knowledge transfer-regarding the characteristics of the two generations. Last year, the authors carried out a quantitative research by questionnaires in order to reveal what the managing of these two generations mean for the managers and also what difficulties occur when the two generations cooperate with each other and with elder generations as well. The main question of the research was how to approach the new generations from the view of HR?

Although the research cannot be considered representative (410 respondents participated in the survey), it can give a picture about the examined issues. The hypothesis phrased by the authors was justified according to which of the HR activities have to adapt to the requirements of the new generations upon their appearance.

Keywords: HR, intergeneration, knowledge-sharing Y and Z generation, behavior, work place
JEL Classification: M10

1. INTRODUCTION

Human nature and the basic characteristics of our behavior are often in contrast with the organizational and corporate requirements for the sake of reaching and maintaining competitiveness. The same applies to the field of cooperation, and of knowledge-sharing as well. Corporate cooperation, teamwork and information flow between departments all depend on communication style, of which positive and/or negative impact - based on our way of thinking - can be best observed in the field of knowledge-transfer and knowledge-sharing. It is true for oral, written and electronic communication as well. The applied methods, corporate principles, regulations and tools influence the successful operation of the corporation through communication, but the consistency of the employees' age-tree influence the method of communication and knowledge-transfer. According to Davenport and Prusak (1998), knowledge-sharing -as a requirement- is unnatural, because people think that their individual knowledge is valuable and important. Piling knowledge and mistrust towards knowledge coming from others is natural. Although, providing knowledge-sharing – as managing condition – means pressure and opportunity at the same time for companies. Therefore it is important to encourage people to transfer their knowledge and to build trust. Several international researchers examine the connection between these two factors (Krishnan et al, 2013; Singh, 2014; Schaffer, 2015; Bencsik – Machova, 2015). With regard to this, the increase in the value of human resources, the utilization of results of mental activities

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in the corporate's activities and consequently, increasing the corporate's market competitiveness are a serious challenge for the management. Reaching the cooperation of different age-groups, managing conflicts originating from generational problems are aggravating factors in the challenge. These problems emerge more often in the field of knowledge-sharing. As a result of increasing the retirement age, it is often 3 or 4 generations who are forced to cooperate and to work together in the majority of companies. The difference between these age groups' way of thinking, attitude, behaviour and value system, their flexibility and their technical knowledge can easily become the source of several conflicts, and it is sometimes very difficult to manage these problems. Nowadays it is quite an up-to-date and unsolved issue how to manage requirements of the two youngest age-groups on behalf of serving the interest of knowledge-sharing by satisfying their requirements. There are corporate solutions, which are specifically forced by the youngest age-groups from the management (Singh, 2014). Such solutions are e.g.: opportunities of atypical employment, home-office or using technical devices where previously it was not typical; or ergonomics, as a workplace organizational solution has again come to the front, but there are other solutions in the front again, such as satellite workplace, hot desk, shared desk, open space, break out or mobile centre.

Beyond harmonizing the corporate processes with the operability of the knowledge-management systems, it assumes the presence of basics, which are manifested in culture, building trust, common thinking and the real cooperation. Based on the results of the research, it is obvious that the key-question behind the operability of knowledge-management is culture and it depends on the know-how of developing trust. In this case, the challenge for the management is easy to phrase.

As all the above mentioned is well-known, it is absolutely right to ask the question: if we know this all in theory, then why does not practice work? Why do managers have to cope with newer and newer unsolved situations (and sometimes the employees as well), and if they do not handle or simply ignore these situations, it is absolutely impossible to create the desired pre-conditions, which is the seal of the corporate's success, the operation of the knowledge-management system and knowledge-sharing. This is the development of the study-organization which is built on trust.

This paper aims to reveal the background and connections of those challenging problems which have to be handled essentially in order to step further. The mentioned managerial tasks created a new term in the professional literature and justified its implementation in corporate practice, which is called intergenerational management. This new managerial task means the recognitions and proper handling of problems originating from the cooperation of different generations; in our case, focusing on the role of knowledge-sharing. In order for the management to be able to take appropriate measures in the new situation, they have to be aware of the most important characteristic features which rank the workplace attitude of each generation. The authors give a brief review on them .

2. LITERATURE BACKGROUND

It is difficult to terminate the groups of each generation precisely, but the time-lanes in the borders mean certain common territories. Therefore, the generations are not sharply divided, but their characteristic features are adequate for the whole age-group in general. Professional literature use different names for depicting the categories of the generations and their time-categorization is also sometimes differently defined. (Although it does not influence the basic characteristics). In the followings you can find the classification we used in our research. Characteristically, we can differentiate 6 generations which are shown in chronological order in Figure 1.



Veteran generation (1925 - 1946)
Baby boom generation (1946 - 1960)
X generation (1960 - 1980)
Y generation (1980 - 1995)
Z generation (1995 - 2010)
Alfa generation (2010 +)

Fig. 1 – Time-line of generations. Source: authors' construction (on the basis of Zemke et al., 2000);

A question should be put why it is necessary to deal with the topic. Why do we need to examine the behaviour of generations and their characteristics? Why do we need to think about an emphatic challenge, how these newer generations at workplaces of earlier generations can be fitted? The older generations have doubts about the younger ones every time and the often cited expression is 'these youngsters of today'. (It is not a positive opinion accent.) To tolerate the conventional differences among generations is insufficient nowadays. Why is this situation special? Why is it a hot issue? What does the term 'new generational employees' mean? What generational features cause bigger problems today in case of employing young graduates than earlier? All the questions cannot be answered in the framework of this article, but we present one portion of our research, which is mainly built on the behaviour of the generations. To answer these questions, firstly, the most important characteristics of generations have to be shown. Then the HR activities are presented briefly in order to show the readers the direction of the necessary changes.

2.1. Characteristics of youngest generations

Apart from detailed characterization of each generation, the paper rather focuses on the most important features of the target audience, the generation Y and generation Z. Thus it prepares the readers' thoughts for evaluation of the questionnaire's research results.

Generation Y: Generation Y is also called millennium generation. (Schäffer, 2012) The ‚Y' comes from the English word youth. They were the first wave of the digital generation born into the world of technology. They are highly qualified in digital knowledge; therefore it is easy for them to quickly acquire the use of new tools and devices in IT. They easily accept changes, they live for today, they do not like to plan for long periods; they rather want to enjoy themselves in their own world. Their circle of friends is virtual, they mainly nurse their relations on social sites, they eas-

ily accept cultural differences and they really like living a quick life (Krishnan et al, 2012). Family is not everything for them, traditional values are fading. Majority of generation Y is already present at the labour market, they have university degrees and they work together with a lot of people from generation X and with fewer people from generation Z. They possess unique ideas about their future positions at the workplaces. It is important for them to work where they want and to do what they really enjoy doing. If they feel that they are in captivity, they quickly step further. Generation Y is characterized by „multitasking", the multi-sided and shared attention (Schäffer, 2015). For them, the concept of success, career and money is of top priority, because they have learned that it is the only thing that can advance them in consumer society (Tari, 2010). Using modern technological devices, their communication mainly happens in the virtual space and their online presence is never-ending. They are motivated by pushing, advancing and reaching success, work is always highlighted for them and family remains in the background. The feeling of free-time and relaxation is inevitable for them, they have wide-spread and diverse desires; they usually make decisions or act accordingly to reach these goals. Money and success are basic motivational tools for them in their work, which come to the front opposite family values. From the view of success in the quality of life is important their work and it appears in their relaxation pointedly, as well. The desires, ambitions of newer generations are comprehensive, the young often grow out of their abilities and possibilities, therefore, their requirements culminate in varied forms. Their experience determine their decisions and actions (Bittner et al, 2013).

Generation Z: Generation Z has the features of „net generation"due to highly developed digital era, which they were born into. They were also characterized as „Facebook-generation", „digital natives" or sometimes „iGeneration". (Tari, 2011). The norms of generation Z are different from the norms of the previous generation. Words, slangs and expressions used by generation Z are quite strange to their parents and the two parties sometimes move apart. As generation Z was born into the world of technology and they feel good in that world, thus it is primarily important for them to be surrounded by that environment. They are always online on any technical device virtually, with no stop. It can be seen through their actions, as well which are in connection with their technical environment and which can appear as a tool or as a milieu in their life. Other forms of socialization are very difficult for them. Compared with generation Y, the generation Z is not aware of the concept of struggling. They are practical, rather intelligent than wise and they like to take the lead as they are brave. They are more impatient and more agile than their predecessors and they look for new challenges and impulses continuously. They are not afraid of continuous changes and due to the world of internet they possess much information, but just to a certain extent. To solve problems, they try to find the solutions on the internet (Tari, 2011).

The Forbes Magazine has made a survey about generation Z in North and South America, in Africa, in Europe, in Asia and in the Middle East. 49 thousand youngsters were asked (Dill, 2015). On the basis of the results it can be said that Z generation is the first real global generation. High-tech is in their blood, they have grown up in uncertain and complex environment which determines their viewpoint about work, studying and the world. Arising from their habit, they have different expectations in their workplaces. We can speak about a careerist, professionally ambitious generation, but their technical- and language knowledge are on a high level. Therefore, they are excellent workforces. Employers have to prepare to engage Z generation with regard to speaking to them efficiently, to fit them into the community, the organizational culture and to make them effective employees in the digital age (Elmore, 2014).

Employers have to face the fact that this generation will choose a career of their own interest, not because they want to meet demands of anybody. The result of this behaviour is an intrinsic motivation, they have a tough enterprising spirit and they want to influence the world. At the same time, their most important career goals are the work-life balance and a workplace stability. Z generation is not as optimistic as their predecessors were from the viewpoint of the workplace. A part of them worry about unemployment, or if their career can get stuck and they cannot evolve their talent. The members of Y generation are afraid of becoming an adult and of responsibility, and they think the world of work is cold and rejecting. These two generations handle the process of job-hunting negatively because they cannot receive feedback at all. The X generation had a bit easier situation in the labour market, they faced rejection as adults (Durbák, 2013). A virtual world is natural for Y and Z, but a lot of them cannot fit their online life into their offline life. They feel some gap between reality and desires is irreconsiable, and they feel the uncertainty of existence. They are anxious, disappointed, they sit at home and they are waiting for somebody to pay attention to them and to give a feedback to them that was often told by their parents: they are fantastic (Tari, 2011).

Using smart applications is quite widespread among them, and these applications further make their everyday life easier, but faster. Generation Z is just partly present at the labour market, but they surprise their colleagues and the HR managers. The key to the classical market success and at the same time, the requirement of the corporate management is to have people who reach their aim by cooperating and by sharing their knowledge. In order to reach this aim, it is necessary for different generations to cooperate with each other (team work, knowledge sharing), they have common goals, they are devoted to do their job, they provide and ask for help and of course, they trust each other to share their knowledge (Elmore, 2010).

Table 1 below shows the two determining characteristics which play the most important role in both daily life and in the life of a successful company as well. These characteristics arise most frequently when attention is focused onto the kind of behaviour expected if the generational differences are to be addressed (Tóth-Bordásné & Bencsik, 2011).

Tab. 1 - Different generational characteristics from a viewpoint of teamwork and knowledge sharing Source: Tóth-Bordásné & Bencsik, 2011.

	Baby - boom	**X generation**	**Y generation**	**Z generation**
Teamwork	Unknown	Natural environment (multinational companies)	Belief in the success of common effort	On a virtual level (only if forced)
Knowledge sharing	Willingly, voluntarily	It is based on mutuality and cooperation	Only in cases of self interest or if forced	On virtual level, easily and rapidly, no stake, publically

In Table 2 we can see the noted characteristics which represent a challenge from the respect of knowledge sharing and intergeneration management (Bencsik & Machova, 2016).

Tab. 2 - Generational behavioural characteristics of different age-groups Source: Bencsik & Machova, 2016.

	Baby – boom	X generation	Y generation	Z generation
View	Communal, unified thinking	Self-centred and medium-term	Egotistical, short-term	No sense of commitment, be happy with what you have and live for the present
Relationship	First and foremost personal	Personal and virtual networks	Principally virtual, network	Virtual and superficial
Aim	Solid existence	Multi-environment, secure position	Rivalry for leader position	Live for the present
Self-realization	Conscious carrier building	Rapid promotion	Immediate	Questions the need for it at all
IT	It is based on self-instruction and incomplete	Uses with confidence	Part of its everyday life	Intuitive
Values	Patience, soft skills, respect for traditions, EQ, hard work,	Hard work, openness, respect for diversity, curiosity, practicality	Flexibility, mobility, broad but superficial knowledge, success orientation, creativity, freedom of information takes priority	Live for the present, rapid reaction to everything, initiator, brave, rapid information access and content search
Other possible characteristics	Respect for hierarchy, exaggerated modesty or arrogant inflexibility, passivity, cynicism, disappointment	Rule abiding, materialistic, fair play, less respect for hierarchy, has a sense of relativity, need to prove themselves	Desire for independence, no respect for tradition, quest for new forms of knowledge, inverse socialization, arrogant, home office and-part-time work, interim management, undervalue soft skills and EQ	Differing viewpoints, lack of thinking, happiness, pleasure, divided attention, lack of consequential thinking, no desire to make sense of things, the boundaries of work and entertainment overlap, feel at home anywhere

The table shows similarities, easily handled gaps and discrepancies. Management, however, has to deal with serious generational differences if the aim that knowledge sharing, as the result of the work of a collaborative organisational community, is to be realized.

2.2. HR challenges

Although the traditional HR activities have developed in methodology a lot recently, they remained at their original fields, such as recruitment, employing, performance evaluation, developing motivation and payment systems, career management, etc. The requirements of the youngest generations rewrite these activities radically. Not only the mentioned fields, but their tools mean challenges for the HR. New and previously not used solutions should be used such as developing satellite workplaces, hot desk, shared desk, open space, break out, mobile centre, green HR, activity based working, developing business partners, etc. All these activities strongly relate to the behaviour of the above mentioned new generations and to the changes in the requirements. Market competition, staying alive and the need to get and to share knowledge mean significant stress towards the direction of change, which will become the basic principle of the competitive operation in the future. The HR fields have to be prepared for these challenges. Table 3 represents an extract of the necessary changes depicting the features, which are important from the aspect of the present research. Of course the HR challenges will not stop at this level. Further theoretical and practical examinations are necessary in order to adapt the present changes to the corporate practice. The table summarizes the most important HR challenges, which have been in the focus since the new generations appeared at the workplaces.

It aims to show that the methodology which supports collaboration and knowledge sharing in these critical areas can be successfully realized if the characteristics of different generations are kept in focus.

Tab. 3 - Challenges of the HR in the light of different generational characteristics Source: Bencsik & Machova, 2016.

	Baby - boom	**X generation**	**Y generation**	**Z generation**
Incentive/ motivation	Promotion opportunity, new paths, fixed work place	Status, materialism	Individual freedom of movement, opportunity to make decisions, competition, self-realization	Immediate remuneration, freedom, non-commitment
Performance evaluation	Fact based, correct, based on the past	Future-oriented, active participation, goal setting, carreer planning	Future-oriented, direct feedback, discussion, talent management	Own limits not recognised, self-confident, values and self-image is distorted

Training, learning, development	Traditional education system, experience, holistic	Flexible, shorter learning time, trainings, mimicry, interactive, flexible, just in case	Rapid, individual, based on IT, alternative, just in time	Based on interest, informal learning
Conflict management	Avoids or deals with	Willing to compromise	Opposes	Provokes conflicts, but either does not follow through or reacts aggressively

It goes without saying that success always depends on the level of preparation, on the leadership style and on other circumstances. This means that the challenges, as introduced in this chapter, faced by company HR departments should not be neglected and it can be of great help to know the family background of employees and the emotional baggage that they bring with them. If these factors are kept in mind, generational problems can be alleviated. If the trust is established, then cooperation and a more pliable form of knowledge sharing will follow and will contribute to the successful, competitive running of a company. It is worth taking a look into the family background of future colleagues, key personnel and managers whilst carrying out the more familiar HR processes such as training, the manager selection process, skills management and career planning (Bencsik 2010). Building and maintaining an atmosphere of trust where collaboration, knowledge sharing can thrive, considered as the key factor to company success and competitiveness, all depends on the behaviour of those who have either experienced, or indeed never felt, the power of trust.

Based on the above presented generation features and HR challenges the question that motivated the research of the authors was asking how to reveal, motivate or perhaps influence the two youngest age groups' workplace attitudes, and their willingness to help and to cooperate by the tools of HR. The test of practical life gives the following results.

3. DETAILS OF THE RESEARCH

3.1. Materials and Procedures

The research was carried out last year (2015). The aim of the authors was to get to know as many age groups' opinion as they could about the generation Y and Z and about the ways how these two generations can fit into their workplaces and what challenges their appearance mean for the HR managers and for the management. The research on one hand consisted of secunder research, that it focused on studying the previous literature in that topic, while on the other hand the research contained quantitative (questionnaires) and qualitative (in-depth interviews and focus group) studies. The results of the questionnaire-based research will be shown in the followings; and their verification was implemented by the qualitative methods.

The respondents had to fill in a questionnaire on the internet, which mainly consisted of closed

questions, and there were only three open questions to answer. The closed questions were built on nominal and metric scales, and within this the authors used the 5-points Likert scale. The questions were divided into three groups. The first group of questions discussed the conflicts between the different generations, also it discussed their form of appearance in work and in human relations at workplaces; furthermore it examined the opportunities how to solve these conflicts. The second group of questions was about age-groups, while the last group of questions was about the specification of the sample.

Filling the questionnaire was anonymous, the method for collecting samples was the snowball method, and therefore the sample cannot be considered representative.

The evaluation was carried out with the help of SPSS program by using one-or more variable-statistical methods such as frequency, average, deviation, crossboard-analysis, and Khi-square test and ANOVA method.

The specification of the sample is the following:

A sample of 410 pieces was collected in the research and all the questionnaires could be used in the evaluation process.

The youngest respondent was 18 years old, while the oldest was 64. The authors divided the sample into 5 age-groups, according to which the classification of the respondents is the following: 3.2% of the respondents were under 20, 48.1 % of them were between 20 and 30, 22.9 % were between 30 and 40, 18.1 % were between 40 and 50; while 7.7 % of the respondents were over 50 years old. The authors considered it useful to divide the sample by ages, because the answers of the respondents could be analysed in more details, rather than dividing the respondents 'just' by generations. The other reason justifying this classification is that the research did not especially focus on generation X.

According to the highest qualification of the respondents, 1.3 % of them finished only primary school, 56.5 % -had high school degree, while 42.3 % had university degree. The results of the crossboard based on the qualification and age-groups revealed that the age-group between 20 and 30 had secondary school education in the biggest proportion (57.8%); more than 50 % of the respondents between 30 and 50 also had secondary school education, while almost half of the respondents over 50 had higher education degree as well.

As far as the company, where the respondents were working is concerned, 26.7% of them were micro company with less than 10 employees, 41% were small enterprise with 11-49 employees, 15.6% were middle-sized enterprise with 50-249 employees, while 16.6% of them were big company employing at least 250 people.

Analysing the crossboard made from the age and size of the company, it could be seen that almost every seventh respondent between 20 and 40 in the sample was working for a big company, while in case of the employees over 50 this index increased to 12. In the sample those with higher education qualification were mainly employed at middle-sized companies (53.8%), while in cases of the employees with secondary qualification this ratio was divided between small enterprises and middle-sized companies (31.8%-31.8%).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the research, the authors performed -among others- the justification of the validation of the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis

According to the respondents participating in the sample, certain changes should be implemented in the activities of HR due to the appearance of generation Z and generation Y.

In the first part of the research, the authors analysed the opinions of the respondents about the employees under 30. Numerous features were enumerated and the respondents had to value on a 5-point Likert-scale how that given characteristic feature was typical of that age-group (table 4).

Tab. 4 - Judgement of the age-group who is under 30 (average and deviation) Source: authors' construction

Variables	Statistics			
	N		Mean	Std. Deviation
	Valid	Missing		
Moderate	308	102	2.31	0.894
Committed	308	102	2.80	0.979
Disrespectful	312	98	2.82	1.014
Working hard	306	104	2.82	1.003
Having no values	307	103	2.83	0.998
Well-mannered	313	97	2.90	0.925
Warmly welcome by the others	315	95	2.91	1,06
Work hard	308	102	2.93	1.023
Share their knowledge	314	96	2.96	0.918
Persistent	311	99	2.98	0.975
Help others with pleasure	312	98	2.99	0.945
Bad	312	98	3.01	1.07
Selfish	311	99	3.02	1.062
Having good problem-solving skills	312	98	3.08	0.849
Work independently	313	97	3.11	0.908
Cooperative	311	99	3.13	0.885
Motivated	310	100	3.26	0.986
Smart	312	98	3.29	0.781
Expect help	312	98	3,31	0.986
Purposive	309	101	3.33	1

Like teamwork	306	104	3.38	0.962
Full of ideas	312	98	3,45	0.961
Can communicate well	310	100	3,50	0.88
Having strong career desire	311	99	3.60	0.988
Creative	313	97	3.68	0.776
Having too much self-confidence	308	102	3.84	1.055

From the table it can clearly be seen that according to the respondents, most typical characteristic features of the youngest age-groups were the following: they have too much self-confidence, they are creative, they have strong career desires and their communication is perfect while they are not at all moderate, committed or work hard.

The authors examined whether there was difference between the judgements of each feature based on the age-groups. Therefore, the ANOVA test found significant differences based on the following features at the level of 0.05 significance: smart (F: 2.522 sign. .041), motivated (F: 3.071 sign. .017), selfish (F: 4.182 sign. .003), work hard (F: 3.045 sign. .018), expect help (F: 3.295 sign. .012), persistent (F: 3.052 sign.:.017). Based on the average values, the authors concluded that it was the generation Z and Y, who typically judged themselves more positive than the older age-groups judged them.

The authors asked the respondents about the activities, where the generation Z and generation Y performed better than the older generations. According to the respondents, the employees under 30 perform better mainly in the field of IT and in activities which require creativity or innovation. At the same time the respondents valued that the above mentioned generations did not like monotony, individual activities, marketing and they also performed poorer than their older colleagues in the field of administration.

It is natural to ask the question whether the age-consistency caused any problems at work within an organization. 34.4% of the respondents answered yes, 14.8% could not answer. However, almost half of the sample answered that it did not cause any conflicts. Based on the Khi-square test, it was examined whether there was significant correspondence in the answers based on the ages. The results of the test did not show such correspondence (Pearson's Khi-square: 6.494 df: 8 sign. .592 $p > .05$). The results of the crossboards showed that among the people between 30 and 50, every second respondent did not feel any problems; less than half of the people between 20 and 30 shared the same opinion; and people over 50 had the same opinion as well.

The respondents who answered that this cooperation was problematic had to answer another question answering where these conflicts appear during common work. The respondents had to choose among problems given by the authors and they had to tell whether that given question emerged or not. The respondents could mark more options in the research. The frequency of the answers can be seen in table 5.

Tab.5 - Sources of conflict (N, %) Source: authors' construction

Features	N	%
Usage of tools	10	3%
Incompatibility	14	4%
Problem concerning method of work	21	7%
Problem caused by the working style	26	8%
Disrespect	42	13%
Problem caused by work-speed	46	15%
Problems concerning sharing work	47	15%
Problem in their way of thinking	52	17%
Communication problem	55	18%
	313	100

Based on the data, it is mainly the communication and the difference in the way of thinking that can cause difficulties in the process of working together. Of course, this tense situation has to be solved. According to the participants, the best way to solve the difficulties is discussion and managerial intervention. It was interesting to see that 24 respondents answered that the best solution is shouting, while 16 of them said that this question was not worth dealing with.

The question is whether it is the labour market-presentation of the generation under 30 who induces the change in the managing of the staff within an organization or in the activities connected to them. 44.5 % of the participants in the research answered yes, 33.2% said no, while 22.3% could not answer the question. There was no significant correlation between the answer and the age-groups: Khi- square test: Khi-square: 14.122 df: 8 sign. .079 $p > .05$. Half of the respondents over 30 answered that it was necessary to change in the management. The authors enumerated different changes for the respondents and they could choose more than one from the list. The frequency of the answers is summarized in table 6.

Tab. 6 - Solution possibilities (N. %) Source: authors' construction

Alteration possibilities	N	%
Corporate culture	21	5%
Expected competencies	37	9%
Team work	42	10%
Selection process	45	11%
Working method	45	11%
Qualitative level	50	12%
Work-speed	55	13%
Communication	61	14%
Performance expectation	70	16%
Total	426	100%

The respondents mostly believed that expecting competencies and changing communication could lead to change in the handling of generation Z and generation Y.

Phrasing the question further, the dilemma is conceived by the management and the HR colleagues regarding the tools and possibilities, which could help to keep these young adults at the given workplaces. Are new tools necessary or are the traditional ones appropriate enough? If they are, then what are the suggested solutions? The respondents had to value the enumerated possibilities on a 5-point Likert scale to what extent they thought that solution was typical or not.

Tab.7 - Incentives for the young adults (N. %) Source: authors' construction

Variables	N		Mean	Std. Deviation
	Valid	Missing		
with money	316	94	4.53	.741
with career opportunity	308	102	4.19	.820
with position	308	102	3.85	.860
with good workplace atmosphere	312	98	3.71	.869
with challenging work	310	100	3.06	.992
with extra cafeteria elements	302	108	2.98	.938
with high salary	302	108	2.80	1.003
with non-material incentives	299	111	2.25	1.006
with nothing	298	112	1.70	1.006

Based on the answers,, it is mainly money and career opportunities which can motivate the young adults to stay at a company: it means that the traditional tools are more motivating than the non-material incentives. This research results are somehow similar to the research carried out by Czeglédi-Juhász in 2013, where the authors examined what opportunities were ensured for entrants by the employers. From the results, it could be seen that the employers mainly offer opportunities in career development for the entrants and furthermore, they can provide good workplace atmosphere and training opportunities. At the same time it is important to note that the entrants knew that their salary requirement could not be high (35.8 % of the respondents answered that out of 157 entrants).

In the research the authors examined whether the different age-groups had different opinions regarding each aspect. Significant difference can only be observed in case of position, where the highest average was judged by the age-group 20-30, thus they considered position important. At the same time the people over 51 and under 20 did not consider it that important in the dimension of generation Y and Z.

Finally it was discussed in the questionnaire which age-groups they could work together with. Almost 44.4 % of the respondents could establish good working relationship with the young adults in their 20's; 37.6 % answered that that they would rather work with the young adults over 30; while 15.6 % of the respondents would have that relationship with people over 40 and only 2.4% could work together with the youngest age-groups, with youngsters under 20. The cross-

boards showed that in case of each generation, it is their own age-group they can work together with the most. Of course, the cooperation of different generations can have more positive benefits for the companies. According to the respondents the advantages are among others: mutual help, respect, better ideas and motivating atmosphere, which by all means can motivate the work of the individuals and the company.

5. DISCUSSION

The aim of the research was to examine the characteristic features, which emerge in case of the youngest generations in the labour-market and what challenges their different behaviour mean in the workplace environment during the cooperation of more generations. The research was based on questionnaires, and in the evaluation process we could justify our hypothesis, namely that the HR managers have to cope with new tasks if they want to capture and keep the young employees and to ensure knowledge-sharing, which is the key to competitiveness. Because this topic is relatively new, the results can be compared only with some earlier results. Some studies deal with the possible workplace problems in theory, which mean challenges for the management. Table 8 shows the difficulties Smith observes. (The newest generation, generation Z is not mentioned in his work). Although the features summarized in the table are slightly different from what we examined, the majority of the features justify our hypothesis and are in correlation with our results. Terepocki (2013) also summarizes in theory the eight most important fields, where the management have to cope with serious challenges and he draws the attention to the necessary tasks. These fields are the following: The fields mentioned by the author correspond with our research results totally. The study of Chen (2015) specifically deals with HR-activities, where he offers theoretical solutions focusing on the main activities. He believes that the majority of problems come from getting the employees, cultural background, managing the communication problems between generations, the opportunities for career-building and replacing lost knowledge due to retirement. The thoughts of Chen also comply with our own results. As it was previously mentioned above, the researches primarily deal with the challenges theoretically and it is not yet possible to compare our results with results of practical researches. Results of practical researches can rather be seen in situations outside workplaces. Previous articles examined the behaviour of new generations and their willingness to share their knowledge (Bencsik, 2015; Gutierrez, 2016), but not the work environment first of all. (The results of these papers are in harmony with the results of ours.) As the Z generation is on the labour market and in the workplaces only in a fewer number that is why, their problems do not appear too sharply and in a bigger measure. The leaders, managers and HR experts have to prepare for these challenges and the researches have started in this area (Olšovská et al, 2016). Intergeneration communication and information sharing, their technics are very different from the previous generations which will lead to a lot of conflicts and give rise to a misunderstanding (Dill, 2015). The members of Y generation achieve antipathy of their surroundings and cause conflict situations by their self-assurance, by their persuasions which do not tolerate criticism or contradiction, by their overconfidence and career desire. According to our results, these young people do not tolerate monotony, individualistic actions or tasks which require thinking (Olšovská et al., 2015). Their behaviour is determined by the culture and value system which are brought from home. The effects of these

features require additional researches. Y and Z generations are distrustful, they do not help each other, they build connections only superficially (Elmore, 2014). An interesting result that these two generations which are closest to each other can least work together. Y generation can work together with X generation for common goals, but Z generation wants to achieve success alone (The Forum, 2016). Previous researches confirm that these young people are clever, they have such abilities which are necessary in the labour market. But to adapt them and to keep them in the companies, to find the best motivational tools are really serious tasks for companies (Cook, 2016). Although the previous researches of Czeglédi-Juhász (2013, 2015) also justified the fact that the needs of the employers and employees with the age-group under 30 and the workplace requiremenst are not always in balance claim a new way of thinking from the HR, which was justified by the present research.

The difficulty of financing is one obstacle of the research, which was rather problematic in case of collecting samples and in case of the method of sampling. In case of getting financial support, we would expand the samples and we would prepare international comparison in the future.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The present paper illustrates some results of last year's research, which examined the organizational effects and HR activities connected to appearance of generation Z and Y in labour market. In the light of the research results, the hypothesis conceived by the authors can be accepted. Although it has to mentioned that the validity of the given hypothesis is justified only within the frame of the given research, which cannot be considered representative. Nevertheless the study draws the attention to several thought-provoking issues. The research justified that the cooperation of different age-groups could provide not only conflicts, but positive results as well for the organisation, of which additive implementation the HR has important roles. Changing present HR activities is by all means necessary in order to have the new generation with their new requirements and new features as active and productive members of the organisation. These changes primarily affect communication, motivation and development of corporate culture. Authors' results correspond with the results of the previous years (Krishnan et al, 2012; Singh, 2014; Schaffer, 2015; Tari, 2011) they see these generations as open and purposeful, but researchers have identified a lot of features which mean challenges for HR experts. Establishing patience, understanding, empathy and re-arranging organisations, establishing the technical background all mean managerial challenges and all the organisations have to start preparing for these changes in time.

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Source 4 (Scholarly)

Citation:

Vieira, J., Gomes da Costa, C., & Santos, V. (2024). Talent Management and Generation Z: A Systematic Literature Review through the Lens of Employer Branding. *Administrative Sciences*, *14*(3), NA.

Summary: The article displays the importance of recruiting and managing talent in the organization by clearly mentioning the competitiveness of corporations where the shortage of talent is increasing. The article researches the proposal of implementing a marketing strategy, Employer Branding, in talent management to consider how this strategy helps to attract and retain suitable employees effectively contributing to the organization's objective. The study highlights the scarcity of the relevance between Generation Z, Employer Branding, and talent management, to that the article focuses on a systematic literature review to identify the attributes of Employer Branding and talent management that are valuable for Generation Z when entering the job market. Later on, the research on applying the Employer Branding strategy to talent management lacks data and resources, however, it leaves plenty of prompt for future research in this theory.

Relevance: The article can be considered as a proposal for a change in the future, known as a way, to enhance better talent management by organizations in the process of welcoming Generation Z. This point is similar to the topic about the influence of Generation Z in changing management practice in organization.

Place in the paper: Literature review

administrative sciences

MDPI

Systematic Review

Talent Management and Generation Z: A Systematic Literature Review through the Lens of Employer Branding

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Abstract: Generation Z is arriving on the labour scene. In the near future, this generation will dominate organisations' recruitment and selection processes. Theories regarding the attraction and retention of talent were initially developed based on the characteristics of previous generations in the late 20th century. This study aimed to conduct the first comprehensive literature review focused on identifying the attributes of attracting and retaining Generation Z talent. The findings will allow for the identification of the most significant attributes within the examined context. However, certain gaps were uncovered, such as the limited availability of publications explaining the applicability of the conventional theory of attracting and retaining talent to Generation Z natives. Significant lines of research are also suggested for the future.

Keywords: employer brand; employer branding; generation Z; talent recruitment; talent retention

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1. Introduction

Today's society operates within a globalised context. The conventional belief from just a few years ago, wherein individuals expect to secure lifelong employment within a single company and remain in a fixed location, is no longer popular. This paradigm shift can be attributed to various factors, including the dissolution of barriers between nations, the accessibility of transportation through modern means, the advancements in technology, and, most notably, the rapid emergence of alternative work arrangements (Shet 2020; Stiglbauer et al. 2022). The global pandemic experienced from 2020 to 2022 has significantly influenced and solidified this transformation (Cappelli and Keller 2014; M. Islamiaty et al. 2022; Keller and Swaminathan 2020; Skuza et al. 2022; Vaiman et al. 2012). This new reality has opened up the labour market (Martin et al. 2011; Smith et al. 2019). Today, recruitment takes place in real time via the internet and social networks and on a global scale. This has created very complex scenarios in terms of human resource management (HRM) and talent retention (Benítez-Márquez et al. 2022; Howe and Strauss 2007). Turnover can now reach much higher levels (Biswas and Suar 2016; Zhong et al. 2023), especially in more vulnerable sectors, where working from home is increasingly being promoted and favoured by companies and employees. Hence, the workplace can be anywhere on the planet and, as a result, recruiting and attracting talent has become virtually global (Charbonnier-Voirin et al. 2017; Lai et al. 2019; McDonnell et al. 2017; Plé 2019).

So-called Generation Z (GenZ) is now starting to enter the labour market. These are the individuals born between 1997 and 2012, who are now aged between 11 and 26 (Dimock 2019). GenZ natives have behavioural characteristics that distinguish them from previous generations, namely millennials, Generation X, and baby boomers. Since they are significantly influenced by their upbringing, which is characterised by a stable social environment, ample availability of resources, and a deep immersion in the digital realm, the recruitment and management of GenZ individuals present additional challenges

for organisations (Deloitte 2022; Schroth 2019). In 2021, around 21 per cent of the US population belonged to this generation (Statista 2021), so in the near future, the recruitment and selection of new employees in companies will be dominated by GenZ natives (Zhong et al. 2023). The theories currently used to frame talent management (TM), including employer branding (EB), are of fundamental importance (Edwards 2009; Lievens and Slaughter 2016; Stiglbauer et al. 2022).

The organisational strategy known as EB (Biswas and Suar 2016; Zhong et al. 2023) has demonstrated high effectiveness and is widely recognised as a suitable approach to attract and retain talented individuals (Kapoor 2023). It is important to note that these theoretical models were developed based on diverse organisational contexts and generations of workers who were influenced by vastly different environments compared to the current GenZ cohort (Cappelli and Keller 2013). Consequently, comprehending the needs and expectations of the GenZ workforce remains a significant challenge for both researchers and organisations (Benítez-Márquez et al. 2022; Deloitte 2022; Williams and Page 2011).

No academic papers were found that specifically examined and contextualised the concepts of EB and TM with a specific focus on GenZ. Among recent literature reviews, the noteworthy work of Barhate and Dirani (2022) deserves mention. The authors conducted a systematic review that sought to synthesise the reported career aspirations of GenZ individuals as documented in the selected articles. Additionally, Benítez-Márquez et al. (2022) performed a bibliometric review that focused on enhancing our understanding of the integration of GenZ into corporate organisations. Both of these articles possess distinct scopes and objectives compared to the present study. Therefore, by taking into account the gaps identified in the conceptualisation, the following research questions were formulated to drive this study (Bryman 2012):

RQ1: Are there any differences in the motivations for work between Gen Z and millennials?
RQ2: Which attributes of EB and TM are suitable for the realities of GenZ?
RQ3: What are the current methodological approaches used to study Gen Z, TM, and EB?
RQ4: What lacunae are present in the current body of research concerning Generation Z and their assimilation into the labour market?

To answer these questions, according to Sloan and Quan-Haase (2017), a systematic literature review (SLR) is considered appropriate. We consequently chose the most pertinent articles within this realm of investigation and subsequently conducted an analysis of the chosen articles. Ultimately, we formulated a series of research proposals that align with the identified gaps.

This article constitutes a significant scholarly endeavour within the field of HRM, specifically focusing on the crucial aspects of talent attraction and retention. Grounded in an exhaustive analysis of the most pertinent articles pertaining to EB, TM, and GenZ, covering the period from January 2010 to April 2023, this study reveals various gaps in the existing body of knowledge. Consequently, it puts forth novel avenues for future research endeavours that aim to bridge the identified gaps. Through this scholarly contribution, an enhanced comprehension of TM and EB is attained, thereby equipping both academics and organisations with fresh guidelines to guide their HRM practices within the contemporary landscape and the foreseeable future.

This article is organised into five sections, which present the conceptualisation of the topic, the identification of the gaps found, the formulation of research questions, the answers to these questions, and the presentation of new proposals for extending current knowledge.

2. Conceptual Framework

2.1. The Importance of Managing Talent in Organisations

In an organisational context, the replication of all aspects is feasible except for the unique intellectual and creative capital contributed by skilled human resources (HR) (Biswas and Suar 2016). As a result, TM has emerged as a significant managerial challenge for companies (Shet 2020; Stiglbauer et al. 2022). This concern has gained considerable

attention in recent years, particularly since the late 1990s, when McKinsey consultancy expressed serious concern about the complexity of effectively managing and retaining talented personnel within organisations (Chambers et al. 1998). The consultancy firmly positioned talent as the most important resource for organisations, addressing the growing challenges associated with attracting and retaining talent at the senior management level. This shortage of talent is becoming increasingly relevant due to demographic shifts, particularly the ageing population in more advanced economies, as well as the forces of globalisation, the rise of knowledge workers, and the proliferation of remote work (Skuza et al. 2022; Stuss 2020). The significant growth and internationalisation of smaller companies have also contributed to a rising demand for experienced and talented HR (Charbonnier-Voirin et al. 2017; McDonnell et al. 2017). The current global situation therefore creates a complex environment for retaining talented HR, as they now have access to and can evaluate professional development opportunities from almost anywhere in the world.

In response to the emergence of the aforementioned issue, the academic community has devoted significant attention to the study of TM over the past 25 years. However, a universally accepted definition of talent remains elusive, leading to a proliferation of definitions in the literature (Skuza et al. 2022). This study aims to provide two illustrative examples to shed light on its conceptualisation. In addition to possessing requisite skills and competencies for effective task performance, talented employees must demonstrate ambition, a willingness to invest considerable effort, dedication, and time in order to achieve organisational success. Furthermore, they must exhibit the capacity to learn from past mistakes and experiences and display a high level of mental agility, particularly in the face of novel challenges (Ulrich and Smallwood 2012). Alternatively, talent can be succinctly characterised as the harmonious interplay of three dimensions: action, passion, and vision. Action encompasses the skill set necessary for task execution; passion signifies the enthusiasm, commitment, and respect for the organisation that employees exhibit during task performance; and vision denotes the ability to anticipate problems and devise solutions within the context of their projects (da Camara et al. 2007).

TM refers to the process of strategically attracting and retaining suitable employees who can effectively contribute towards achieving an organisation's objectives. This multifaceted process encompasses the ongoing management of employee motivations to ensure optimal performance standards are maintained (Schiemann 2014; Stuss 2020). TM is a complex undertaking that should be consistently integrated throughout the entire employment lifecycle, encompassing various stages such as attraction, acquisition, onboarding, training, performance optimisation, development, retention, and transition (Cappelli and Keller 2014; Schiemann 2014). As employees engage with organisations at different points within the talent lifecycle, TM finds practical expression in this cyclical progression. Effective TM directly influences the return on investment in highly skilled HR (Vaiman et al. 2012).

TM and the subsequent retention of skilled employees have significant implications for companies. Primarily, it reduces the expenditures associated with recruiting new employees and turnover costs. Additionally, it diminishes the investment in training and development for both existing employees and the talented individuals within the organisation (Rothwell 2011). However, the most crucial aspect of TM lies in the influence that skilled employees can exert on a company's performance, often serving as its primary source of competitive advantage (Barney 1991; Barney et al. 2011; Gelens et al. 2013). Exceptional HR contribute to enhanced productivity, profitability, and overall outcomes. TM plays a pivotal role in ensuring organisational success as it facilitates the cultivation of advantageous opportunities (Arocas and Morley 2015).

Companies try to retain their talent by using several strategies, for example, by developing emotional relationships between employees and the organisation as a way of achieving an emotional commitment between the two and fostering employee engagement (Cadigan et al. 2020; Thakur and Bhatnagar 2017; Wiblen 2016). Companies develop internal marketing strategies with a strong culture of identity and values as a way of increasing

recognition among employees and the community in general. These strategies involve the development of a strong company brand as a way to communicate the company's organisational values, culture, and principles with the aim of attracting and retaining talent workers (Keller and Swaminathan 2020). These employer branding strategies, which are discussed in the following section, significantly contribute to enhancing recruitment strategies and mitigating their expenses. Moreover, they play pivotal roles in diminishing turnover rates and augmenting organisations' capacity to retain talented individuals (Ahmad and Daud 2016; Hadi and Ahmed 2018). Thus, TM is companies' response to the challenges of the contemporary economy, since identifying and retaining talent is essential for their competitiveness (Biswas and Suar 2016; Skuza et al. 2022; Stuss 2020).

2.2. Employer Branding

Employer branding (EB) has been proposed as an effective organisational strategy that differentiates an organisation from other competitors and allows it to gain competitive advantages in the labour market (Lievens and Highhouse 2003; Saini 2023). It is a concept in which marketing principles, particularly branding theories, are applied to the HRM. The use of employer branding models suggests a strong differentiation of the company's characteristics as an employer; the employer brand highlights the unique aspects that the company offers (Backhaus and Tikoo 2004; Edwards 2009). EB sits at the intersection of HRM and brand equity and is seen as an essential strategy for overcoming the challenges of recruiting and retaining talented HR (Theurer et al. 2018). In 1996 employer brand was defined as the "package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by and identified with the employing company", suggesting the application of marketing techniques to attract and retain talent (Ambler and Barrow 1996; Charbonnier-Voirin et al. 2017). In the same way that a brand associated with a product communicates characteristics, benefits, ideas, principles, and associated values (J. L. Aaker 1997), the employer brand communicates to current and potential employees the experience that they have or will have in the organisation. In other words, all employees may recognise a (company) brand, but not all will be effectively committed to the organisation in order to differentiate themselves as employees of that organisation. EB strategies aim to overcome this adversity (Backhaus 2016).

Distinct from employer brand, the employer branding concept (EB), a term adapted from marketing and branding theories, also explained by the application of branding theories to HRM, is the process of building a unique and identifiable employer identity. In other words, it is the promotion of a unique and attractive employer image (Backhaus and Tikoo 2004; Behrends et al. 2020). It is also distinct from internal branding, which is more related to the company's brand awareness, especially when future employees apply to work for the company. EB is related to the differential effect that knowledge of the company's brand has on employee responses as a result of internal brand management (Saini 2023). In other words, EB can contribute to implementing internal branding in an organisation. Therefore, the purpose of EB is to present an attractive and positive image of the organisation to current and potential employees (Backhaus 2016; Reis et al. 2021).

EB is a very effective organisational strategy for attracting and retaining talent (Biswas and Suar 2016), and it is perhaps the most critical aspect for effectively achieving this (Kapoor 2023). It is based on the idea that HR are valuable company assets that contribute to increasing organisational value and performance, very much in line with the resource-based view. According to this theory, HR are some of company's main assets and often their main sources of competitive advantage. For example, a company's internationalisation is more likely to be successful if it is led by experienced and competent HR (Barney 1991).

The concept of EB was initially developed by Ambler and Barrow (1996) when they tested the application of brand management techniques to HRM. It was later conceptualised by Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) in a seminal paper published in 2004, which brings together marketing and HR concepts (see Figure 1). Heavily influenced by Aaker's conceptualisation of brand equity (D. A. Aaker 1991), the authors define two main outcomes of EB: EB

associations (EBA) and EB loyalty (EBL). EBA reproduces an employer's image, which is reflected in greater attractiveness for potential employees, for example, through objective attributes such as a better income, additional benefits, and flexible working hours, or through subjective attributes such as perceptions of the company's prestige. On the other hand, EB impacts organisational culture and identity, which, in turn, stimulates EBL. EBL has a very positive impact on organisational performance.

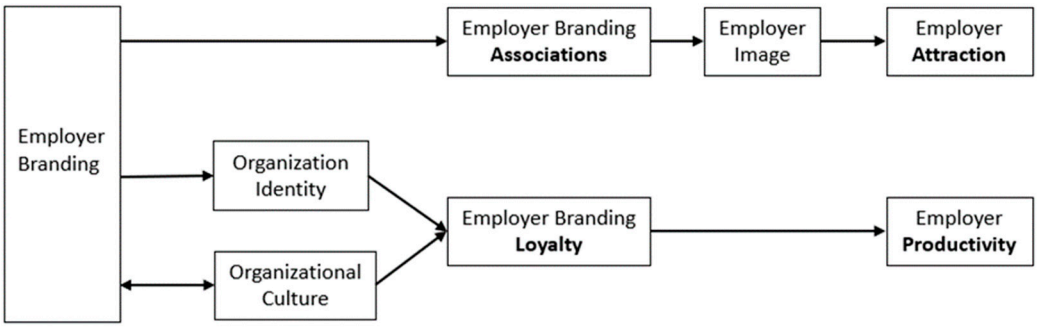


Figure 1. Conceptual model of employer branding. Source: Backhaus and Tikoo (2004).

The same authors conclude by defining a set of prepositions that reinforce the positive impact of EB on organisational performance in its different aspects: organisational culture, loyalty to the company, identification and differentiation, productivity, and career management (Backhaus and Tikoo 2004). It can be divided into external EB (the management of the organisation's image) and internal EB (the management of the organisation's identity) (Lievens and Slaughter 2016; Theurer et al. 2018).

2.3. Determinants of EB

There is no consensus in the existing literature regarding the definition of the determinants of EB. Ambler and Barrow (1996) identified four determinants: corporate culture, internal marketing, corporate reputation, and trust. Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) developed the first conceptualisation of EB. They were heavily influenced by the theories of branding and brand equity (BE) and defined a conceptual model based on the determinants of BE, namely loyalty, quality, associations, awareness, and identity, which were initially conceptualised by D. A. Aaker (1991), to which they added two new determinants: assets/symbols and extensions. Edwards (2009) conceptualised the following determinants: reputation, psychological contract, organisational identity, and personality. Biswas and Suar (2016) also used the conceptualisations of EB equity, loyalty, employee engagement, talent attraction, and retention. The absence of a universally applicable construct and the extensive range of determinants employed by different authors (refer to Table 1) seem to be significant gaps in the existing body of literature on the EB theory (Stiglbauer et al. 2022).

The organization and the EB both need to have a unique, relevant, resonant, and newsworthy brand (Moroko and Uncles 2008). This means that the corporate image and EB must be aligned to prevent communication inconsistencies, which can have negative effects on various audiences and organizational productivity (Backhaus and Tikoo 2004; Foster et al. 2010).

There is a substantial body of scholarly literature that illustrates the favourable influence of the effective management of EB determinants on organizational performance. A notable illustration of this phenomenon can be found in a study that encompassed 172 employees from both the public and private sectors. The study revealed that a sense of emotional attachment and identification with the organization, known as affective commitment, is fostered through involvement and engagement. The findings of this study establish a positive association between EB and affective organizational commitment (Alves et al. 2020). Another study, which examined data from 93 companies, demonstrated a positive relationship between EB and organizational performance. This association was found to be mediated by the cultivation of a positive affective environment. Furthermore, the

study concluded that these outcomes can be solely attributed to EB, independent of any other characteristics of the company's brand (Tumasjan et al. 2020). Ahmad and Daud (2016) conducted a study in which they examined employees' perceptions of EB across five distinct dimensions. One of these dimensions is interest value, which refers to the perception that an organization fosters an enthusiastic work environment that encourages creativity for the purpose of developing innovative and distinctive products. Social value pertains to the perception that a company offers a friendly work environment that promotes a culture of teamwork. Economic value encompasses the perception that a company compensates employees at a level that surpasses the industry average. Development value encompasses the perception that a company actively supports employee development and offers opportunities for advancing one's professional career. Lastly, application value refers to the perception that employees are afforded the opportunity to apply their knowledge and skills in order to develop and train other employees through mentoring programs.

Table 1. Determinants of EB.

EB Determinant		Authors
Associations	ASS	(Backhaus and Tikoo 2004)
Awareness	AWA	(Backhaus and Tikoo 2004)
Brand loyalty/employee engagement	BLO	(Biswas and Suar 2016; Backhaus and Tikoo 2004)
Corporate culture	CCU	(Ambler and Barrow 1996)
Corporate reputation	CRE	(Ambler and Barrow 1996; Edwards 2009)
EB equity	EBE	(Biswas and Suar 2016)
Extensions	EXT	(Backhaus and Tikoo 2004)
Identity	IDE	(Backhaus and Tikoo 2004; Edwards 2009)
Internal marketing	IMK	(Ambler and Barrow 1996)
Personality	PER	(Edwards 2009)
Psychological contract	PSY	(Edwards 2009)
Quality	QUA	(Backhaus and Tikoo 2004)
Symbols/assets	SAS	(Backhaus and Tikoo 2004; Biswas and Suar 2016)
Talent attraction/retention	TAT	(Biswas and Suar 2016)
Trust	TRU	(Ambler and Barrow 1996)

The study of employer branding (EB) is continuously progressing to encompass additional societal values, such as the principles of organizational sustainability. Originally, the construct of EB was designed to integrate branding, HRM, and corporate social responsibility. Additional qualities pertaining to the collaborative creation of value, the ongoing discussion of this value with stakeholders and their expectations (where current and future employees fulfil the role of stakeholders in this context), and the fostering of employer–employee relationships oriented towards continual introspection on shared necessities and future prospects were subsequently incorporated into the initial concept (Aggerholm et al. 2011).

The concept of EB is poised to encounter significant challenges in the future due to its vital role in attracting and retaining talented HR, which are often considered an organization's greatest competitive advantages (Behrends et al. 2020; Biswas and Suar 2016; Cascio 2014). These challenges revolve around the ability (or necessity) of EB to effectively manage the employee lifecycle. Primarily, they are associated with shifts in the age distribution and the subsequent ageing of populations, particularly affecting more developed nations (Bărbulescu and Vasiluță-Ștefănescu 2021; McDonnell et al. 2017). This demographic trend further diminishes the pool of skilled employees, thereby intensifying the urgency to cultivate robust and impactful EB strategies across all organizations (Abbasi et al. 2022; Backhaus 2016).

EB also encounters the generational dilemma posed by the influx of young workers into the job market, whose requirements and motivations may not align with those of workers from preceding generations (Hadi and Ahmed 2018; Plé 2019; Stuss 2020). This theme will be addressed in the next chapter.

2.4. Generation Z

The categorization of individuals into generational cohorts allows for the characterization of a group based on its historical period as well as its shared educational and cultural backgrounds. This framework provides insights into the common perceptions, interests, and behaviours exhibited by each generation. A generation is defined as a cohort of individuals who belong to the same age group and have undergone or will undergo similar life experiences that have shaped their personalities (Hung et al. 2007). Consequently, different generations can be distinguished based on factors such as birth location and date, upbringing, educational patterns, and cultural and social environments. As a result of growing up in the same macro environment, individuals belonging to a particular generation tend to exhibit a shared set of behaviours, attitudes, and perspectives. While there is general agreement in the literature on the identification of five generations, the exact dates demarcating each generation may vary. For the purposes of this study, we have adopted the Pew Research Center's recommended generational definitions (see Table 2), which include the following cohorts: the Silent Generation (born between 1928 and 1945), Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964), Generation X (born between 1965 and 1980), Generation Y (born between 1981 and 1996), GenZ (born between 1997 and 2012), and Generation Alpha (born from 2013 onwards) (Dimock 2019; Williams and Page 2011).

Table 2. The different generation cohorts according to the Pew Research Centre.

Generation	Year of Birth
Silent Generation	1928–1945
Baby Boomers	1946–1964
Generation X	1965–1980
Generation Y	1981–1996
Generation Z	1997–2012
Generation Alpha	2013–. . .

Source: (Dimock 2019).

This study focuses on GenZ, which is made up of individuals born between 1997 and 2012. The people in this generation are also known as "digital natives", who are highly qualified, experienced in the use of technology, innovative, and highly creative (Duffett 2017; Plé 2019; Priporas et al. 2017). GenZ individuals cannot fathom a world devoid of a permanent internet connection, as they have never experienced such a reality. Moreover, they are commonly referred to as screen enthusiasts due to their intrinsic interconnectivity with electronic devices. This cohort can also be identified as homo digitalis, digital natives, or the NET generation, owing to their complete reliance on the digital realm. They have come of age amidst the swift advancement of innovative technologies, including smartphones, tablets, Wi-Fi, online gaming platforms, and social networking sites (Meirinhos 2015). This generation exhibits a range of distinguishing characteristics. First and foremost, they have become highly reliant on technology, displaying a notable preference for incorporating it into their daily lives. Additionally, they possess a distinct open-mindedness and embrace multiculturalism, displaying enthusiasm and a genuine receptiveness to diversity. Moreover, they demonstrate an impressive level of innovation and entrepreneurial spirit, which is indicative of their intelligence and adaptability. Furthermore, this generation is notably more culturally educated and better equipped for the challenges of the contemporary world compared to previous generations. They also exhibit a progressive stance towards racial and gender issues, actively advocating for equality and justice. In addition, they strongly prioritise sustainability practices and

uphold ethical and deontological principles with a remarkable level of conviction and integrity (Priporas et al. 2017; Schroth 2019). Gen Z individuals possess advanced cognitive abilities and exhibit adeptness in utilising various sources of information and assimilating diverse experiences, be they direct or virtual. Their professional expectations surpass those of preceding generations, while their brand loyalty is notably diminished. They exhibit a core inclination towards immediate experiences rather than long-term considerations (Bărbulescu and Vasiluță-Ștefănescu 2021; Vieira et al. 2020).

To gain deeper insights into the perspective of Generation Z, it is imperative to consider the contextual backdrop in which they came of age. The advent of the iPhone© in 2007 coincided with the eldest members of Generation Z reaching the tender age of 10, rendering them incapable of recollecting the pivotal events surrounding the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Furthermore, the pervasive presence of broadband internet and the near-ubiquitous accessibility of Wi-Fi had already permeated the global landscape. Consequently, Generation Z grew up amidst an era defined by the prevalence of streaming platforms and digital content formats found abundantly on the internet, divorcing them from the experience of procuring music through traditional means such as CDs or DVDs. These unique circumstances have indelibly shaped the behavioural tendencies, attitudes, and overall lifestyles of Generation Z (Dimock 2019).

GenZ individuals are now entering the workforce, and their unique characteristics present intriguing challenges for organisations. This generation, often considered the most well prepared due to their mastery of technology and high levels of education, was born into a period of relative economic stability and security despite the prevailing climate of global uncertainty (Williams and Page 2011). However, GenZ individuals also face unique obstacles when it comes to the job market, as they possess less prior work experience compared to previous generations. Additionally, their frequent interactions in virtual environments, where the approval of others is often sought through likes and online validation, may make them more vulnerable to episodes of anxiety and depression (Schroth 2019). Consequently, they may be less prepared to handle the complexities and potential challenges of face-to-face interactions within a corporate setting (Plé 2019; Przybylski et al. 2013; Zhong et al. 2023). This specific context poses challenges for organisations, which have historically managed employees from disparate generations and are now faced with adapting to the unique needs and characteristics of GenZ (Schroth 2019).

GenZ individuals have a strong desire for a career that offers rapid progression and advancement to higher positions within the organisational hierarchy. However, this ambition can sometimes lead to impatience and demotivation. They tend to prefer working on individual tasks rather than in group settings. Despite this, they generally exhibit positive attitudes, display interest and involvement, and possess a high propensity for mobility (Rzemieniak and Wawer 2021). This generation places a great emphasis on work environments characterised by diversity, transparency, and open dialogue. They greatly value the opportunity to become actively engaged in the organisation's projects and align with its values. The initial phase of onboarding and adapting to the organisation plays a critical role in establishing trust and minimising the risk of anxiety. Furthermore, it is crucial for Gen Z individuals to have a clear understanding of their roles and potential career prospects within an organisation. However, managing these specific needs can prove challenging for managers, as they often belong to different generations with distinct behaviours and may not be adequately prepared to address the unique characteristics and expectations of young employees. This generational conflict has the potential to negatively impact motivation and increase turnover (Jung et al. 2023; Schroth 2019) Thus, organisations must be prepared to comprehend the specific expectations and values of Gen Z individuals, as they will soon dominate the job market. Recruitment, selection, onboarding, and career management processes must be adapted to accommodate this new reality (Rzemieniak and Wawer 2021).

Barhate and Dirani (2022) conducted a comprehensive literature review in order to ascertain the professional ambitions of individuals belonging to Generation Z. They noted

that a majority of the chosen studies focused on participants who were either students or unemployed, which aligns with the prevalent youthful demographic characteristic of this generation (see Table 3).

Table 3. Summary of professional aspirations of GenZ natives.

Framework	Attitudes	Attributes
Career Expectations	- Organisational culture - Work and personal life balance - Stability	- Activities, communication, diversity, flexibility at work, good working environment, work in mobility, security, salary
Career Development	- Learning - Mentoring - Growth opportunities	- Skills, casualness, career progression, task flexibility, learning, monitoring

Source: (Barhate and Dirani 2022).

GenZ represents the most recently emerged cohort of individuals entering the workforce. Despite their significance, there exists a paucity of knowledge concerning their specific behaviours within professional environments. However, it is well established that this generation requires a distinctive approach with respect to the selection, recruitment, admission, and inclusion processes within organisations (Stiglbauer et al. 2022). Moreover, capturing and retaining talent prove to be particularly crucial given that GenZ stands as one of the most academically and technologically advanced cohorts of workers. Consequently, there exists a considerable void in understanding the applicability of current theories on TM and employee branding within the context of GenZ.

This is because the body of these theories was defined based on a completely different work environment than the one we live in today. TM models were created in the late 20th century (Chambers et al. 1998) when the predominant working generation was still Generation X. EB models appeared a little later, in the first decade of the 21st century. Generation Y was still entering the market (Backhaus and Tikoo 2004; Kele and Cassell 2023; Krywalski Santiago 2023). In the past 20 years, there has been little progress in adapting these concepts to the new realities resulting from the effects of globalisation, technological developments, and new generations of workers (Azmy et al. 2023; Grigore et al. 2023; Küpper et al. 2021). This study endeavours to address this gap.

3. Methods

Based on the preceding chapter's research theme and theoretical framework, it is evident that a notable dearth of works in the literature exists regarding the integration of Generation Z individuals into the labour market. This deficit becomes even more pronounced when considering the lack of discourse on talent retention and employer branding strategies aimed at this demographic. The limited scholarly output on this subject can be attributed to its novelty, given that the majority of Generation Z individuals are currently beginning their professional careers.

The initial search conducted on employee branding (EB) and TM over the past two decades has yielded a substantial number of articles. However, only a few of these articles specifically address the job market behaviours of Generation Z. This dearth of literature may be the primary reason why our research questions remain unanswered. In this study, we adhere to the recommendations of the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) and its subsequent 2020 update, as briefly outlined in Figure 2 (Moher et al. 2009; Page et al. 2021).

The search was conducted utilising the B-On, Scopus, and Web of Science (WoS) platforms, which are widely recognised and esteemed platforms in the field of academic research.

Article Selection Criteria

(a) Initial screening carried out through the B-On, Scopus, and WoS platforms;
(b) Selection of articles in English, which is the universal language for scientific communication (Di Bitetti and Ferreras 2017);
(c) Articles published in academic, indexed, and peer-reviewed journals;
(d) Articles published between January 2010 and March 2023;
(e) Search carried out in titles (TI), keywords (KW), and abstracts (AB);
(f) The following search terms: "gen* z" AND "employ* brand*";
(g) The following search terms for the complementary search: "gen* Z" AND "talent management";
(h) Application of Boolean search.

Given the research questions and the objective of identifying the maximum number of connections between employer branding (EB), talent management (TM), and Generation Z (GenZ), the operator "*" was employed alongside the terms "gen", "employ", and "brand" to encompass the various descriptors utilised in the search.

The search process and data gathering were conducted in April 2023. Following the utilisation of the search terms on both platforms, a total of 67 articles were retrieved. In an initial analysis carried out using the MS Excel 2018© software, 11 duplicated articles were identified and subsequently eliminated. Subsequently, a more comprehensive analysis was performed on the remaining set of 56 articles, involving a thorough examination of abstracts, keywords, and, where necessary, the complete article content. According to Moher et al. (2009), SLR is an iterative process wherein researchers may need to make adjustments to their research procedures. In order to ensure a sound analysis and selection process, the scope of this study was carefully structured. Consequently, only conceptual or empirical articles that focus on identifying attributes defining GenZ and their impacts on EB and TM were included. As a result, 32 articles that did not align with these research objectives were excluded. Additionally, one article was removed due to insufficient detailed information for analysis. Consequently, the final selection consisted of a total of 23 articles (refer to Figure 2).

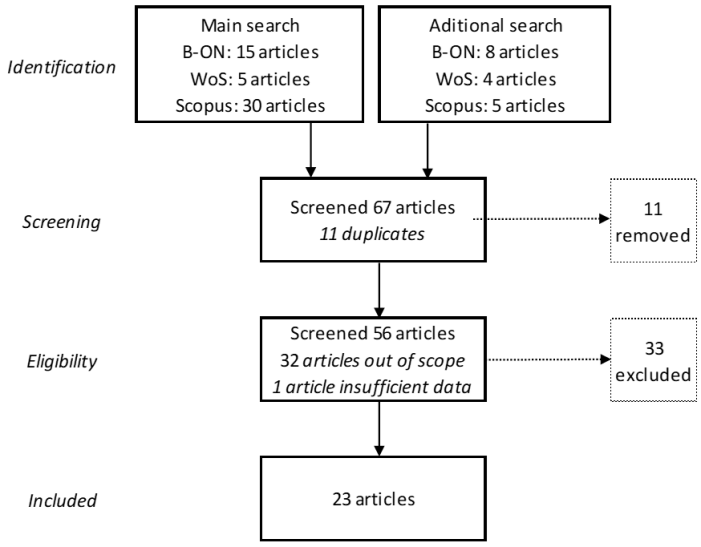


Figure 2. Screening process of articles.

4. Results

4.1. Bibliometric Analysis

4.1.1. Frequencies of Publications, Publishers, Citations, and References

The final selection reveals a high concentration of publications in the past three years (see Figure 3), which is most likely due to the fact that GenZ has been studied more frequently very recently as a result of the age of this cohort of individuals.

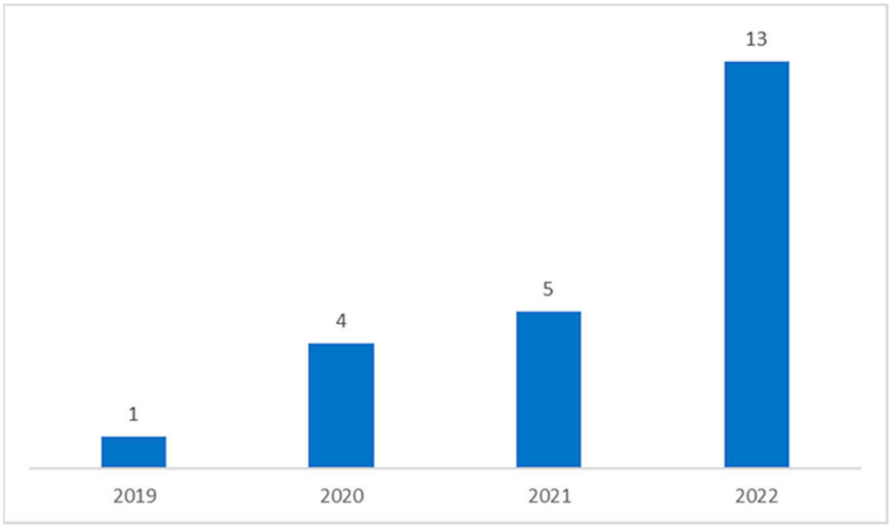


Figure 3. Annual frequency of published articles.

The publishers associated with the chosen publications (refer to Table 4) were subjected to analysis. The findings reveal a substantial level of variability, possibly stemming from the fact that the majority of these studies seem to be preliminary investigations. Additionally, given the relatively recent nature of the subject, there is a dearth of publications presenting comprehensive studies. However, it is foreseeable that in the forthcoming years, more conclusive investigations will be conducted and subsequently published. It is noteworthy that a significant proportion of these publishers have direct affiliations with universities. Detailed information pertaining to the journals was not included in the analysis due to the even higher level of variability, which lacked substantial analytical significance.

Table 4. Frequency of articles based on publisher.

Entity	*n*
Emerald	3
MDPI	3
IEEExplore	2
Beladi Publishing House	1
BEIE&S Publications	1
Cardiometry	1
Centre of Sociological Research	1
Eastern-European J. Enterprise Technologies	1
Editura ASE	1
EDP Sciences	1
Elsevier	1
Nicolae Titulesku University	1
SAGE	1
SCIndeks	1
Silesian University of Technology	1
Technology audit and production reserves	1
Universitas Jenderal Soedirman	1
University of Merdeka Malang	1

4.1.2. Citations and References

We have checked the number of citations for each article using Google Schoolar (https://scholar.google.com/, accessed on 24 October 2023). Most of them have a low number of citations, with 12 of them having zero or one citation (see Figure 4). There are two exceptions: the article titled "Attitudes of Z generations to job searching through social media" has 24 citations (Karácsony et al. 2020), and the article titled "Employer branding in the context of the company's sustainable development strategy from the perspective of gender diversity of generation Z" has 33 citations (Rzemieniak and Wawer 2021).

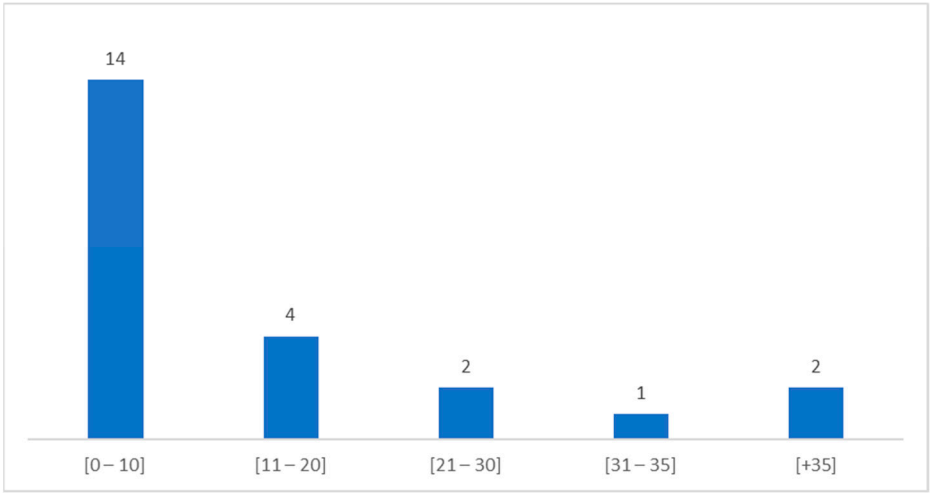


Figure 4. Number of citations for each article.

In terms of the references provided within each article, a noteworthy observation is that 12 works, constituting approximately 66% of the total, demonstrate a relatively modest number of bibliographic references, less than 50 references. In contrast, only two articles, comprising around 11%, exhibit a high number of references surpassing 75 (see Figure 5).

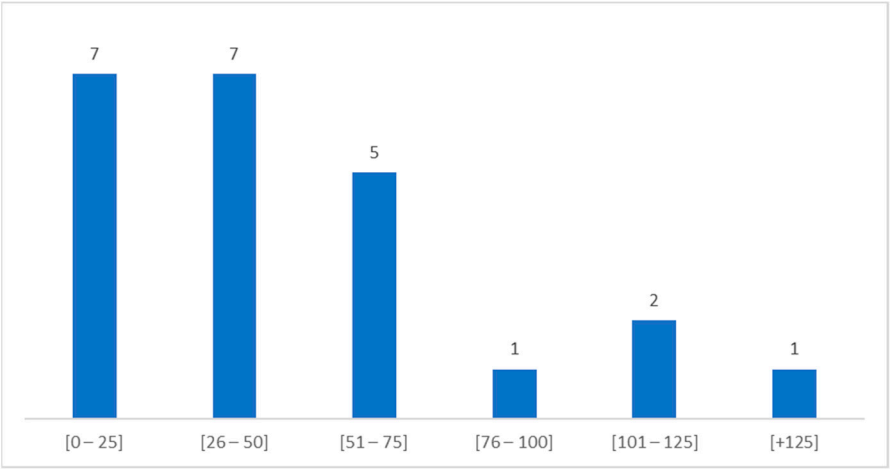


Figure 5. Reference count for each article.

4.1.3. Type of Investigation

With the exception of a singular article, all other articles in this compilation reflect inquiries of an empirical nature. In the examination of the outcomes garnered from empirical studies, a diverse range of statistical techniques were employed, albeit with a notable emphasis on less sophisticated methods, such as descriptive analysis and exploratory factor analysis (see Figure 6).

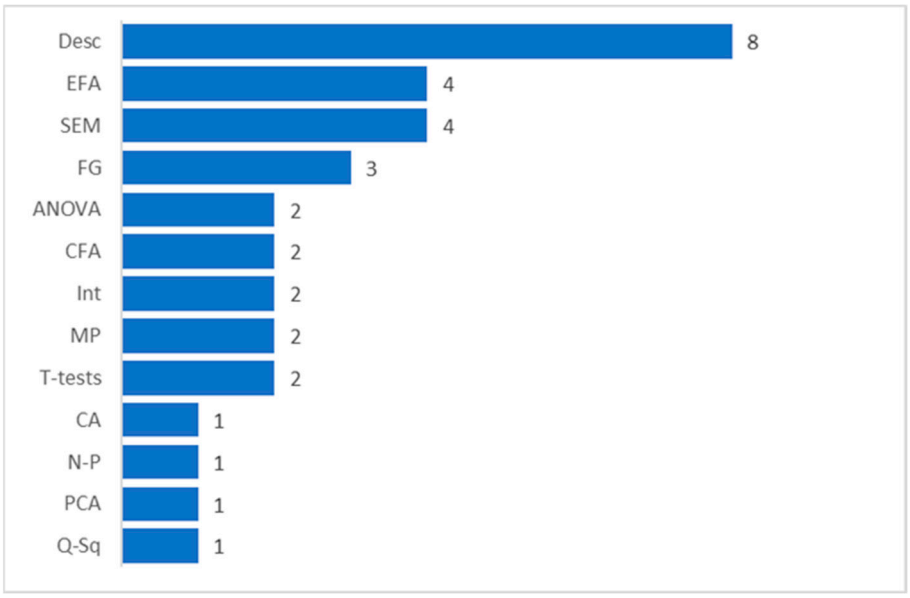


Figure 6. Statistical analysis methodologies used in empirical research. ANOVA: ANOVA variance tests; CA: cluster analysis; CFA: confirmatory factorial analysis; Desc: descriptive analysis; EFA: exploratory factorial analysis; FG: focus group; Int: interviews; MP: multiple regression; N-P: non-parametric tests; PCA: principal component analysis; Q-Sq: chi-squared tests; SEM: structural equation modelling; *t*-tests: compare means.

4.1.4. Most Frequent Keywords

During the analysis, not only were the keywords themselves taken into account, but also the titles and summaries of the articles. This was carried out to enhance the availability and density of words and to deepen the results obtained, particularly in relation to the most significant words found in the selected articles. The necessary information was extracted from the metadata of the studies, which were exported from the B-On, Scopus, and WoS search engines. To standardise terms and expressions, as well as to eliminate irrelevant words or expressions in the context of this study, the outputs obtained underwent a treatment process. Subsequently, the finalised file was imported into the MaxQDA© 2022 application, where an analysis of the most frequent words was conducted, resulting in the word cloud presented in Figure 7.



Figure 7. Word cloud generated from metadata of selected articles.

The findings reveal that the keywords "employers", "branding", "generation", and "Z" are the most relevant, aligning with the initial search terms. However, it is worth noting that other words, such as "attractiveness", "talent", "value", "management", "expectations", and "gender", also emerged during the analysis. The existence of these words is intriguing as they are deemed significant attributes within the context of talent retention, thereby contributing to the relevance of our investigation.

A correspondence analysis between keywords was also carried out using VOSviewer, version 1.6.18 (https://www.vosviewer.com/, accessed on 20 March 2023). This correspondence analysis extends the results of the previous analysis, highlighting the strongest relationships between words. In this analysis, only the most relevant connections were considered. It is interesting to note the correspondence between GenZ and values, talent acquisition, and employer attractiveness, while employer branding is more related to brand management, employer value propositions, and the labour market (see Figure 8).

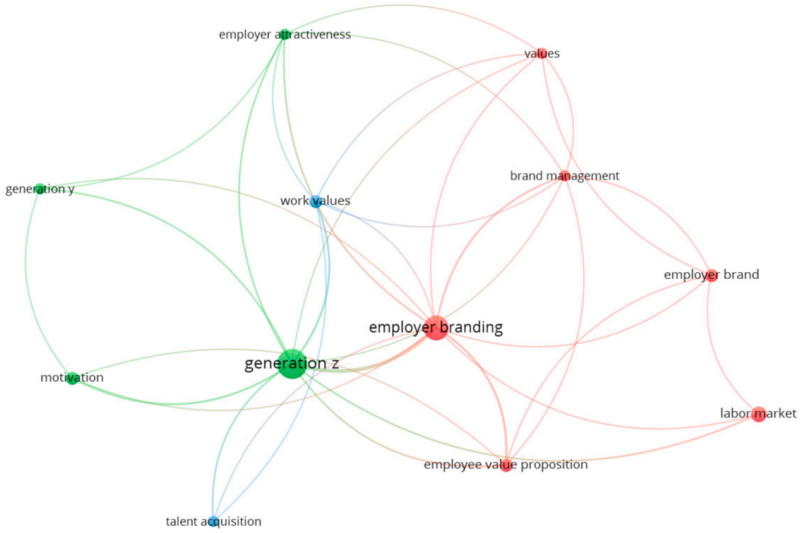


Figure 8. Relationships between keywords.

4.2. Content Analysis

The selection criteria were established over an extended period of time, starting in 2010, with the aim of identifying all pertinent articles and, if feasible, discerning a chronological progression in the various approaches to the subject matter. Nonetheless, only articles published after 2019 were discovered. A comprehensive summary of all of the chosen articles is provided in Appendix A.

In approximately 11 studies, which accounts for roughly 50% of the total articles examined, samples of students were surveyed (refer to Table 5). This discovery indicates that the authors aimed to gauge the perceptions of the respondents when selecting a company prior to entering the job market. This suggests a heightened interest in the specific aspirations of this generation in contrast to potential constraints, perceptions, or concerns of employers regarding the categorisation of employees belonging to this particular generation (e.g., Dzhulai et al. 2022; Kunal et al. 2022; Lukić-Nikolić and Lazarević 2022). The field of tourism and hospitality is the sole professional sector mentioned, and it is only referenced in three studies (Goh and Okumus 2020; Kapuściński et al. 2022; Tang et al. 2020). Therefore, the authors manifest great concern regarding the acquisition and retention of talent within this new generational cohort, especially within a sector that heavily relies on human capital.

Table 5. Types of samples used in article selection.

Sample	*n*
Students	11
Hospitality	3
Workers	3
People applying to a job offer	1
HR managers	1
Recruitment agency database	1
Internship candidates	1
Start-up companies	1

In this selection, the authors aimed to ascertain the factors that contribute to job attractiveness among individuals belonging to Generation Z. As an illustration, this cohort exhibits a preference for utilising digital and online platforms to search for employment, while traditional means like print publications have experienced a marked decline in interest. Consequently, social networks have emerged as prominent avenues for exploring new job opportunities (Gajanova 2021; Karácsony et al. 2020). Controversially, a study revealed that the LinkedIn social network is not perceived as attractive by GenZ as a means of job searching (Gajanova 2021).

Moreover, other researchers have examined the behavioural disparities between Generation Z and millennials (also known as Generation Y) and did not find significant differences in terms of employer attractiveness dimensions (Bărbulescu and Vasiluță-Ștefănescu 2021; Jackel and Garai-Fodor 2022; Kunal et al. 2022). Nevertheless, certain characteristics of employer branding have been observed, with Generation Z placing particular emphasis on factors such as knowledge of the company's reputation, employer image campaigns, opportunities for professional development and growth within the organisation, and collaborations with educational institutions as a means of attracting talented individuals (Lukić-Nikolić and Lazarević 2022; Pandita 2022).

GenZ is deeply focused on defending social values (M. Islamiaty et al. 2022; Kapuściński et al. 2022; Priporas et al. 2017; Schroth 2019; Silva and Carvalho 2021). Thus, it has been demonstrated that offering volunteering practices is a good technique to attract talent in this generation (Garai-Fodor et al. 2021). Moreover, it was found that GenZ individuals are very sensitive to sustainability strategies and that the development of these initiatives increases their motivation to work in these organisations (Rzemieniak and Wawer 2021).

Regarding gender, several differences in behaviour have been identified, particularly in the appreciation of corporate values, which is more pronounced among females. Conversely, it is this gender that exhibits lower salary expectations upon entering companies (Silva and Carvalho 2021).

It was evident that Generation Z demonstrates a prioritisation of workplace well-being and employee satisfaction. Factors such as salary level, employer-provided training, flexibility and leisure time, and opportunities for personal and professional growth within the organisation were deemed important by this cohort (Anggraeni 2022; Dzhulai et al. 2022; Garai-Fodor and Jackel 2022; M. Islamiaty et al. 2022; Kunal et al. 2022; Lukić-Nikolić and Lazarević 2022). Conversely, a study indicated that the loyalty of Generation Z towards organisations is lower compared to other generational groups (Jackel and Garai-Fodor 2022), which is a finding that was previously observed by Schroth (2019).

Table 6 provides a summary of the prevailing career aspirations among Generation Z. This analysis reaffirms the significance of workplace conditions, ethical considerations, and the reputation of employers, which are on par with wage-related concerns (e.g., Kapuściński et al. 2022; Prasetyaningtyas et al. 2022; Samoliuk et al. 2022; Tang et al. 2020; Wawer 2022). Upon comparison with the determinants of employer branding (EB) identified in the theoretical framework, it is apparent that they encompass the aspirations and attributes expressed by Generation Z in this review. Thus, the EB theory appears to provide a framework for comprehending the career aspirations of Generation Z in the job market.

Nevertheless, this assertion requires further contextualisation and empirical confirmation. The findings of this review broadly align with those of previous studies (Steckl et al. 2019).

Table 6. GenZ's professional aspirations found in article selection.

GenZ Attributes	*n*	EB Determinant
Workplace (WOR)	7	CCU
Social Responsibility (SOR)	6	CCU
Salary (SAL)	6	ASS/SAS
Company Reputation (COR)	5	CRE
Career Opportunities (CAO)	4	ASS/SAS
Coaching (COA)	3	PSY
Learning Opportunities (LEO)	3	ASS/SAS
Personal Development (PED)	3	PSY
Work–Life Balance (WLB)	3	ASS/SAS

ASS: associations; CCU: corporate culture; CRE: company reputation; PSY: psychological contract; SAS: symbols/assets.

5. Conclusions

Recruiting and retaining talent are currently two of the foremost challenges faced by organisations (Shet 2020). This issue spans across all levels of the organisational structure, particularly in leadership roles, rather than being solely the responsibility of HRM (Plé 2019; Schroth 2019). This challenge is further complicated by the global and transformative nature of today's labour market (Howe and Strauss 2007; Verbeke and Hutzschenreuter 2021). The entry of a new generation, known as GenZ, into the workforce presents an additional obstacle for companies. GenZ possesses distinct behavioural characteristics shaped by their upbringing in an environment characterised by digital reliance, relative security, resource abundance, high mobility, easy access to information, and education (Howe and Strauss 2007; Przybylski et al. 2013; Stiglbauer et al. 2022). However, this generation tends to have less preparation as they enter the job market due to limited work experience and unfamiliarity with internal company dynamics (Schroth 2019; Zhong et al. 2023). Consequently, these challenges in job search and selection contribute to heightened levels of unease, anxiety, and depression among GenZ employees, surpassing the prevalence observed in previous generations (Lyngdoh et al. 2023). Such circumstances result in substantial turnover rates, particularly within the first six months of their employment with companies (Deloitte 2022; Smith et al. 2019).

This situation presents significant challenges in the attraction and retention of talent. The objective of this study was to conduct the first literature review to identify the attributes of EB and TM that GenZ individuals value when seeking entry into the job market (refer to Table 6).

This research aims to address the initially formulated research questions. It confirms the scarcity of studies covering GenZ, TM, and EB, possibly due to the limited amount of research conducted on this generation, as it is the most recent cohort to enter the job market. Therefore, no studies prior to 2019 were identified.

Answering the RQ1, our study revealed distinct aspects concerning the needs and anxieties of GenZ individuals, which differentiate them from individuals of previous generations. Specifically, it unveiled the relative lack of preparedness of GenZ for the job market, their high levels of insecurity, and their propensity for episodes of anxiety and depression (Lyngdoh et al. 2023; Smith et al. 2019). Nevertheless, our study revealed that these conclusions are not universally agreed upon. Mahmoud et al. (2021) concluded that there are differences between generations, with GenZ being more sensitive to episodes of demotivation and extrinsic motivation factors. On the other hand, Bărbulescu and Vasiluță-Ștefănescu (2021) did not find significant differences between Generation Y and GenZ regarding the dimensions of employer attractiveness. Garai-Fodor and Jackel (2022), in their study on the professional aspirations of different age groups, identified generational differences in terms of salary expectations, opportunities for career advancement, and the

work environment, which are more highly valued by GenZ (El-Menawy and Saleh 2023). However, no differences were found in relation to the innovative environment and work–life balance. In another study, these authors also did not find differences between GenZ and millennials with regard to work performance, loyalty to employers, and working with older generations of workers, as GenZ individuals prefer to be a part of teams comprising individuals of the same age (Jackel and Garai-Fodor 2022). In other words, further research is necessary to explore and confirm this point.

Regarding RQ2, this research has clearly identified the most relevant attributes to this generational cohort. We identified workplace conditions and social responsibility (belonging to the EB corporate culture attribute); salary, career and learning opportunities, and work–life balance (belonging to the EB associations/symbols/assets attribute); company reputation (belonging to the same EB attribute); and finally, coaching and personal development (belonging to the EB psychological contract attribute), as the most frequent attributes (see Table 6).

According to RQ3, this systematic investigation also uncovered that the majority of studies retain an exploratory nature, frequently utilising methods to assess and substantiate simple and less robust hypotheses (e.g., Dzhulai et al. 2022; Garai-Fodor and Jackel 2022; Kunal et al. 2022; Samoliuk et al. 2022). Furthermore, it was observed that a substantial number of these studies are conducted and published in university-affiliated journals (e.g., the studies by Jackel and Garai-Fodor 2022; Lukić-Nikolić and Lazarević 2022; and Wawer 2022). In fact, the main limitations of this study are linked to this particular finding. Another limitation is attributable to the inclusion of a small number of articles, namely 23. The rationale for this was previously elucidated in the preceding chapters and is connected to the scarcity of studies that specifically focus on Generation Z and their interactions with the job market, particularly pertaining to talent attraction and retention.

The limitations identified in this review present fertile ground for future research endeavours, which would enhance the existing but limited body of knowledge. In accordance with RQ4, considering the outcomes of this research, it seems clear that there is a need to better understand how EB can affect TM in GenZ. In particular, it would be important to carry out the following:

(a) Conduct a research inquiry with the primary objective of delineating the characteristics of EB and TM and examining these attributes within distinct segments of GenZ;
(b) Ascertain whether novel attributes of EB or TM exist that are specific to this generational cohort;
(c) Determine the disparities in talent attraction and retention behaviours across generations, specifically comparing GenZ with the immediately preceding cohorts: generation Y and generation X.

This study did not reveal concerns regarding the different sectors of activity. With the exception of the hotel and tourism sector, with three studies identified, no other sectors were identified. Based on these assumptions, the following question is generated:

(d) Are the behaviours of GenZ individuals in the job market identical, regardless of the sector of activity?

This review primarily consists of experimental and exploratory studies, in which the authors used less robust analysis techniques. Thus, the following conclusion is made:

(e) It is crucial to conduct robust studies with sufficiently large sample sizes and well-defined variables based on the existing literature. Such studies would enable the application of more sophisticated statistical techniques, which can be critical for gaining a better understanding of the actual needs of GenZ in relation to attracting and retaining talent.

In this review, the selected articles sought to identify the factors and attributes prevalent in GenZ in the job choice process. On the other hand, there was a total absence of articles that studied the attitudes of companies and employers as well as the perceptions of

HR recruitment and selection companies. Therefore, potential research questions include the following:

(f) What is GenZ's perception of HRM among companies?
(g) What are the most crucial factors or attributes that companies identify when it comes to capturing and retaining GenZ talent?
(h) Will there be differences in the approach to HRM for GenZ among companies in different sectors of activity?
(i) What recruitment and talent acquisition strategies specific to GenZ are being adopted by recruitment agencies?

In this systematic review, no articles were found that specifically aimed to examine the antecedents or outcomes of managing Generation Z in business activities. As a result, the following research questions are proposed:

(j) What variables can be considered as outcomes of TM and retention within Generation Z?
(k) What are the potential consequences for management when there is a better alignment of Generation Z resources?
(l) What is the impact of effectively managing Generation Z individuals on the performance of the company?
(m) Are there any mediating effects of certain employer branding or TM variables?
(n) What are the moderating variables that need to be taken into account when managing GenZ individuals? How could these possible moderating effects contribute to alleviating some of the integration challenges faced by GenZ, such as workplace anxiety?

This study contributes to the existing literature on GenZ theory and EB, providing valuable insights and information. Its findings have the potential to inspire other scholars to further investigate this topic, particularly due to its significance within the realm of organisational management. Specifically, we identified the most salient distinguishing features of Gen Z workers and what they seek in their initial employment. However, our systematic review makes evident that the current TM and EB models do not adequately consider the unique qualities that define this generational cohort and their career aspirations (Kucherov et al. 2023). This finding presents an intriguing challenge to academic researchers to investigate and discover novel and valuable insights to update the existing body of theory in HRM according to the current global employment landscape and the particular characteristics of Gen Z. Perhaps becoming aware of this fact is the most significant contribution of the present study.

Moreover, it is essential to highlight the implications for HRM in various settings, including recruitment companies, HR departments, and management teams. These findings will prepare such professionals with the knowledge that is necessary to effectively address the challenges presented by Generation Z in the current organisational landscape.

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Data Availability Statement: Data are contained within the article.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Appendix A. Summary of Selected Articles

Article	Study Type	*n*	Main Outcomes	GenZ Attribute
(Hameed and Mathur 2019)	E	350	Generation Z employees are entrepreneurial, learning driven, and altruistic in addition to being brand conscious about their workplaces.	ENT, LEO
(Goh and Okumus 2020)	C	-	The key focus of this paper serves to provide practical recruitment strategies to attract Generation Z. It provides 10 key talent management strategies on how to appeal to Generation Z and entice them to join the hospitality sector.	CAO, TRO, WOR
(Karácsony et al. 2020)	E	234	Generation Z prefers online job search over older methods just as they spend a huge portion of their free time on social media platforms. The function of social media is no longer simply immersed in entertainment and chat, but is also actively involved in recruitment and HRM.	SOM
(Mahmoud et al. 2021)	E	1.387	Generation Z is more sensitive to amotivation than Generation X and Generation Y. Extrinsic regulation material is only a valid source of overall work motivation for Generation Z. Intrinsic motivation contributes more to Generation Z employees' overall work motivation than to Generation X and Generation Y.	SAL, WLB
(Tang et al. 2020)	E	400	Generation Z's subjective well-being (SWB) is influenced by Chinese cultural values. Two cultural dimensions can be identified as playing a significant and salient role in shaping their SWB in the workplace as well as their future job intentions, namely attitudes toward work and job-related face values.	PED, SOR, TEA
(Bărbulescu and Vasiluță-Ștefănescu 2021)	E	156	The results do not show statistically significant differences between GenZ and GenY regarding the perception of the dimensions of an employer's attractiveness. Both generations place the attributes of management value and social value (of integration) in first place.	COA, SAL, WOR
(Gajanova 2021)	E	283	Digital job advertisements, top employer ranking, employer image campaign, cooperation with schools, Instagram, and rating platforms are very suitable tools for GenZ. Print job advertisements and LinkedIn are completely not or not very suitable ones.	COR, SOM
(Mónika Garai-Fodor et al. 2021)	E	840	The motivation of volunteering is connected to individual values; hence, it can be stated that the reason behind the unwillingness and lack of motivation of young people towards volunteer work is the immature value orientation and often a lack of information.	PED
(Rzemieniak and Wawer 2021)	E	291	Sustainable development measures undertaken by employers increase the candidates' motivation to apply for a job in the organisation. GenZ women are more ecologically oriented than men and follow a sustainable development strategy.	DIV, ORC, SUS

Article	Study Type	*n*	Main Outcomes	GenZ Attribute
(Silva and Carvalho 2021)	E	3.349	Gen Z individuals value social values, followed by intrinsic and then extrinsic work values. Work values partially explain work preferences, such as employer size and salary expectations. Gender differences mark our results, with women expressing higher work values and lower entry salary expectations.	SOR
(Anggraeni 2022)	E	192	This study contributes to explaining the mechanism for managing expectations of Generation Z through well-being, including both intrapersonal and interpersonal aspects.	ORC
(Dzhulai 2022)	C	-	New model proposal	- - -
(Dzhulai et al. 2022)	E	1.341	GenZ as potential employees are attractive to today's employers, who expect their employees to have creativity, energy, and opportunities to learn and develop with the company. This article identifies a list of the main value propositions: salary level and training in the company.	COA, COR, SAL, SUS, WLB
(Monika Garai-Fodor and Jackel 2022)	E	540	Wage-related elements are still the most important but not the only motivators. Team spirit and more free time, as well as work tasks that allow individual ideas to be implemented, are just as motivating for workers as higher wages.	SAL, WOR
(Islamiaty et al. 2022)	E	220	The EB dimensions for GenZ consist of economic, social, working culture, environmental, and sustainability values. However, not all elements influence the intention to apply; economic and social values are the only two significant factors.	SAL, SOR
(Jackel and Garai-Fodor 2022)	E	540	Generations Z and Y find it more difficult to work with older people and prefer to work with groups of similar age. They find it harder to find a good job for young people. Their loyalty levels are lower than those of the older generation.	TEA
(Kapuściński et al. 2022)	E	40	The value structures of GenZ are psychological, development and social values.	SOR
(Kunal et al. 2022)	E	160	There is a degree of similarity of employer preference attributes for Millennials and Gen Z, as both generations' preferred instrumental factors. Still, Gen Z preferred more growth and learning opportunities than Millennials, who favoured compensation and organisational attributes.	LEI
(Lukić-Nikolić and Lazarević 2022)	E	339	The results indicated the following three key factors that influence GenZ's choice of an employer: the opportunity for career advancement, a pleasant and interesting work environment, and the opportunity for personal development.	CAO, PED, WOR
(Pandita 2022)	E	21	GenZ has high career aspirations, working styles, attributes, and education preferences and innovative mindsets. This demands a flexibility of being independent and confident. They prefer diversity not just through race and gender, but also through identity and orientation. They are driven by an innovative mindset where they resort to creative means to achieve their goals.	CAO, DIV, INN, LEO
(Prasetyaningtyas et al. 2022)	E	306	All EB variables positively affect the intention to apply for a job.	COR, LEA, SAL, SOR, WOR

Article	Study Type	*n*	Main Outcomes	GenZ Attribute
(Samoliuk et al. 2022)	E	510	The main differences between GenZ and GenY in the perception of the EB are identified by gender (higher value of safety in the workplace for women and opportunities for personal development for men) regarding the availability of experience; for those who have no work experience, the EB's reputation is a more important factor. There are also significant differences in assessments of the importance of workplace safety, professional development, comfortable environment, and work–life balance.	CAO, COR, WLB, WOR
(Wawer 2022)	E	789	The experiences gained during internships, mentors' involvement, and the way internships are prepared and carried out by the company have an impact on the assessment of the EB and influence the decisions of GenZ to participate in recruitment processes.	COA, COR, SOR, WOR

GENz attributes: CAO—Career Opportunities; COA—Coaching; COR—Company Reputation; DIV—Diversity; ENT—Entrepreneurial; INN—Innovative; LEA—Leadership; LEO—Learning Opportunities; ORC—Organisational Culture; PED—Personal Development; SAL—Salary; SOM—Social Media; SOR—Social Responsibility; SUS—Sustainability; TEA—Teamwork; TRO—Travel Opportunities; WLB—Work–life Balance; WOR—Workplace. Study type: C—Conceptual; E—Empirical.

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Summary: The subject being studied in this article is Millennial workers on how this generation faced the obstacles when increasing the number of laborers in working groups. Researchers have studied the characteristics of Millennials and analyzed the barriers of this generation to being restrained by the leadership theories of the prior generation. The article generally figures out various lacunae of the 5 leadership theories for Millennial managers, which lead to the generational changes in the values and work attitudes of employees that significantly decrease the effectiveness of workers in an organization. Furthermore, it emphasizes the essential of the organization to reframe the leadership theories to be adapted to the new generation entrants of workforce and human resource management.

Relevance: Millennial is the central point of this article, this will be relevant to the topic of Generation Z by comparing the transition in organization's management with the entering of those new generation workforces. Especially, Generation Z and Millennials share the setting of a working environment where the remarkable role of technology assists well in working and communicating.

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What works for you may not work for (Gen)Me: Limitations of present leadership theories for the new generation

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ABSTRACT

Scholars and practitioners alike have recognized that younger workers, collectively known as Millennials or GenMe, are different from workers in prior generations. Employees of this generation hold different expectations regarding the centrality of work to their lives and bring different personalities and attitudes to the workforce. As the number of Millennials in the workforce grows each year, the divide between them and their older counterparts becomes more salient, posing unique challenges for organizational leaders. In this paper, we explore how these changes may force the need for reconsideration of five of the most frequently used leadership theories in an effort to understand important boundary conditions and how leadership research must evolve to keep pace with a changing workforce.

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You know you are getting old when you use the oft repeated phrase, "The current generation is so much different than my generation." For those of us with an interest in leadership, the implications of newer generations are quite substantial. New generations bring new ideas, new behaviors, and new ways of looking at the issues with which we have been concerned for years. A Google search of the phrase "managing Millennials" brings up thousands of articles, books, and websites offering advice to managers, indicating the concern that practitioners have in regard to leading the next generation. In terms of sheer size, this concern seems warranted as Millennials have outpaced Generation X as the largest age group in the workforce as of early 2015 (Brownstone, 2014). The term Millennials refers to people born between 1982 and 1999 (Twenge and Campbell, 2008), and other common names for this age cohort include GenY, nGen, and GenMe (Twenge, 2010).

Anecdotes from the popular press indicate that managers frequently bemoan the increasing lack of work ethic, narcissism, and sense of entitlement of employees in generations following the Baby Boomers. For example, Millennials are painted as the "selfie" generation, a generation who cares more about sharing pictures of themselves than about the contributions they make at work. Other more positive articles often highlight the creativity, technical ability, concern for social values, and inclusive attitudes toward diversity associated with Millennials. Although these viewpoints conflict, they indicate that there is clearly a perception that Millennials are most assuredly different than their predecessors with respect to ideas, behaviors and viewpoints, and that organizational leaders will have to lead these employees, by necessity, differently.

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In support of the perception that Millennials are different, a recent review by Lyons and Kuron (2014) provides evidence that attitudes and values have changed across the generations. Their findings echo Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman, and Lance's (2010) study which showed that changes in work values have been quite dramatic from the Baby Boomers to the Millennial generation. Examples of changes include increases in the desire for leisure and work-life balance, (Twenge, 2010; Twenge and Kasser, 2013), individualism (Twenge and Campbell, 2012), and desire for greater support from managers (Ng, Schweitzer, and Lyons, 2010). Research also illustrates the self-involved and narcissistic tendencies of Millennials (Twenge and Campbell, 2009; Twenge and Foster, 2010). In addition, the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions is not the same across generations (Lu and Gursoy, 2013). On the whole, these findings demonstrate that Millennials are, in fact, different from their predecessors. Furthermore, these results suggest that these generational differences may call for adaptations to our current theories of leadership.

Interest in how our theories of management must evolve over time is not new. Harvey and Buckley (2002) argued over a decade ago that paradigm shifts necessitate continual reevaluation and adaptation of management practices and research. For example, the authors identified obsolete terms including span-of-control and line/staff. Just as these phrases are no longer meaningful for managers in 2015, theories of management and leadership can become outdated as well. Indeed, Cooper, Scandura, and Schriesheim (2005) remind us that we "must be cognizant of the history of the field and the lessons it teaches" (p. 476). However, outdated or misinformed beliefs continue to live on through management lore (Buckley et al., 2015; Pfeffer and Sutton, 2006). Research continues to advance and researchers have suggested multiple ways of expressing various forms of leadership (e.g., Baur et al., 2016). Nomological networks that encompass variables related to dynamic work attitudes should be reexamined to ensure their continued relevance. Leadership is one important area of research in which changes in employee values urge us to engage in a reconsideration of our current theories.

Past research on the effectiveness of leaders has shown that leadership style can have an important impact on variables such as employee job satisfaction, motivation, and team performance (e.g., Judge and Piccolo, 2004). Studies have also linked employee-supervisor relationships with organizational commitment and decreased turnover intentions (e.g., Han and Jekel, 2011). These studies underscore the value of having able leaders in place in order to leverage human capital resources. And, leaders may need to play an even bigger role in attracting, motivating, and retaining today's employees for at least two reasons. First, Millennials are more likely to value working for supervisors they like than previous generations (Twenge et al., 2010). Second, post-Baby Boomer employees have very different work-related values and are more likely to quit than employees of yesteryear if their needs are not met (Lu and Gursoy, 2013). These changes in the personalities, needs, and work values of Millennial employees not only highlight the importance of high-quality leaders, they call into question the application of current leadership theories to 21st century employees. Therefore, we suggest that the time has come to revisit theories that were developed before most of today's employees entered the workforce or were even born.

Following a brief discussion of how Millennials differ from prior generations, we examine the utility of current leadership theories when applied to this younger generation of employees. In doing so, we limit the scope of our review to five theoretical perspectives which have been identified as amongst the most frequently used of the 21st century (Dinh et al., 2014) which include three established theories – Transformational Leadership, Information Processing, and Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) – and two emerging theories – Authentic Leadership and Ethical Leadership.

By considering current leadership theories in the context of a changing work force, we seek to make three important contributions to the leadership literature. First, we identify generational changes that have important implications for leaders in today's organizations. Second, we answer the call to reevaluate our ideas about leadership in the context of these generational differences (Lyons and Kuron, 2014). Third and finally, we offer a framework to guide future research regarding leadership in the face of a changing workforce.

Generation gaps

It is not uncommon for people to hold unfavorable perceptions of employees from younger generations (Deal, Altman, and Rogelberg, 2010). While some perceived differences are overstated (Deal et al., 2010) due to varying life stages (Lyons and Kuron, 2014), a growing area of research sheds light on the true differences between Millennials and the two previous generations, which collectively represent the overwhelming majority of today's workforce. Indeed, several important generational shifts which include changes in employee personalities, work attitudes, and values are of particular interest to leadership scholars because of the importance of these variables in work-related outcomes.

One such shift is in individual differences or dispositions. Notably, the Millennial generation seems to be more individualistic than their forbearers (Twenge, 2010). Furthermore, in contradiction to the commonly held belief that Millennials are more altruistic than previous generations (Twenge et al., 2010), empirical research suggests that younger generations are, in fact, less altruistic at work than earlier generations of employees (Lyons, Duxbury, and Higgins, 2005) and have lower concern for others (Twenge, Campbell, and Freeman, 2012). As will be discussed in the next section, a rise in the proportion of individualists in the work force, especially in combination with fading levels of altruism, can have important implications for leaders in organizations.

Another important generational gap exists in employee attitudes toward work. Work centrality is becoming less and less important across the three generations, being least important to the Millennial generation (Twenge and Kasser, 2013). Employees in the younger generation value work-life balance and meaningful lives outside of work, including leisure activities, more than their

predecessors (Ng et al., 2010; Twenge, 2010). This change in how employees view their jobs and careers is likely to impact managers' abilities to lead and influence these employees.

Employees of the more recent generations also have different motivational drivers than their predecessors. Results from several studies show that Millennials are more likely to be motivated by extrinsic rather than intrinsic rewards (Twenge, 2010; Twenge et al., 2010). Research suggests that this generation is highly sensitive to monetary compensation (Johnson and Ng, 2015) and that Millennials expect to be paid well and to be promoted quickly (Ng et al., 2010).

Lastly, although research has confirmed the suspicion that Millennials have a greater sense of entitlement, they are also more likely to appreciate accountability (Laird, Harvey, and Lancaster, 2015) and feedback from their supervisors (Graen and Schiemann, 2013). As such, they feel very comfortable challenging authority figures, but they also rely on praise and rewards from those same sources (Ahmed, Scott-Young, Ahmed, and Fein, 2013). Taken together, the findings from the research on generational gaps demonstrate that today's workforce is different and that these differences are likely to pose challenges for those called upon to lead within organizations. The next sections of this paper explore these generational gaps in terms of five major leadership theories.

Leadership gaps

It is widely established that in order to lead employees successfully, managers must utilize leadership styles and behaviors that match the situation, and the needs and abilities of the employees they are trying to influence (e.g., Fiedler and Garcia, 1987; Hersey and Blanchard, 1977; House and Mitchell, 1974; Shamir and Howell, 1999; Vroom and Yetton, 1973). In this paper, we explore five major theories of leadership, namely, Transformational Leadership, Information Processing, Leader-Member Exchange, Authentic Leadership, and Ethical Leadership, in terms of generational changes in the values and work attitudes of employees. Each of these theories has practical implications for managers who apply them in order to motivate and influence employees to meet organizational objectives. However, changes in the personalities, values, work attitudes, and motivations of employees may decrease their effectiveness in modern organizations. The following sections will highlight some of the lacunae of these theories for 21st century managers. In Table 1 we provide a summary of the changes that need to be addressed in the following sections.

Transformational leadership

Transformational leadership is characterized by inspirational leaders who motivate employees through the achievement of group or organizational goals (Burns, 1978). In doing so, they exhibit the following four factors (Bass and Avolio, 1994). First, they exert *idealized influence* to attract followers who want to be like them. Second, they provide *inspirational motivation* through a shared vision that motivates others to participate in the collective. Third, they value creativity and welcome challenges that create situations which support *intellectual stimulation*. Lastly, through *individualized consideration*, they attend to the development needs of their followers and encourage personal growth. Through this process, transformational leaders often achieve increased outcomes (Bass and Avolio, 1990), in part by aligning employee behaviors to benefit the collective good and ignore personal interests (Kuhnert, 1994).

On the surface, transformational leadership may seem like an ideal style for the current work force. Research on today's employees suggests that they crave personal attention and feedback, and thus are likely to enjoy the personalized attention that

Table 1
Summary of influences of generational changes by leadership theory.

Generational change			Theoretical perspective			
Category	Change	Transformational leadership	Information processing	Leader-member exchange	Authentic leadership	Ethical leadership
Individual differences	Increased individualism	Difficult to encourage collective needs over self-interests (P1)	Differing dispositions lead to different attributions (P4)	Difficult to engage in high-quality LMX (P7)	Difficult to achieve value congruence due to desire for individualism (P10)	Difficult to reach consensus on ethicality due to individualism (P13)
Work values & attitudes	Decreased work centrality, increased focus on work-life balance	Less interested in the vision provided (P2)	Less likely to have leadership cognitions that are tied closely to organizational settings (P5)	More interested in work-life balance than in engaging in LMX (P8)	May be less interested in leaders with work values and more interested in leaders with leisure values (P11)	See morality differently and work situations as less morally intense (P14)
	More extrinsically motivated	Less motivated by idealized influence and inspirational motivation (P3)	More likely to attribute leadership as a function of providing rewards (P6)	Too focused on extrinsic rewards to invest the time to cultivate high quality LMX (P9)	Less motivated by the intrinsic outcomes that drive followership development (P12)	More likely to choose rewards over ethicality (P15)
	Increased entitlement	Less interested in being led by others (P16)	Less interested in being led by others (P16)	Less interested in being led by others (P16)	Less interested in being led by others (P16)	Less interested in being led by others (P16)

transformational leaders offer (Graen and Schiemann, 2013). However, these individuals are also more individualistic and less interested in working together to achieve common goals (Twenge et al., 2010). They want to stand out as individuals and achieve their own goals (Twenge, 2010). These traits and behaviors are problematic for today's leaders who must influence employees to suppress their own interests for the sake of the organization's goals. Their self-focus suggests that employees in the newer generation are less likely to be moved to action by idealized influence and inspirational motivation because they are less motivated to obtain a collective goal.

Unfortunately, the current model of transformational leadership provides little guidance to managers who must balance helping employees reach their own goals with the achievement of group goals. The current model conceptualizes each factor of transformational leadership as having an additive influence on performance (Northouse, 2012) and assumes that visionary leaders can inspire employees to care about the needs of the organization. Although transformational leaders may fulfill employees' desires for personal development through individualized consideration, the model doesn't explain how managers can translate individual employee performance to organizational performance when employees are more concerned with their own interests.

Proposition 1. *Because today's employees are more individualistic, transformational leadership is less effective in motivating them to put the organization's needs before their own needs.*

Another problem for transformational leaders is the change in employee attitudes about working and careers. Because today's employees are more likely to want to "work to live" than to "live to work" (Ng et al., 2010), managers may find it more difficult to motivate employees through an idealized vision. One of the assumptions of the transformational leadership model is that leaders can create a vision of the future that will inspire and motivate employees (Bass, 1991). However, when employees find work to be less central to their lives, they are also less likely to be influenced by leaders' appeals. Thus, managers who utilize a transformational leadership style may find that their attempts at motivation and encouragement are met with disinterest and even apathy.

Proposition 2. *The current theory of transformational leadership fails to adequately prepare managers to influence employees who see work as less central to their lives and who want more work-life balance than previous generations.*

Post-Baby Boomer employees are also more motivated by external factors (Twenge, 2010). This presents yet another challenge to the transformational leadership model. Under the current perspective, leaders can leverage followers' intrinsic motivations to rally for a cause. The growing value that employees of today place on extrinsic rewards makes it less likely that they will be motivated by the emotional and attributional appeals of charismatic leaders. Instead, these employees are more likely to seek the outcomes which provide them with the most benefit (Twenge and Campbell, 2008). Despite some mixed results regarding Millennials' work-based expectations in other domains, it is clear that they place great value on external validation in some form. In a survey of nearly 25,000 Millennials, approximately 70% of them held the expectation that they should be promoted within two years at a firm (Ng et al., 2010). Instead of valuing a reward system based on loyalty and "waiting your turn", Millennials are more apt to value leader recognition and rapid advancement (Ng et al., 2010), including lateral promotions (Kowske, Rasch, and Wiley, 2010), and they are willing to leave their current organization to meet those expectations (Rawlins, Indvik, and Johnson, 2008). This inclination to obtain external rewards strains the application of the transformational leadership model.

Proposition 3. *Because of the value they place on extrinsic rewards, today's employees are less likely to be motivated by transformational leaders' appeals to idealized influence and inspirational motivation.*

Information processing

The information processing perspective has grown from recognition that the attributions which followers make about their leaders are an integral part of the phenomenological experience of leadership (House and Aditya, 1997). This theoretical domain encompasses both follower and leader cognitions (Dinh et al., 2014), and within this perspective researchers have investigated the processes behind leadership attributions (e.g., Phillips and Lord, 1981; Lord, Foti, and De Vader, 1984), implicit leadership theories (e.g., House and Aditya, 1997; Offermann, Kennedy, and Wirtz, 1994), and the behaviors and decision-making processes which define leaders (e.g., Lord and Hall, 2005; Lord and Shondrick, 2011). The basic tenants of an information processing perspective posit that leadership exists in a social context (Pfeffer, 1977) and that leadership is conferred only through the perceptions of others (House and Aditya, 1997). With roots stretching over half a century (Martinko, Harvey, and Douglas, 2007), interest in leadership and followership cognitions continues to grow as scholars strive to determine the meaning of leadership (Dinh et al., 2014).

Much of the earliest research on leadership information processing focused on explaining leadership as an attributional process (Martinko et al., 2007). This work was built upon Heider and Kelley's attributional models which sought to explain how individuals interpret cues perceived from their social environments (e.g., Calder, 1977; Phillips and Lord, 1981). As perceivers attempt to make sense of the behaviors and dispositions of others, they attribute certain behaviors to leadership (Phillips and Lord, 1981). Leadership, then, is not understood through leader behaviors, but rather through followers' perceptions of leadership (House and Aditya, 1997).

Closely tied to work on attributions is research on implicit theories of leadership. As Offermann et al. (1994) noted, although scholars have difficulty in agreeing on a definition of leadership, the average person seems to have no problem identifying

leadership in everyday life. Drawing upon categorization theory, Lord et al. (1984) argued that individuals distinguish between leaders and nonleaders by evaluating the extent to which their attributes and behaviors are prototypical of leaders. Furthermore, Foti, Fraser, and Lord (1982) found that leadership prototypicality was associated positively with perceptions of leadership effectiveness. Subsequent research found support for their theoretical explanation of leadership categorizations (Lord et al., 1984).

Although much research on leadership and information processing focused on followers' cognitions, leader cognitions have been examined as well. This body of work has given us insight into how leadership skills develop relative to information processing ability (Lord and Hall, 2005) and how leaders make decisions (Dinh et al., 2014). Additionally, this research has demonstrated how leadership processes require differentiated knowledge (Lord and Shondrick, 2011).

The development of an information processing view has contributed uniquely to our knowledge of leadership through its emphasis on the role of follower attributions (Martinko et al., 2007). Because follower perceptions shape the experienced phenomenon of leadership, it is important to be aware that individuals may hold differing perceptions. In as much as leaders and followers process information about leadership differently, leaders will have less ability to influence and guide their followers (House and Aditya, 1997). Further, because perceptions are influenced by individual differences (Block and Funder, 1986; Lord, Phillips, and Rush, 1980) and past behaviors (Salancik and Pfeffer, 1978), the changing personality traits and experiences of younger workers are particularly relevant for the consideration of perception creation. Specifically, narcissism has been shown to influence individual's leadership perceptions (Judge, LePine, and Rich, 2006). Today's employees who are more individualistic are likely to make different leadership attributions than employees who are less individualistic

Proposition 4. *Because of their individualism, today's employees hold different cognitions about leadership than previous generations.*

Information processing models of leadership also indicate that situational factors influence attributions of leadership (e.g., Lord and Smith, 1983; Lord, Brown, Harvey, and Hall, 2001). Lord et al. (1984) found that leadership prototypes vary across environmental contexts. This suggests that differences in the ways individuals perceive their surroundings are also likely to shape the attributions they make about leaders. Because work is less central to the lives of Millennials, organizational settings are likely to be imbued with less meaning for these employees. Other settings, such as home or places of leisure, may evoke stronger emotional attachment for them. As today's employees view places of employment differently, they may also make leadership attributions differently.

Proposition 5. *Because they place work in a different context, today's employees are less likely to have cognitions and attributions of leadership that are tied closely to being in an organizational setting.*

Perceptions of leadership are commonly linked to attributions of causality and responsibility for organizational events (Martinko et al., 2007). As previously discussed, the work motivations of the Millennial generation are generally more extrinsically focused on material outcomes, such as compensation, than previous generations (Hansen and Leuty, 2012; Twenge, 2010). Because of the importance they place on external outcomes, Millennials are likely to be sensitive to the receipt of these rewards. As a result, their attributions of leadership may be highly dependent upon their perceptions of their leaders' ability to award raises, promotions, etc.

Proposition 6. *Because of the value they place on extrinsic rewards, today's employees are more likely to attribute leadership to others as a function of the rewards that others can provide.*

Leader-member exchange

Since the early work by Graen and colleagues (Dansereau, Graen, and Haga, 1975; Graen, 1976; Graen and Cashman, 1975; Graen and Scandura, 1987), researchers have examined dyadic, one-on-one relationships between leaders and followers through the lens of the leader-member exchange perspective (Dienesch and Liden, 1986; Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995; Liden, Wayne, and Stilwell, 1993). LMX is based on social exchange (cf, Blau, 1964) vis-à-vis the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), which suggests that when leaders provide discretionary resources to their followers, the later will reciprocate in kind. At the 45th anniversary of LMX, researcher attention continues to increase (Anand, Hu, Liden, and Vidyarthi, 2011), and there is an acknowledgment that more work is needed (Schriesheim, Castro, and Cogliser, 1999; Uhl-Bien, Maslyn, and Ospina, 2012).

Like any social exchange, LMX requires mutual effort from both parties (Maslyn and Uhl-Bien, 2001). These exchange relationships are frequently categorized as either high quality, such that the employee is placed in the leader's in-group, or low quality, such that the employee is in the leader's out-group (Dansereau et al., 1975). Employees frequently become part of the in-group through their willingness to do more than the requisite job at hand for their supervisors (Graen and Schiemann, 1978). In exchange for their contributions to their work units, followers in the in-group receive additional resources, access to information, and are treated in a more collegial manner such that control and influence are more evenly balanced between the parties (Dansereau et al., 1975; Schriesheim, Castro, Zhou, and Yammarino, 2001). Conversely, some employees may be content with a low-quality relationship or prefer not to extend themselves beyond the required tasks (Maslyn and Uhl-Bien, 2001). The designation between the in- or out-group is made early in the relationship and remains relatively constant over time (Liden and Graen, 1980).

Research has demonstrated that when employees and managers have high LMX relationships (i.e. the employee is in the leader's in-group), employees experience many beneficial career outcomes such as more frequent communication, performance

feedback (Harris, Wheeler, and Kacmar, 2009), and promotions (Liden, Sparrowe, and Wayne, 1997). Further, they have positive perceptions of fairness and justice (Scandura, 1999; Sias and Jablin, 1995; Vecchio, Griffin, and Hom, 1986) and, as part of the decision-making process (Wayne, Liden, and Sparrowe, 1994), they are able to impact the allocation of resources, thereby decreasing perceptions of organizational politics (Kacmar, Bozeman, Carlson, and Anthony, 1999). Benefits also accrue to the organization as these employees are less likely to leave, have increased organizational commitment and overall satisfaction as well as satisfaction with their supervisor, and are more likely to engage in organizational citizenship behavior (Ballinger, Lehman, and Schoorman, 2010; Gerstner and Day, 1997; Ilies, Nahrgang, and Morgeson, 2007; Wayne, Shore, and Liden, 1997). Lastly, primary, as well as meta-analytic, results suggest that employees who have high-quality relationships with their supervisors outperform their coworkers (Gerstner and Day, 1997; Settoon, Bennett, and Liden, 1996).

Under an LMX model of leadership, managers are likely to find it difficult to lead employees in the midst of changes across generations. The personality characteristics of today's employees will make it difficult for leaders to reap the rewards from high-quality exchanges with their subordinates. Specifically, Millennials are focused more on individual accomplishments than employees of previous generations (Twenge and Foster, 2010). Similar to its negative influence on the efficacy of transformational leadership, this increased level of individualism will undermine the LMX model. Employees who are more individualistic are less likely to be interested in building social relationships in addition to the tasks that are required of them, even while expecting managers to give them more attention and praise (Twenge and Campbell, 2008). Managers who have operated with an LMX style are unlikely to reciprocate with more self-interested employees because these employees are not willing to give anything back. This will ultimately lead to low-quality LMX relationships which result in less favorable outcomes to the employee and organization with one exception – networking (Granovetter, 2005).

High-quality relationships are more likely to emerge when the subordinates are more extroverted (Nahrgang, Morgeson, and Ilies, 2009) because being in the in-group requires more interaction (Dansereau et al., 1975). However, Millennials are finding new ways to collaborate and communicate, including computer-mediated communication (Pearson, Carmon, Tobola, and Fowler, 2010). While potentially effective at delivering messages, brief and informal correspondence such as that frequently received in emails, web memos, text messages, social media, and e-bulletins will decrease the opportunity for a high-quality relationship such that they do not allow for the establishment of mutual trust and can be perceived as disrespectful – two established hindrances to high-quality LMX (Dirks and Ferrin, 2002; Lau and Cobb, 2010; Liden and Maslyn, 1998; Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard, and Werner, 1998).

Proposition 7. *Because of the communication patterns of today's employees, leaders will find it difficult to engage them in high-quality leader-member exchanges.*

One of the assumptions of LMX theory is that leaders will be able to engage employees in not only the work at hand, but also in going beyond the formal job description to help the leader (Graen and Schiemann, 1978). However, today's employees are likely to resist this higher level of engagement because it will require them to invest more time and effort in work than they would like to. In fact, Millennial employees acknowledge that their perceptions of work-life balance differ from their supervisors (Gilley, Waddell, Hall, Jackson, and Gilley, 2015) in that work does not occupy as central of a place in the lives of today's employees (Dharmasiri, Ammeter, Baur, and Buckley, 2013; Ng et al., 2010). Managers who are accustomed to achieving outstanding performance through high-quality LMX relationships may be disappointed to find that Millennials value maintaining work-life balance more than supervisor favor.

Proposition 8. *Today's employees, who place a high value on work-life balance, will be less likely to seek out high-quality leader-member exchange relationships.*

On one hand, employees who are more extrinsically motivated may find the reciprocal nature of LMX relationships appealing. Because employees are increasingly motivated by extrinsic factors (Hansen and Leuty, 2012; Twenge, 2010; Twenge and Kasser, 2013), they may see exchange relationships with their managers and supervisors as a practical way to obtain valued rewards. On the other hand, many of the benefits that employees in high-quality LMX relationships obtain are only indirectly related to external rewards such as higher salaries. Because the value of these relationships increases over time (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995), Millennials, who are quick to chase extrinsic rewards by changing jobs (D'Amato and Herzfeld, 2008; Johnson and Ng, 2015), may be too impatient to cultivate a high-quality relationship with their manager in order to achieve the extrinsic rewards they seek. Especially given that many of these employees are more egoistically focused, they may believe that it is easier and quicker to obtain desired outcomes working for themselves.

Proposition 9. *Because today's employees place a high value on extrinsic rewards, they are less likely to take the time to cultivate high-quality leader-member exchange relationships.*

Authentic leadership

Despite having ancient roots in Greek philosophy (see Erickson, 1995; Novicevic, Harvey, Buckley, Brown, and Evans, 2006), authentic leadership (Avolio and Gardner, 2005; Luthans and Avolio, 2003), is one of the newest approaches to leadership, and it provides an important perspective into the tradeoffs associated with aligning one's actions to mimic other popular and effective styles of leadership or remaining true to one's self. Indeed, while authenticity is recognized as an important characteristic in other leadership styles such as transformational leadership (Bass, 1990; Bass and Steidlmeier, 1999; Burns, 1978; Howell and Avolio,

1992), the direct study of authentic leadership is a seeming rebuttal to the recommendations of prior decades to alter behaviors in order to adapt to the most recent trends in leadership as well as an outcry against unethical behaviors (Cooper et al., 2005; Luthans and Avolio, 2003). Authentic leadership emerged from the positive organizational behavior movement (e.g., Cameron, Dutton, and Quinn, 2003; Nelson and Cooper, 2007) to provide a deeper investigation into the beneficial aspects of organizational life. In doing so, then, authentic leadership is similar to Kernis' (2003; Kernis and Goldman, 2006) concept of authentic functioning as is based on being true to one's self and is centered on self-awareness and attitude-behavior congruence. As such, authentic leaders have been suggested to be aware of who they are as well as the values they hold and are able to consistently behave in ways that are in agreement with these beliefs (Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, and May, 2004). Researchers consider the development of authentic leadership to emerge from this idea of self-awareness and internalized moral compass (Shamir and Eilam, 2005) in addition to balanced processing and relational transparency (Ilies, Morgeson, and Nahrgang, 2005; Luthans, Norman, and Hughes, 2006).

While on the surface authentic leadership may seem to suggest a reversion to a trait-approach to leadership such that being consistently authentic harkens to the genetic makeup that creates the individual differences which allow leaders to act uniquely in myriad contexts, researchers have noted that leaders are more strongly guided by their prior experiences and major events which shape and develop their authenticity (Avolio, 2005; Shamir and Eilam, 2005). It is by reflecting on these prior events that leaders can become more keenly aware of their values and beliefs by assessing which events were most impactful to them as well as how their reactions suggest their fundamental beliefs. Indeed, then, authentic leaders frequently consider their leadership role as a mission or vocation such that they accept roles that allow them to be true to themselves and impact situations in alignment with their beliefs (Humphrey, 2014). In this way, then, authentic leadership is suggested to be trainable (Avolio, 2005) in much the same way as other leadership styles.

Authentic leadership has been found to be positively related to follower performance (Clapp-Smith, Vogelgesang, and Avey, 2009; Wang, Sui, Luthans, Wang, and Wu, 2014), both in-role as well as extra-role (Leroy, Anseel, Gardner, and Sels, 2015). In support of the interpersonal perspective of authentic leadership, important mediating mechanisms in these relationships include stronger feelings of identification and empowerment by the followers toward an authentic leader (Leroy, Palanski, and Simons, 2012). Additionally, authentic leaders are able to impact team in-role and extra-role performance through trust, psychological capital (Clapp-Smith et al., 2009), positive affective tone (Hmieleski, Cole, and Baron, 2012), teamwork, and team authenticity (Peus, Wesche, Streicher, Braun, and Frey, 2012). In addition to performance-related outcomes, authentic leadership has been found to be associated with positive outcomes for leaders and followers alike. Authentic leadership has been found to be related to ethical (Brown and Treviño, 2006) and transformational leadership (Spitzmuller and Ilies, 2010) as well as leader psychological well-being (Toor and Ofori, 2009) and positive modeling (Henderson and Hoy, 1983). Likewise, followers of an authentic leader experience more satisfaction and commitment (Jensen and Luthans, 2006), increased engagement (Giallonardo, Wong, and Iwasiw, 2010), increased group support (Wong and Cummings, 2009), and more trust in their leader (Clapp-Smith et al., 2009; Wong, Spence Laschinger, and Cummings, 2010). Finally, the dimensions of psychological capital were found to positively predict authentic leadership (Jensen and Luthans, 2006).

While authentic leadership suggests an external reflection of internally held beliefs, researchers have also suggested that the interactions with others, including followers, help to shape the perceptions of the requisite leader identity (Sparrowe, 2005). Indeed, researchers considering an interpersonal perspective of authentic leadership (e.g., Eagley, 2005) consider it as a process between a leader and his or her followers such that each party influences the other. Surprisingly, while researchers have recognized the importance of followers in developing authentic leadership (e.g., Eagley, 2005) as well as the need for authentic followership (Gardner, Cogliser, Davis, and Dickens, 2011; Ilies et al., 2005; Shamir and Eilam, 2005), the attention has been given, almost universally, to the development of leadership at the expense of the followers (Algera and Lips-Wiersma, 2012; Avolio and Reichard, 2008; Gardner et al., 2011). Indeed, while the attention has been very leader-centric (Yammarino, Dionne, Schriesheim, and Dansereau, 2008), Gardner, Fischer, & Hunt (2009) noted that leaders and followers alike can vary on their levels of authenticity, and Shamir (2007) recognized that followers are active participants in the leadership process. As such, the role of followers is likely underestimated in the study of authentic leadership (Leroy et al., 2015) as is the impact on followers as key desired outcomes of authentic leadership include the development of followers and promotion of authentic followership (Avolio and Gardner 2005). In a recent examination of the role of followers and authentic followers, Leroy et al. (2015) found that authentic followership and authentic leadership predict follower performance, as mediated by followers' need satisfaction and that the followership and leadership have an interaction effect.

According to Avolio and Gardner's (2005) model, authentic leaders inspire followers to examine their own beliefs and values. When followers hold beliefs that are congruent with those of their leaders, they will identify with their leaders and will seek to be like them. This presents an interesting paradox for leaders of Millennials. Because this generation places a high value on individualism (Twenge and Campbell, 2012), they may not want to conform to the values of another, even a trusted leader. This means that by leading followers to develop a sense of self-clarity, leaders create a situation in which followers move away from their leaders. Relatedly, employees who hold high opinions of their own leadership abilities (Judge et al., 2006) may be less likely to see the importance of coming together with an authentic leader.

Proposition 10. *Because today's employees are more individualistic, it is it difficult to achieve the value congruence that is vital for authentic leadership.*

Authentic leaders are motivated by self-awareness and the opportunity to lead in a way that is authentic to their developed selves (Avolio et al., 2004). For some leaders, behaviors such as coming early and staying late will be a reflection of their internal

beliefs about the importance of work in their lives. To the extent that they value work centrality, authentic leaders may experience a disconnection with Millennial employees who want more leisure and less work (Twenge and Kasser, 2013). This incongruity in values will undermine the leader-follower relationship which is based on value identification and emulation (Avolio and Gardner, 2005).

Proposition 11. *Because today's employees place a high value on work-life balance, they may be less likely to want to emulate leaders with a strong work ethic.*

Authentic leaders' attempts to help followers become self-aware may also encounter another challenge. In general, authentic leaders strive to develop followers' authenticity by appealing to intrinsically held values (Avolio et al., 2004; Avolio and Gardner, 2005), which conflicts with members of the Millennial generation (Twenge, 2010; Twenge et al., 2010). Because of their focus on external rewards, Millennials' goals and motives may run counter to the ideas espoused by authentic leadership. It may be particularly difficult for younger employees to identify with and desire to follow leaders who are intrinsically motivated when they don't share the same values.

Proposition 12. *Because today's employees place a high value on extrinsic rewards, they will be less interested in the intrinsic outcomes offered by authentic leaders.*

Ethical leadership

Another emerging theory in the field of leadership is ethical leadership, which draws upon an understanding of both ethics and leadership in order to explain how leaders behave ethically and promote moral behavior amongst their followers (Brown and Treviño, 2006). Interest in theories of ethical leadership was driven in large part by corporate scandals at the turn of the millennium which highlighted the need to understand not just how leaders should behave, but also how their behavior influences ethical decision making in organizations (Brown, Treviño, and Harrison, 2005). In this way, then, it is not enough for leaders to behave ethically; they must lead others to do so as well (Brown et al., 2005).

At a high level, ethical leadership can be categorized as a theory of moral leadership alongside servant leadership, spiritual leadership, and authentic leadership because of its focus on doing the right thing (Brown and Treviño, 2006; Dinh et al., 2014). Digging deeper, ethical leadership is also related to transformational leadership (Brown et al., 2005) through idealized influence which occurs when leaders influence followers by demonstrating moral and ethical behavior (Avolio, 1999). Modeling appropriate behavior is a hallmark of an ethical leader (Brown et al., 2005). In addition, ethical leaders employ transactional leadership styles as they implement ethical standards and ensure compliance with them (Brown et al., 2005). Although related to other leadership styles, ethical leadership is also unique (Brown et al., 2005; Brown and Treviño, 2006). While transformational leaders can behave unethically or immorally, ethical leaders use their idealized influence only for altruistic purposes (Brown et al., 2005). Ethical leadership is also associated with leaders who are perceived to be honest (Treviño, Hartman, and Brown, 2000) and who treat their employees fairly (Treviño, Brown, and Hartman, 2003).

Early empirical and conceptual work on ethical leadership utilized Bandura's (1977, 1986) social cognitive theory to explain how ethical leaders influence followers (Brown et al., 2005; Brown and Treviño, 2006). One of the ways in which ethical leaders promote ethical behavior is through modeling appropriate behavior (Brown et al., 2005; Brown and Treviño, 2006). As employees view leaders behaving in ethical ways, employees can learn to discern between correct and incorrect actions in a given situation. In order for employees to learn vicariously through their leaders' actions, they must attend to their leaders' behavior. Their attention will be drawn to their leaders in part by the leaders' positions within organizations. Followers will also be more likely to attend to their leaders' behavior when they perceive that their leaders are worthy role models. Ethical leaders engender these perceptions because they act altruistically and fairly. Further, because leaders' values impact organizational values (Carlson and Perrewe, 1995; Schminke, Ambrose, and Noel, 1997; Treviño, 1986), the establishment of an ethical organizational culture, which facilitates discussion of ethical topics, highlights the importance of ethical decisions, and rewards appropriate behavior, can be developed and perpetuated (Brown et al., 2005; Brown and Treviño, 2006).

One of the difficulties of encouraging ethical behavior is that employees are not always aware that they are facing an ethical dilemma (Trevino and Brown, 2004). Moral awareness, a recognition of the ethical nature of the situation, is necessary for employees to engage in ethical decision-making (Barnett, 2001). And, when employees become morally aware, they are more likely to look to their leaders for guidance (Brown and Treviño, 2006). Perceptions of moral intensity, which drive moral awareness, are a function of an employee's understanding of the potentially harmful outcomes and a strong social agreement about the appropriate, or ethical, behavior (Brown and Treviño, 2006).

Increased individualism amongst employees may lead to less social consensus around ethical norms, causing employees to have dissimilar perceptions of moral intensity in the same situations. For example, an older employee may believe that it is unethical of an organization to pay for birth control and a younger employee may believe that organizations whose insurances do not cover abortions or birth control are violating basic human rights. Beyond generational differences in moral norms, individualistic employees of the same generation may not even agree about whether or not an issue has an ethical dimension. One employee may perceive a situation involving harm to the environment as an ethical issue while another employee may be more concerned about the ethicality of benefits for same sex partners. When employees experience moral intensity differently, some

employees will become morally aware, while others will not. Ethical leadership is unlikely to influence employees' ethical decision making if employees do not perceive moral intensity in a situation (Brown and Treviño, 2006).

Proposition 13. *Because today's employees are more individualistic, they are more likely to have dissimilar perceptions of morally intensity, making them less likely to look to ethical leaders for guidance in ethical decision making.*

Attempts by ethical leaders to elicit ethical behaviors may also be stymied because of the decreased value that younger employees place on work (Twenge and Kasser, 2013). One of the factors which drives moral intensity, and in turn moral awareness, is a recognition of a situation's potentially large consequences for an organization and its stakeholders (Brown and Treviño, 2006). When employees place a lower value on workplace centrality, they are less likely to be cognizant of the negative organizational outcomes which could occur as a result of unethical behavior.

Proposition 14. *Because today's employees see work as less central to their lives, they are less likely to perceive situations as morally intense, making them less likely to look to ethical leaders for guidance in ethical decision-making.*

Research on ethical leadership suggests that it is positively related to the performance of organizational citizenship behaviors (Mayer, Kuenzi, Greenbaum, Bardes, and Salvador, 2009), job dedication (Brown et al., 2005), relationship behaviors and leader-member exchange (Mahsud, Yukl, and Prussia, 2010). Further, when ethical leadership is present, employees generally perceive that they are being treated fairly and with respect, and they are usually satisfied with their leaders and rate them as effective (Brown et al., 2005). However, although ethical leaders may enjoy positive relationships with their followers, when they attempt to cultivate ethical behavior, they may find it difficult to motivate Millennial employees who are more concerned with receiving tangible rewards (Hansen and Leuty, 2012; Twenge, 2010; Twenge and Kasser, 2013). In fact, research suggests that these employees may be even more likely to succumb to the temptations to be unethical if such behavior is likely to lead to pay-offs (Ethics Resource Center, 2011).

Proposition 15. *Because today's employees place a high value on extrinsic rewards, they will be less likely to respond to ethical appeals to do right by the organization and its stakeholders.*

General challenges

In addition to the theory-specific shortcomings discussed above, another generational gap may pose some challenges to leaders in general. Employees of the Millennial generation seem to want to redefine relationships between supervisor and employee. Because of their upbringing, these employees have an almost conflicted relationship with authority (Ahmed et al., 2013). Their sense of entitlement leads them to perceive themselves as not needing direction or leadership from others (Laird, Harvey, and Lancaster, 2015), but they also require a lot of positive feedback (Graen and Scheimann, 2013). This can be confusing for managers and our current leadership theories offer no guidance for overcoming this push-and-pull. For example, managers who offer employees leadership in an LMX style may be astonished when they encounter entitled employees who expect to immediately receive all of the benefits of high-quality LMX relationships without putting in any time or effort required to develop such relationships. Likewise, transformational leaders may be surprised to find that their employees appreciate their attention, but not their vision.

Millennials' sense of entitlement is also problematic for other leadership theories. Just as individual differences lead to differing perceptions of leadership (Lord et al., 1980), entitlement is also likely to affect the leadership attributions Millennials make. Because they feel they deserve to have things their way (Twenge and Campbell, 2009), Millennials may be less willing to see themselves as subordinate to managers. They may also be less sensitive to situational cues that organizations have traditionally used to signal leadership such as titles, policies, and symbols (Pfeffer, 1977), because they perceive that they are as important, or even more important, than others in the organization. Furthermore, when younger employees perceive that guidance from their authentic leaders or ethical leaders about values and ethical choices is a criticism of their abilities or beliefs, they are likely to respond poorly to such influence (Campbell, Bonacci, Shelton, Exline, and Bushman, 2004).

Proposition 16. *Our current leadership theories will be challenged by employees who want to redefine the leader-follower relationship in way that is more palatable to their sense of self-entitlement.*

Discussion

Several of our most widely researched theories of leadership may be stretched by the changing dispositions and values of the work force. We would contend that generational shifts have dictated a reevaluation of the applicability of many of our classic leadership approaches how they might be useful in leading the newest generation of organizational entrants. Given the generational shifts that have been discussed, managers and future researchers need to be mindful of both the adequacy and adaptability of these theories for the latest organizational entrants.

Practical implications

This paper has important implications for leaders in organizations, ranging from those in leadership positions to HR personnel. Managers who have applied these theories successfully in the past may not experience the same levels of success today and in the future. They may also find themselves struggling to engage a workforce that views work as less central to their lives. Additionally, many managers who leverage group goals and teamwork to achieve high performance may find that younger employees are less interested in working together.

Although we have focused on the potential incongruence between current theories of leadership and the workforce of the 21st century, leading Millennials also offers several opportunities. For instance, younger generations have been exposed to more technology, helping them leverage technological opportunities more easily (Deal et al., 2010). And, having begun their work lives in a more diverse labor market (Lyons, Ng, and Schweitzer, 2014), these employees may exhibit fewer biases when making hiring decisions and performance evaluations. Similarly, Millennial employees are more likely to come from a wide range of cultural backgrounds (Lyons et al., 2014), giving their employers a competitive advantage in the global marketplace for products and services. Managers who can overcome the challenges posed by the new attitudes and values of the Millennial generation will be able to capitalize on these favorable characteristics of today's employees.

Recommendations for adapting current leadership theories

While we have noted numerous boundary conditions with the application of the focal leadership theories to the changing workforce, with some reframing and minor adjustments, the utility of these theories can be maintained for the management of Millennials. First, although transformational leaders may find it difficult to engage Millennials by appealing to a sense of community to achieve common goals (Twenge et al., 2010), goal setting may still be effective. Revisiting the dimensions of transformational leadership, especially *intellectual stimulation* and *individualized consideration* (Bass and Avolio, 1994), can offer some insight into how to motivate and manage generations entering the workforce. Because younger generations tend to be motivated by meaningful, challenging work (Wesner and Miller, 2008) and the potential for individual achievement (Twenge et al., 2010), and because they desire personalized feedback (Graen and Schiemann, 2013), it is possible that reframing goal-setting initiatives such that individual goals align with organizational objectives could work well for motivating Millennials. Further, linking long-term extrinsic rewards to the established goals when possible may also activate Millennials' drive to succeed (Twenge, 2010).

Second, the information processing perspective relies on the attributions that followers make of leaders (House and Aditya, 1997; Pfeffer, 1977). With respect to the focal cohort of followers, it may be that because Millennials place such importance on extrinsic rewards (Hansen and Leuty, 2012) that they perceive those with the power to control resource allocation (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978) as more leader like. In other words, Millennials may be more receptive to those who use position power - doling out rewards and punishments - as opposed to those who use personal power, which relies upon knowledge and likeability (French and Raven, 1959). Given that the use of position power is not readily applicable to many organizational contexts, this poses a particularly novel challenge for leaders of Millennials. However, there are instances in which position power can be granted to an employee in an emergent leadership role that might increase the likelihood that Millennials will view that person as an authority figure. For instance, granting reward power to a team leader may alter Millennials' perceptions of that person, who they might otherwise view as a peer. Additionally, leaders can provide external rewards such as public recognition or praise that do not cost the organization anything but that may fulfill the validation that Millennials crave (Ng et al., 2010).

Third, the nature of social exchange has transformed dramatically since the advent of LMX (Dansereau et al., 1975). Due to the drastic changes in communication styles and media, Millennials view concepts and acts of communication in different ways than their superiors. Specifically, Millennials prefer to use computer-mediated or text-based communication (Pearson et al., 2010). This new way of communicating aligns with the trends of globalization in business, but also complicates the process of building relationships. It is unlikely that this trend will reverse (Alsop, 2008), but leaders can use the new, text-based communication skills of Millennials to their advantage. For instance, while it is unlikely that Millennials will develop deep-rooted relationships with others using new media, Millennials can develop an expansive network of shallow connections (Granovetter, 2005), which could be leveraged for various positive organizational outcomes, including organization-to-organization partnerships, resource acquisition, or marketing initiatives. In addition to integrating the changing landscape of communication, leaders may also be well served by clarifying expectations of what qualifies as high-level performance. Millennials tend to think highly of themselves (Twenge, 2010), and, as such, they may assume they are already included in the in-group composed of exceptional performers. As a result, Millennials may not feel they need to work harder to gain favor with their leaders.

Fourth, even relatively new areas within the leadership domain can benefit from some minor alterations that could improve ethical behavior in all followers, not just Millennials. Younger generations appear to be more driven by rewards, especially extrinsic rewards (Hansen and Leuty, 2012), and, as such, may be more likely to be tempted to act unethically if the rewards associated with doing so greatly overshadow the consequences of behaving ethically. Generally, ethical behavior is not rewarded; it is simply expected. One potential solution suggested in the ethical decision making literature to increase adherence to ethical guidelines and promote an ethical culture is to incorporate metrics for ethical behavior into formal performance management systems (Treviño, Weaver, and Reynolds, 2006). Pairing this with leaders' behavior modeling may increase the likelihood that Millennials will view the leader as an authority figure because the leader is modeling a pathway to extrinsic rewards. Additionally, leaders themselves may opt to create their own informal award for ethical behavior. Again, this low-cost option fulfills Millennials' desire for achievement and recognition (Ng et al., 2010).

Finally, authentic leaders may discover that finding value congruence with their Millennial workforce is difficult (Avolio and Gardner, 2005). A potential reason for this lies in diverging ideas of careers and work (Sullivan, 1999). Baby Boomers perceive that those who expend a great deal of effort and spend more time at the office possess a stronger work ethic (Twenge, 2010) than those who do not. In a commissioned study at Bentley University (2014), Millennials reported that they agreed their work styles did not fit within the tenets of effort-based definitions of work ethic. However, this may be in large part due to Millennials' tendency to focus on results, embodying the phrase "work smarter, not harder". Even though Millennials may feel very invested in their work, their own work values may still be misaligned with their leader's values because they are fundamentally different. Alsop (2008) suggests that adapting firms to incorporate some aspects of results-only work environments (ROWEs) offers a unique solution. ROWEs offer flexibility to how, when, and where work is completed (Ressler and Thompson, 2008), and, therefore, have the potential to emphasize the strengths of Millennials who tend to be creative and appreciate autonomy (Alsop, 2008). Some large organizations that frequently hire younger employees, including GAP Inc., have incorporated the core concepts behind ROWEs into their organizations for the reason listed above.

Recommendations for human resource management

In addition to the potential adaption of how to apply established leadership theory in new ways, research suggests several ways to adjust human resources practices in order to avoid leadership pitfalls and leverage the potential of the Millennial generation. Human resource practices can help managers across all leadership styles develop more successful leader-follower relationships with Millennial employees. Preselection (Buckley, Fedor, Veres, Wiese, and Carraher, 1998), realistic job previews (RJP) and expectation lowering procedures (ELP: Baur, Buckley, Bagdasarov, and Dharmasiri, 2014; Buckley et al., 2002; Wanous, 1992) can influence Millennials' expectations about not only the job itself, but also about factors such as extrinsic rewards and work-life balance. Millennials entering the workforce are often still figuring out which job characteristics are the most appealing to them (Kuron, Lyons, Schweitzer, and Ng, 2015), and pre-hire interventions may shape their preferences by exposing them to aspects of jobs which they had not considered. It is especially important to offer Millennials upfront and realistic information about compensation and career paths as this generation appears to have unrealistic expectations about how quickly they will move up the corporate leader and earn pay increases (Ng et al., 2010). Through preselection, RJPs, and ELPs, Millennials can self-select out of organizations and jobs which they may find unappealing, increasing the likelihood that those who accept jobs have attitudes and values that align with the organization and hiring manager.

Socialization and on-boarding processes are another valuable opportunity to introduce Millennials to the values and work attitudes more commonly held by Baby Boomer and Gen X employees. Through socialization within the organization, employees internalize organizational values (Avolio and Gardner, 2005). For ethical leaders, socialization can increase Millennials' moral awareness, giving ethical leaders more influence over these employees (Butterfield, TrevinÄo, and Weaver, 1996) and for authentic leaders, it can drive value congruence that is so vital to a successful leader-follower relationship (Avolio and Gardner, 2005). Interest in transformational leaders' visions of the greater good can also be increased through socialization, especially when orientation programs give employees contact with the beneficiaries of their work (Grant, 2012).

Organizations can also decrease the negative impact of the individual differences which are more pronounced in the Millennial generation through socialization procedures. Consideration of all of the people who are part of one's life and one's successes can increase social awareness (Twenge and Campbell, 2009). At an organizational level, socialization processes that focus on the ways in which different departments, teams, and individuals are interrelated and dependent upon one another, can overcome individualistic tendencies through the creation of superordinate goals (Sherif, 1958). Individual differences and past experiences can color employees' perceptions of leadership (Lord et al., 1980; Salancik and Pfeffer, 1978), but socialization processes can shape the ways employees view their leaders, helping even individualistic employees come to recognize their managers as leaders.

Performance appraisals offer an additional avenue to build influence with Millennial employees. Millennials prefer frequent and direct communication with their supervisors (Myers and Sadaghiani, 2010) and crave individualized feedback from others (Twenge and Campbell, 2009). They are also likely to respond favorably to feedback from managers that supports their autonomy while providing mentoring (Winter and Jackson, 2014). To the extent that managers can utilize performance feedback as a coaching tool that meets these needs, managers can develop powerful relationships with their Millennial employees.

One of the keys to leading Millennials successfully is an awareness of the attributions managers make when working with employees who have different backgrounds and who hold different values. For example, managers of previous generations may be tempted to interpret Millennials' desire for more information and feedback as a sign of disrespect (Myers and Sadaghiani, 2010). Similarly, when Millennials exhibit their preference to work to live and not live to work, managers may mistakenly attribute this attitude to laziness or lack of initiative. Organizations can help managers overcome these attribution errors to recognize the value of Millennial employees by offering education and training to managers.

Creating reverse mentoring opportunities is another practice which can help organizations and managers benefit from the expertise of Millennial employees (Meister and Willyerd, 2010). Because Millennials have grown up with technology and social media applications, they navigate the digital world with ease (Hershatter and Epstein, 2010), and older employees often seek to improve their own skills by associating with younger employees (Chaudhuri and Ghosh, 2012). In addition to transferring valuable knowledge throughout the organization, reverse mentoring also helps younger employees, acting as mentors to more senior employees, learn valuable leadership skills (Marcinkus Murphy, 2012). Through the mentoring process, Millennials may come to identify with their mentees (Humberd and Rouse, 2015), leading to them adopt some of the values and attitudes of their mentees. Higher retention of Millennials is another important organizational benefit of reverse mentoring programs (Marcinkus Murphy, 2012).

Directions for future research

The generational gaps discussed in this paper do not signal the demise of our current leadership theories. Indeed, the age cohort effects discussed herein provide researchers with interesting avenues of future research and even the possibility of developing new theories of leadership that will better suit the 21st century workplace. At the very least, these theories need to be adapted in order to address the changing personalities and values of employees, and, as of yet, there have been scant attempts to do so (Lyons and Kuron, 2014). This paper serves as a guide for the important variables that need to be considered as scholars design and conduct leadership research in current organizations.

In addition to the changes highlighted in this paper, other factors may impact how we conceptualize leadership in the 21st century. The section below discusses several other areas for further investigation. Research on these factors will also add to our understanding of how leadership is changing in today's organizations.

In a comparative review of publications in cohort workforce dynamics from 1965 to 1975 and 1998–2008, Wesner and Miller (2008) found that, in their transition to the workforce, Boomers and Millennials were alike in many ways. Most relevant in this case is the desire for meaningful, challenging work. Wesner and Miller (2008) reported that Millennials are equally loyal to their employers when their work is congruent with those values. In fact, Millennials report higher instances of overall satisfaction with their job and their organization when they are recognized for their contributions to the organization, provided timely career advancement options, and given options to develop professionally and in a leadership capacity (Cahill and Sedrak, 2012; Deal et al., 2010; Kowske et al., 2010; Myers and Sadaghiani, 2010; Ng et al., 2010). In short, Millennials and Boomers are quite similar in some respects – both groups value meaningful and challenging work. However, it's critical to evaluate what qualifies as meaningful and challenging to both cohorts in order to gain a richer understanding of where the generations divide. Future research should explore the ways in which leaders can provide Millennials with jobs and careers that meet these desires.

The ever-increasing number of Millennials in the workplace continue a trend that many managers would like to see reverse direction. The phenomenon of "job hopping" (cf. Saxena, 2012) is unsurprisingly concerning to leaders. Employees who have more experience in the workforce tend to have longer tenure in a particular position, and the gap in tenure between more and less experienced workers is widening over time. In short, the average tenure of workers aged 55 to 64 was approximately 3.5 times that of workers aged 25 to 34 in 2014, which is up slightly from congruent comparisons ten years prior (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014). Research on leading Millennials may further our understanding of why employees leave and how leaders can mitigate this tendency.

Although it has been suggested that younger workers are more likely to be comfortable with boundaryless careers and more open-ended employment relationships (Sullivan, 1999), researchers have noted that ambiguous situations are very stressful for members of the Millennial generation (Twenge and Campbell, 2008). It is likely that leaders will need to provide more structure in both jobs and career paths for employees than they have in the past in order to reduce turnover. For instance, task type may be an important contextual factor to consider in future research on Millennial job hopping.

This paper has considered the effects of generational gaps from the perspective of leaders of a changing workforce. However, Millennials are beginning to join the management ranks, so it is also important to consider how leaders may be different because of these generational shifts. For example, managers from these generations may not be interested in investing in their followers through LMX or transformational leadership. And, Millennial managers may have overinflated views of their own leadership abilities (Judge et al., 2006). Future research should explore the ways in which Millennials' individual differences and work attitudes impact their tenure as managers.

Just as past researchers have considered the effects of differences for Gen X and Millennial employees, today's researchers should also turn an eye to the upcoming generation. As of yet, this generation has no commonly used name, but some people born after the end of the Millennial generation are beginning to call themselves Gen Z (Geck, 2006). And, as has occurred in previous generational changeovers, managers are already worried about what the future holds. For example, practitioners believe that the next generation will be less likely to be formally educated and will have an even stronger sense of entitlement (Alsop, 2015). Only time will tell, but leadership scholars need to keep the next generation in mind as theoretical advances in leadership are pursued.

In conclusion, the workforce is changing and, likewise, leadership theories must change. Empirical research on generational gaps outlined in this paper points to several lacunae in our major theories of leadership. As Fiedler (1964) suggested over a half of a century ago, effective leadership occurs when the leader's skills and personality match the situation. Because of substantive changes in the values and attitudes of today's workers, our current theories face the crisis of becoming less applicable to the leadership contingencies of 21st century organizations. Instead of viewing these generational gaps as dangers to the science of leadership, we urge researchers to embrace these changes as fecund new opportunities to add to our knowledge of leading individuals in organizations.

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Source 6 (Not scholarly)

Citation:

Singh, A. P., & Dangmei, J. (2016). Understanding the generation Z: the future workforce. *South-Asian journal of multidisciplinary studies*, *3*(3), 1-5.

Summary: The article gives general information about Generation Z which includes an explanation of the definition of Gen Z, and carefully analyzes the characteristics of this generation. The core of the article is to list the preferences of Generation Z in the workplace environment, which focuses on learning about how Generation Z expects to communicate with colleagues, what work ethics they are following, and what is the role model of a good manager that they want to have. Especially, the learning mentions a lot about how Generation Z wishes for a motivational space that helps to maintain their productivity for company assignments.

Relevance: This article is related to the topic of Generation Z in the workplace environment, it helps to understand the characteristics of this generation before going further to the research section. Another important thing, this article uses many non-scholarly resources, which mostly came from blogs and articles on many career or recruitment websites. This article and those related sources are essential for analyzing the case study of considering the influence of Generation Z in the HR industry.

Place in the paper: Introduction, literature preview

UNDERSTANDING THE GENERATION Z: THE FUTURE WORKFORCE

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Abstract

Generation Z is born and raised with the social web, they are digital centric and technology is their identity. This generation will be entering in the companies in the coming years but little is known of this generation about their characteristics, needs, attributes and work style. They seem to have different attitudes towards work then the previous generations. Without proper understanding of this generation, organizations will find difficulties to hire and retain them for the sustainable growth of the organizations. By understanding them, the companies can determine what can impact their recruitment and retention success through paying attention to what this generation tick in the workplace. This paper examines the characteristics and preferences of the Generation Z from the existing literature so that organizations can foresee and build work place suitable for them which in turn will impact the organizational performances.

Keywords: Generation Z, Characteristics, Preferences, Workplace.

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Introduction

While employers are finding hard to identify and realize the needs of the Generation X and Y in the 21st century, now they have completely new generation i.e., the Generation Z to work on with. The challenges of the organizations are not only to serve the Generations X and Y, but also to foresee the workplace needs of the rising Generation Z so that groups comprising of different generations can work effectively (Knoll, 2014). Researchers have demonstrated that each generation has different attitudes towards work and workplace (CIPD, 2008; Harber J., 2011). But little is known of this Generation Z about their characteristics, needs, attributes and work style. Therefore employers and HR managers should anticipate workplace needs and change their strategy for recruiting, motivating and retaining these emerging young workers who will be arriving very soon. It is crucial to understand them to keep talent from the newest generation and realize their benefits to sustain the growth of the company. By understanding the characteristics and the preferences of the Generation Z, recruiters will be able to attract and connect them in order to groom them to become the future leaders of the company. Without this proper understanding, companies will find difficulties in recruiting and retaining the best talented candidates of the Generation Z and will also fail to motivate and inspire them which in turn will impact the organizational performances.

1. Generation Z

Generations born in the 1990's and raised in the 2000s during the most profound changes in the century who exists in a world with web, internet, smart phones, laptops, freely available networks and digital media are considered as the Generation Z (Bascha, 2011; Brue Tulgan & Rain maker Inc., 2013). Generations Z is raised with the social web, they are digital centric and technology is their identity. They are also referred as Generation I, Gen Tech, Digital natives, Gen Wii etc. They are born and raised in the digital world and what distinguishes them from other generation is that their existence is more connected to electronics and digital world.

2. Characteristics of Generation Z

According to the Institute for Emerging Issues (2012), the Generation Z is the most ethnically diverse and technologically sophisticated generation. Generation Z has a informal, individual and straight way of communicating, and social networking is a vital part of their lives. They are a Do-It-Yourself generation. In the study conducted by Dan Schawbel (2014), Generation Z tend to be more entrepreneurial, trustworthy, tolerant and less motivated by money than Gen Y. They

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are more realistic about their work expectation and optimistic about the future. Based on the findings of Generational White Paper (2011), Generation Z tends to be impatient, instant-minded, lacking the ambitions of previous generations, have acquired attention deficit disorder with a high dependency on the technology and a low attention span, individualistic, self-directed, most demanding, acquisitive, materialistic and entitled generation so far. Max Mihelich. (2013) describes that the Generation Z are very concerned with environmental issues, very conscious of looming shortages and water shortages which indicates that they have a high sense of responsibility towards the natural resources. Amanda Slavin (2015) finds the Generation Z wants to be heard irrespective of their young age. Technology is a part of their identity and they are tech savvy but lack problem-solving skills and have not demonstrated the ability to look at a situation, put in context, analyze it and make a decision (Joseph Coombs, 2013). They also appear to be less inclined toward voting and to participating in their communities than earlier generations (Institute for emerging issues, 2015).

3. Preferences of Generation Z at the Workplace:

As preferences of work and workplace are different for different generations, it is crucial to understand the preferences of the Generation Z so that proper channel of communication is established and good environment is created in the organization. It is also important to understand what motivates them for the organizational productivity. The preferences of generation Z based on the available literatures are as follows:

(a) Based on the study of Bascha (2011), they prefer transparency, self-reliance, flexibility and personal freedom are non-negotiable aspects of Generation Z work ethics and ignoring them could result to frustration among peers, reduced productivity, low morale and a lack of employee engagement. They expect to be informed, to be allowed to be responded, and to have their responses heard and acknowledged.

(b) Max Mihelich (2013) stated that they must have enough independence to prove themselves and earn immediate recognition. Also as this generation has never lived in a world without a smart phone or an iPad, they expect not to lose all these gadgets when going to the office.

(c) According to the study of Dan Schawbel (2014), they prefer in-person or face to face communication and want to take them seriously. They desire the managers to listen to their ideas and value their opinions. It indicates that the workplace should be less about age and more about ideas and contributions. Also they want to work for an honest leader

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and want them to be open and do not hide information from them because of their young age or title

(d) According to Teresa Bridges (2015), they prefer work environment that cultivate mentoring, learning and professional development opportunities as they believe their education has not given the required skills to deal with the real life problems. Work place that encourages their entrepreneurial skills, work environment which is friendly and allowance for flexible schedules are the attributes that the Generation Z looks for a job. Technology is their integral part of their lives and prefers organizations that are at the forefront of workplace that supports and allow them to communicate, edit documents and advance work regardless of geographies or time zone barriers.

(e) They prefer office workplace that is easy to adjust within. They value arrangement and certainty in the workplace and find complex planning layout undesirable (Knoll, 2014).

(f) They prefer to work for a leader with honesty and integrity (Robert Half, 2015).

(g) They prefer to work for an organization that demonstrate genuine ties with community and social responsibility (Nicola Middlemiss, 2015)

4. Conclusion:

Generations Z seems to have different requirements and motivating factors then the earlier generations. This generation will stir its own unique needs upon the workplace as they enter the organizations. It is important for the organization to discover what's important to the Generation Z beforehand to boost attractiveness within and outside the industry in order to establish a corporate culture and workplace to gain a distinctive advantage in the hunt for top talent employees from the Generation Z which in turn will sustain the organizational growth and remain a winning organization throughout.

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Summary: In this article, Generation Z and Y are brought out to analyze the generational differences in their communication style. The study was conducted due to the modest amount of research about Generation Z, which most of the research had surrounded Generation Y before. The reason is reasonable because Generation Z has just begun to enter the workforce in recent years. The main point of this study is to examine the communication style of Generation Y and Z in the dimension of general characteristics, study and work habits, and communication style. Noticeably, the theoretical framework of the study was inspired by prior communication style research by Hartman and McCambridge, whose concentration is on the dual concept of communication style-typing and style flexing. At the end of the article, the study gets on the difference between Generation Z and Y in communication style, which indicates specific significant good points of each generation. Moreover, it includes the clear declaration that both Generation Z and Y have an amiable communication style.

Relevance: With research about the influences of Generation Z on communication practice, the article will be a standard for comparing Generation Z and W in the period of the increased number of people in the workforce.

Place in the paper: Literature review

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Gen Y and Gen Z Communication Style

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ABSTRACT

Communication style plays a crucial role in managing the multigenerational ecosystem of the present world. This study examined the communication style of Gen Y and Gen Z. The participants were 311 youth (Gen Y, 68; Gen Z, 243). The questionnaire on communication style was developed based on Hartman and McCambridge (2011). The online survey was conducted from 6 April 2020 to 11 May 2020 by distributing the questionnaire link to people who were in the Gen Y and Gen Z age groups. The results showed that both groups were similar in their general characteristics, which included preferences for group-work, affirmation, clear rules, and for their opinions to be valued. They liked face-to-face communication, and using visuals for online communication. There were significant differences in some of their study and work habits, that is, the Gen Y are better than Gen Z at analysing information obtained from the Internet, and handling a lot of work at one time, whereas Gen Z expected more instantaneous feedback than Gen Y. As for communication style, they were amiable communicators who were low on assertiveness, prioritised relationship over task in task completion, and had a slow-paced communication style. The results showed that Gen Y and Gen Z had some style-typing ability, whereby they compared their communication style with their peers. More practised style-flexing, as in fitting their communication to the target group but Gen Y had a stronger information-focus. Their demographic background (gender, ethnic group, socio-economic status) did not influence their communication style, indicating the stronger influence of their generational cohort. The study suggests that employers who require goal-oriented communication need to make their expectations clear to Gen Y and Gen Z employees.

Keywords: Gen Y, Gen Z, communication style, assertive, responsive, task completion

JEL Classification: C1, L2

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1. Introduction

Multigenerational studies have shown that generational cohorts are more than just demographic information (Ismail, 2016). In this paper, Dimock's (2019) definition of the age range for Generation Y or millennials (Gen Y henceforth) and Generation Z (Gen Z henceforth) is used. Gen Y are born between 1981 and 1996, and they are aged 24-39 (in the year 2020). Gen Z are born in 1997 and onwards, and are aged 23 and below (in the year 2020). Studies on Gen Y gained momentum when businesses realise that this cohort has unconventional workplace expectations that affect managerial practices, and the overall workplace culture (Abdul Malek & Jaguli, 2018; Said et al., 2020; Smith & Nichols, 2015). In Malaysia, Gen Y accounts for more than 40% of the workforce (Jalil et al., 2015).

Employee retention became a complex endeavour across all industries, propelling research to identify factors that would ensure Gen Y's long-term loyalty to their respective hiring organisations (Mohd Soieb, Othman, & D'Silva, 2015; Naim & Lenka, 2017; Stewart et al., 2017). In Malaysia for instance, generational differences concerning workplace expectation, job satisfaction and leadership style preference contribute to the deficit of talents in the labour force (Ahmad & Ibrahim, 2016; Islam et al., 2011). Koh (2018) found that in the Malaysian food industry, Gen Y employees would stay in a job if they have job satisfaction, good leadership and good compensation. Polytechnic graduates stay at their job because of the money and the enjoyable work (Yeap et al., 2018). What is known about communication style is that Gen Y employees are eager to engage with their superiors (Soieb, Othman, & D'Silva, 2015) and seek constant coaching and feedback from their mentors (Stewart et al., 2017). They respond well to open, transparent and frequent communication, particularly through text-messaging and social media (Abdul Malek & Jaguli, 2018). However, Abdul Malek and Jaguli's (2018) study only involved female leaders giving their views on Gen Y employees. Andi (2018) offers Malaysian Gen Y's perspective on leadership style. They gravitate towards transformational leadership, meaning that they expect their leaders to communicate the organisational goals clearly and consistently, and to work with them to achieve the goals. Andi (2018) also found that the millennials expect their leaders to talk with them about their motivation and problems. Transformational leaders need to have a high level of knowledge and skills in communication to yield positive results (Holt et al., 2012). Gen Y employees also like a customised and informal approach in workplace communication (see also Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010; Smith & Nichols, 2015). These studies focused on employers' and Gen Y's perspectives on the content, frequency and medium of communication but not on communication style.

In comparison to Gen Y, there is less research on Gen Z because they have just begun to enter the workforce. In a few years, the workforce is going to consist of four generations, with the latest addition being the Gen Z employees (King et al., 2019; Said et al., 2020). The available findings on Gen Z is largely on their traits (Raslie et al., 2016; Törőcsik et al., 2014), with many academic papers repeating descriptions of Gen Z (Said et al., 2020; Schwieger & Ladwig, 2018; Singh & Dangmei, 2016; Turner, 2015). Other researchers have written about Gen Z students (Rickes, 2016; Seemiller & Grace, 2016; Sriprom et al., 2019). For instance, Sriprom et al. (2019) found that Gen Z university students view themselves as high on the agreeableness in the Big Five personality model, and caution that individuals with this trait may be erratic and insecure. They avoid group conflict and competitiveness in group work, and may have difficulties performing individual tasks and making decisions. Campiere (2019) found that Gen Z employees like to get daily feedback from their superiors, and are willing to share information, but like to communicate using emoticons, gifs and acronyms which may be challenging to older generation. Our exhaustive literature search revealed that no studies have been conducted on the communication style of Gen Z.

Malaysia is experiencing is talent deficit in labour force, with Gen Y and Gen Z not displaying job loyalty like the Baby Boomers and Gen X (Ahmad & Ibrahim, 2016; Islam et al., 2011). One area that can

be improved to retain talent is communication because Gen Y and Gen Z like transparent communication and constant feedback (Abdul Malek & Jaguli, 2018; Andi, 2018; Campiere, 2019; Soieb et al., 2015; Stewart et al., 2017). It is important to study the communication style of Gen Y and Gen Z because effective communication is directly correlated with organisational success (Hartman & McCambridge, 2011). Hartman and McCambridge (2011) only wrote about the importance of equipping Gen Y with communication skills of style-typing and style-flexing to develop their leadership acumen. They did not focus on Gen Z because one decade ago Gen Z had not entered the workplace. Incompatible communication styles that occur within a multigenerational workplace setting would potentially amplify the generational differences, and create conflict and miscommunication which affects the overall productivity of the organisation (Singh et al., 2020). The scant findings available on communication style are from studies focusing on leadership style, where communication is only an adjunct (see Ahmad & Ibrahim, 2015; Soieb et al., 2015). As pointed out by McCroskey et al. (1998), there is an empirical paucity in terms of quantity and cohesiveness in the area of communication style research. Therefore, in view of the lack of research on the communication style of Gen Y and Gen Z, studies are needed to produce empirical findings that are potentially useful for increasing employee retention, bridging intergenerational differences in workplace communication and improve multigenerational workplace management.

The present study examined the communication style of Gen Y and Gen Z in Malaysia. The objectives of the study focused on the general characteristics, study and work habits, and communication style.

2. Theoretical framework of the study

The theoretical framework of the study was adapted from Hartman and McCambridge (2011) because this is the most appropriate framework for researching communication style. They advocate the dual concepts of communication style-typing and style-flexing, which requires individuals to improve the fit between their communication style and their interactants, and this constitutes development of interpersonal communication skills to be effective communicators. According to Hartman and McCambridge (2011), style-typing is a technique for recognising one's own preferred communication style and those of their target group. Once the dominant communication styles have been identified, style-flexing follows. Style-flexing refers to the ability to adapt one's dominant style to the target group's styles to communicate on the same wavelength. People may use a mixture of styles, but the awareness of one's own communication styles and those of the target group is important to lower communication barriers.

Hartman and McCambridge (2011) proposed an assessment tool to identify the four main communication styles based on Mok (1975) which is underpinned by Jungian psychology and transactional analysis. As Hartman and McCambridge (2011) had made vast changes to Mok's communication style (sensor, thinker, intuition, feeler) to highlight the communication style angle, reference will not be made to Mok (1975). The following description is based on Hartman and McCambridge (2011).

The four communication styles (Analytical, Driver, Amiable, and Expressive) are based on two dimensions, that is, assertiveness and responsiveness. Assertive people feel a need to control situations, and they usually talk more than listen, and start discussions. On the other hand, responsive individuals are emotionally expressive, and they listen more than they talk. The level of assertiveness is determined by assessing pace (fast vs. slow), whereas the level of responsiveness is determined by assessing priority (task vs. relationship orientation). This gives rise to four quadrants in the profiling of an individual's communication style as shown in Figure 1, and explained as follows:

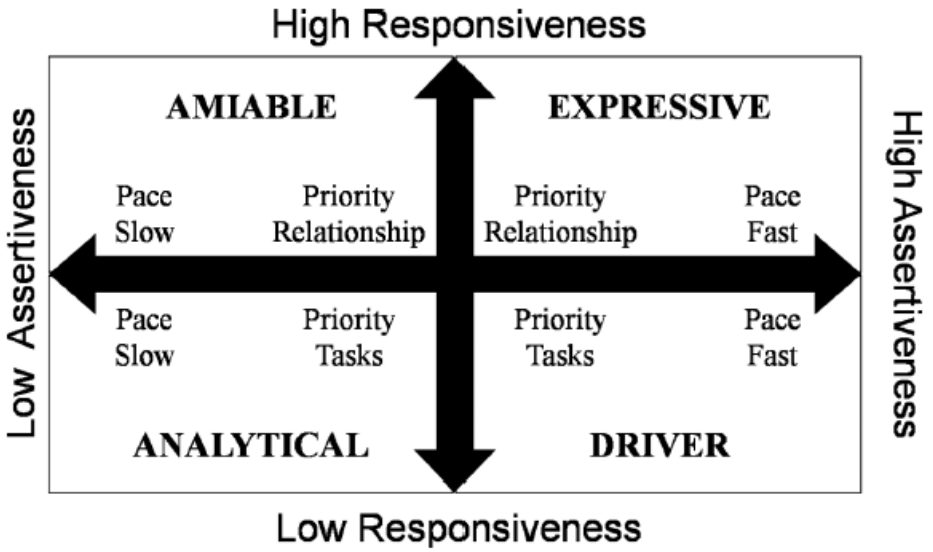
(1) Expressive – high assertiveness, high responsiveness (fast pace of communication, relationship priority). The Expressive asks "how" questions to create alliances (e.g., How can we work with others to achieve our goals within the given time?).

(2) Driver – high assertiveness, low responsiveness (fast pace of communication, task priority). The driver asks "what" questions to get results from tasks (e.g., What is the purpose of your plan?).

(3) Amiable – low assertiveness, high responsiveness (slow pace of communication, relationship priority). The Amiable asks "who" questions to conform and cooperate (e.g., Who have you considered when making this plan? and What is their view?).

(4) Analytical – low assertiveness, low responsiveness (slow pace of communication, task priority). The Analytical asks "why" questions to work within the system, and are indecisive, uncommunicative and impersonal (e.g., Why do you do it that way and not this way).

Figure 1. Four categories of communication styles based on dimensions of assertiveness and responsiveness



Source: Hartman & McCambridge, 2011

Hartman and McCambridge's (2011) assessment tool comprised 67 items but only descriptions related to assertiveness and responsiveness dimensions and the communication pace and task versus relationship priority were used in the description above. The other items are not relevant as the purpose of this study is not to profile the individual participants as expressive, driver, amiable, and analytical communicators. An example of an excluded item is whether they liked Oprah Winfrey.

3. Method

A survey was conducted on youth in the Gen Y and Gen Z age range in Malaysia, that is, between 23 and 40. The participants were 311 youth (Gen Y, 68; Gen Z, 243). There were more female participants, but the ethnic composition reflects that of Malaysia which has 62.51% Malay (inclusive of indigenous), 20.56% Chinese, 6.18% Indian, and 10.75% others making up the 32,581,400 population (Department of Statistics, Malaysia, 2020). A majority of the participants had at least Form 6, Matriculation or Diploma qualification, and 49.46% of the participants had a monthly income of less than RM2000 as 76.21% were students. However, their parents' monthly income was quite evenly spread, except that there were fewer with a combined income of above RM6000 per month. The large student population is expected because of the focus of the study on both Gen Y (who were already working but some were pursuing postgraduate studies) and Gen Z (who were mostly still studying).

Table 1 Percentages showing demographic information on participants (N=311)

Demographic characteristics		Gen Y (N=68) %	Gen Z (N=243) %	Overall (N=311) %
Gender	Female	76.47	69.55	71.06
	Male	23.53	30.45	28.94
Ethnic group	Malay	64.71	41.56	46.62
	Chinese	22.06	18.52	19.29
	Dayak	2.94	12.35	17.04
	Kadazan-Dusun	7.35	19.75	3.86
	Orang Ulu	1.47	4.53	1.93
	Indian	0	2.47	10.29
	Eurasian	1.47	0.82	0.96
Highest qualification	PMR and lower	0	0.82	0.64
	SPM	0	1.65	1.29
	Form 6/ Matriculation/ Diploma	5.88	34.98	28.62
	Degree and higher	94.12	62.55	69.45
Employment status	Student	19.12	92.18	76.21
	Unemployed	13.24	1.23	3.86
	Self-employed	4.41	0.82	1.61
	Working for others	63.24	5.76	18.33
Own monthly income	Less than RM2000	32.72	73.68	49.46
	RM2000-RM3999	41.82	18.42	32.26
	RM4000-RM5999	10.91	2.63	7.53
	RM6000-RM7999	12.73	0	7.53
	RM8000 and above	1.82	5.26	3.23
Parents' monthly income	Less than RM2000	26.47	27.57	27.33
	RM2000-RM3999	19.12	21.81	21.22
	RM4000-RM5999	29.41	19.34	21.54
	RM6000-RM7999	7.35	13.17	11.90
	RM8000 and above	17.65	18.11	18.01
MUET Band score for English proficiency[1]	Band 1	1.54	0.85	1.00
	Band 2	3.08	2.55	2.67
	Band 3	21.54	17.45	18.33
	Band 4	43.08	62.13	58.00
	Band 5	26.15	16.60	18.67
	Band 6	4.62	0.43	1.33
SPM results for Bahasa Melayu[2]	Grade A	79.41	68.88	71.20
	Grade B	16.18	27.39	24.92
	Grade C	2.94	3.32	3.24
	Grade D	0	0	0
	Grade E	1.47	0.41	0.65
	Grade F	0	0	0

Notes:
Malaysian University English Test (MUET) tests students' proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing, and the scores are from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest).
Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) examination for the Bahasa Melayu subject includes both spoken and written skills, and the grades are from Grade A (highest) to Grace F (fail).

The participants' proficiency in English and Malay were obtained because language proficiency influences communicative ability. Table 1 shows that the participants' Malay proficiency was good (71.20% scored A), but their English proficiency was lacking (only 20.00% scored the top two bands of Bands 5 and 6 in MUET).

The questionnaire was developed from Hartman and McCambridge's (2011) description of Gen Y communication styles (Appendix 1). The sections in the questionnaire were on demographic background, general characteristics of Gen Y (11 items), study and work habits (5 items), communication style (11 items). A five-point Likert scale from Strongly Disagree to Neither Disagree Nor Agree to Strongly Agree was used.

The questionnaire was designed in Google Form, and the purpose of the study, voluntary participation, and confidentiality of responses were explained. Youth in the Gen Y and Gen Z age groups were invited to fill in the questionnaire from 26 April 2020 to 11 May 2020. Out of 312 questionnaires received, one participant above 40 years old was eliminated, leaving 311 for the analysis.

The data were coded for analysis. Mean scores and standard deviations were computed. As the items used a five-point scale, the mid-point was three. To profile the participants according to the four communication styles (Hartman & McCambridge, 2011) on the two dimensions (assertiveness-responsiveness, and task versus relationship priority), the mean scores were categorised as low (0-1.6), medium (1.7-3.3) and high (3.4-5.0). T-tests (threshold value of $p<0.05$) were conducted to find out if there were differences between Gen Y and Gen Z. T-tests were also conducted to determine if there were gender differences in characteristics, study and work habits, and communication styles. Additionally, Pearson correlation tests were run to determine if these variables co-vary with age and socio-economic status.

4. Results

4.1 General characteristics of Gen Y and Gen Z

The t-tests showed that there were no significant differences between Gen Y and Gen Z participants in their characteristics at 95% confidence level.

Table 2 Mean scores showing characteristics of Gen Y and Gen Z participants (N=311)

	Characteristics	Gen Y (N=68)		Gen Z (N=243)	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1	I like clear rules.	4.47	0.66	4.45	0.73
2	I like to get encouragement from people around me.	4.19	0.82	4.15	0.81
3	I like to talk with people face-to-face.	4.06	0.83	4.06	0.98
4	I like people to listen to my opinions.	3.96	0.65	3.94	0.85
5	I like to be praised.	3.71	0.98	3.74	0.97
6	When I communicate online, I like to use visuals to share my ideas.	3.63	0.99	3.37	0.94
7	I like to work in groups.	3.49	0.92	3.48	0.91
8	I have better communication skills than my friends.	3.17	0.85	3.17	0.90
9	I do not like to be criticised.	3.02	0.96	3.01	1.01
10	I usually think negatively about things.	3.01	1.09	3.01	1.16
11	I like my parents to make decisions for me.	2.60	0.98	2.61	0.89

Note: Items were on a five-point Likert scale from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree, and the mid-point is three.

Table 2 shows the characteristics of Gen Y and Gen Z participants. Both Gen Y and Gen Z agreed that they liked to work in groups. Contrary to popular belief, they did not like their parents to make decisions for them. In other words, they perceived themselves as having independent thinking.

The results in Table 2 showed that both Gen Y and Gen Z thrive on positive affirmation. They like to be praised (Gen Y: M=3.71, SD=0.98; Gen Z: M=3.74, SD=0.97), and people to listen to their opinions (Gen Y: M=3.96, SD=0.65; Gen Z: M=3.94, SD=0.85). They also liked to be encouraged by people around them (Gen Y: M=4.19, SD=0.82; Gen Z: M=4.15, SD=0.81). In this respect, they are considered to be high maintenance. There were mixed responses on whether they liked to be criticised (Gen Y: M=3.02, SD=0.96; Gen Z: M=3.01, SD=1.01), and whether they usually think negatively about things (Gen Y: M=3.01, SD=1.09; Gen Z: M=3.01, SD=1.16). The mean scores showed that Gen Y and Gen Z were similar, indicating that there is no generational difference in how they react to negativity. Tyler (2008) stated that they could become aggressive when criticised.

Both groups expressed strong opinions that they liked clear rules (Gen Y: M=4.47, SD=0.66; Gen Z: M=4.45, SD=0.73), suggesting that structure is important in their lives. This means that they do not like ambiguity and grey areas. In an organisation, rules and regulations have to be clearly spelt out, making the rights and obligations plain. This also means that they abhorred disregard for rules and preferential treatment.

Gen Y and Gen Z are said to be so immersed in the social media world that they cannot communicate well in face-to-face interactions. However, the results showed that they liked to talk with people face-to-face (Gen Y: M=4.06, SD=0.83; Gen Z: M=4.06, SD=0.98), and considered themselves to have better communication skills than their friends (Gen Y: M=3.17, SD=0.85; Gen Z: M=3.17, SD=0.90). When they communicate online, they liked to use visuals to share their ideas (Gen Y: M=3.63, SD=0.99; Gen Z: M=3.37, SD=0.94). In the same way, they would also like information to be shared with them visually rather in the form of text, characteristics of visual learners rather than verbal learners.

4.2 Study and work habits of Gen Y and Gen Z

Table 3 shows results on the study and work habits of Gen Y and Gen Z participants. The t-test results showed significant differences between the two groups on three out of five characteristics studied. Gen Y and Gen Z were significantly different in how well they can analyse information that they find from the Internet at p= 0.01 (Gen Y: M=4.07, SD=0.80; Gen Z, M=3.79, SD=0.79). The two groups were also significantly different on whether they can handle a lot of work at one time at p = 0.03 (Gen Y: M=3.31, SD=1.05; Gen Z: M=2.99, SD=0.99). There was also a significant difference between Gen Y and Gen Z on whether they liked to get feedback on their work in the same day at p = 0.01 (Gen Y: M=3.56, SD=0.97; Gen Z: M=3.90, SD=0.95).

The value of the mean scores indicated that Gen Y were better at analysing information, and handling a lot of work at one time. Here, some demographic information is used to interpret the results. A large percentage of Gen Y (67.65%, Table 1) was already working, and therefore they developed their analytical skills as well as their ability to handle heavy workload. The mean values also showed that more Gen Z participants liked to get instantaneous feedback than Gen Y participants. Gen Y participants who were older, and have begun working, realise that they could not expect their supervisors and employers to give them immediate feedback on their work in the same day, but the Gen Z participants still had unrealistic expectations due to lack of working experience. The demographic information in Table 1 shows that only 6.58% of Gen Z participants were working at the time of the study. Most of them were students. Their teachers and lecturers may or may not give feedback according to their expectations, but what the results showed is that Gen Y and Gen Z are significantly different in their expectation of instantaneous feedback.

Table 3 Mean scores showing how Gen Y and Gen Z participants handle work and studies (N=311)

	How Gen Y and Gen Z handle work and studies	Gen Y (N=68)		Gen Z (N=243)		T-test results
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
1	I can analyse information that I find from the Internet well.	4.07	0.80	3.79	0.79	*p = 0.01
2	I like to get feedback on my work in the same day.	3.56	0.97	3.90	0.95	*p = 0.01
3	I can handle a lot of work at one time.	3.31	1.05	2.99	0.99	*p = 0.03
4	I usually submit my work before the deadline (due date).	3.93	0.98	4.03	0.88	
5	I can find information that I need for my projects easily.	3.76	0.93	3.61	0.88	

Notes:
Items were on a five-point Likert scale from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree, and the mid-point is three.
*Significantly different at $p < 0.01$

The two groups were similar on two other aspects studied. They could find information that they needed for their projects easily. Being the technology-savvy generations, they did not have problems searching for required information on the Internet. However, after they had obtained the information, Gen Y was better at processing the information than Gen Z. Their analytical capability differed; probably due to work experience and age effects. Both Gen Y and Gen Z were similar in reporting that they usually submitted their work on time. They also felt that they were punctual in meeting academic or work deadlines. The results reported earlier showed that Gen Z was not as good as Gen Y in handling a lot of work at one time. This is an indication that if Gen Z were overwhelmed with assignments and projects, they might not be able to meet deadlines. Gen Y on the other hand was probably trained by their work environment to meet project deadlines. These results are from the perspective of Gen Y and Gen Z, but the perspective of educators and employers may differ, and this is an area for future research.

4.3 Communication style of Gen Y and Gen Z

Table 4 shows the communication style of Gen Y and Gen Z participants. The t-test results showed significant differences for two out of 11 characteristics examined.

Gen Y and Gen Z were similar in their style-typing, meaning they are aware of their own communication style. They often compared their style of communicating with others. Table 4 shows that there were mixed responses on whether they communicated in the same way as their peers, in that Gen Y (M=3.13) marginally agreed with this statement while Gen Z marginally disagreed (M=2.94). The mixed responses are expected because of individual differences in communication styles. Here, a reference to the earlier set of results is needed. Table 2 results showed that both groups were confident of their own communicative ability. Both groups expressed slight agreement that their communication style was better than their peers' (M=3.17 for both Gen Y and Gen Z). The results indicated that they have awareness of communication styles in order to report whether they have better communication style than their friends.

Gen Y and Gen Z participants were significantly different in style-flexing practices, that is, ability to adapt their style to their interactants' styles for more effective communication. Table 4 shows that the two groups differed significantly in their information-focus when they prepared powerpoint slides for oral presentation at p=0.01 (Gen Y: M=4.31, SD=0.70; Gen Z: M=4.20, SD=0.75). The mean values indicated that Gen Y participants were more likely to focus on the information they wanted to present, while the Gen Z participants were more likely to consider the needs of their audience and tailor their slides to the target group. According to Hartman and McCambridge (2011), an information focus signifies a self-focus, as opposed to an audience-focus. It seems that Gen Y may be more self-focused, whereas

Gen Z may be more other-focused. However, the differences between the two groups on the people-focus in their preparation of powerpoint slides for oral presentations were not big enough to be significant.

Table 4 Mean scores showing the communication style of Gen Y and Gen Z participants (N=311)

Constructs		Questionnaire items	Gen Y (N=68)		Gen Z (N=243)		T-test results
Awareness of communication styles			Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Style-typing (knowing own style)	1	I often compare my style of communicating with others.	3.60	1.15	3.49	1.11	
	2	I communicate in the same way as others.	3.13	0.90	2.94	0.83	
Style-flexing (information versus audience focus)	3	When I prepare powerpoint slides for oral presentation, I focus on the information I want to present.	4.31	0.70	4.20	0.75	*p=0.01
	4	When I prepare powerpoint slides for oral presentation, I make them to suit my audience (people listening to me).	4.24	0.79	3.95	0.83	
Types of communication style							
Assertiveness versus responsiveness	5	When we meet for projects, I usually start the discussion.	3.52	1.01	3.42	1.02	
	6	I talk more than I listen.	2.46	1.06	2.76	1.09	*p=0.04
	7	When I talk, I need to express my feelings.[R]	3.16[R]	1.13	3.25[R]	1.06	
		Average Assertiveness Score	2.60		2.64		
Task versus relationship priority in task completion	8	When we do projects, I usually push members to get the job done.	3.38	1.07	3.39	1.04	
	9	When we do projects, I usually want to know what the members think.[R]	4.24[R]	0.71	4.26[R]	0.74	
		Average Task Priority Score	2.07		2.06		
Pace of communication	10	When I am given work to do, I usually finish it quickly.	3.31	1.03	3.36	0.94	
	11	When I am given work to do, I usually think a lot during each step and do it slowly.[R]	3.59[R]	0.90	3.71[R]	0.94	
		Average Fast-Paced Communication	2.36		2.60		

Notes:
Items were on a five-point Likert scale from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree, and the mid-point is three.
*Significant difference at $p < 0.01$
Means were reversed for the calculation of the average mean score so that bigger numbers reflect assertiveness, task priority in task completion, and fast-paced communication accordingly

Based on these results, the participants were better at style-flexing than style-typing. However, if they are not accurate in recognising the type of communication style, the modification they make in their oral presentations may not be on target, and they still would not be able to overcome

communication barriers. To help the Gen Y and Gen Z to become better communicators, they need to be trained to recognise communication styles.

Next, the results on the four communication types are described, focussing on the assertiveness-responsiveness, and task-relationship priority dimensions. Table 4 shows that the Gen Y and Gen Z were significantly different on one out of three aspects of the assertiveness-responsiveness dimension examined. There were significant differences between the two groups on whether they talked more than they listened at p = 0.04 (Gen Y, M=2.46, SD=1.06; Gen Z, M=2.76, SD=1.09). Both groups listened more than they talked, but the mean values indicated that Gen Y participants expressed greater disagreement with the statement, that is, Gen Y listened more than Gen Z. According to Hartman and McCambridge (2011), talking more than listening reflects assertiveness whereas listening more is a responsive communication style. Both groups were responsive, but Gen Y talked less than Gen Z. Gen Y and Gen Z participants were similar on the other two aspects of the assertiveness-responsiveness dimension. When they met for projects, they usually took the lead and started the discussion. This is a characteristic of assertive behaviour, and reflects a need to be in control. They were also emotionally expressive, characteristic of a responsive behaviour (Hartman & McCambridge, 2011). Taken together, both groups reported both assertive and responsive behaviour in communication.

As for task versus people priority in task completion, the mean values in Table 4 showed that both groups were similar in giving more priority to people than to task in getting the job done. They reported that when they did projects, they usually wanted to know what the members thought, and minimally pushed their members to get the job done. By giving more priority to people, they showed that they valued their members' views and ideas. However, when there are conflicting opinions and they are unable to push group members, the timely and good completion of the job may be at stake.

The pace of communication of both groups can be characterised as somewhat slow rather than fast. They minimally agreed that they finished given work quickly, but they reported stronger agreement with the statement that they usually thought a lot during each step and did the work slowly. A slow pace of work is associated with responsiveness, and not assertiveness.

The t-tests showed that were no significant differences in the communication style of Gen Y and Gen Z at 95% confidence level (see Table 4). The subsequent statistical tests were conducted for the 311 participants as a group since the two generational cohorts were similar in their communication style. The t-tests showed that there were also no significant gender differences in the communication style of the participants. The Pearson correlation tests showed that there was no relationship between the participants' communication style and their parents' income (indicative of socio-economic status). These results suggest that differences in the communication style of Gen Y and Gen Z were not due to their demographic background, but their generational cohort.

Finally, average assertiveness, task priority, and fast-paced communication scores were computed, as shown in Table 4. Both Gen Y and Gen Z can be characterised as having low assertiveness (Gen Y, M=2.60; Gen Z, M=2.64), a relationship-priority in task completion (Gen Y, M=2.07; Gen Z, M=2.06), and a slow-paced communication (Gen Y, M=2.36: Gen Z, M=2.60). In Hartman and McCambridge's (2011) framework of communication styles, both groups of participants can be described as amiable communicators (see Figure 1). They are more likely to cooperate during communication, and to conform to group expectations and norms. They ask the "who" questions because they prioritise the opinions of others, and are inclusive in their decision-making.

5. Discussion

The study on Gen Y and Gen Z showed that they are similar in their general characteristics, which include preferences for group-work, affirmation, clear rules, and for their opinions to be valued. They

like face-to-face communication, and using visuals for online communication. There are significant differences in some of their study and work habits, that is, the Gen Y are better than Gen Z at analysing information obtained from the Internet, handling a lot of work at one time. Both generational cohorts expect frequent feedback, but Gen Z expect more instantaneous feedback than Gen Y. As for communication style, both Gen Y and Gen Z are amiable communicators who are low on assertiveness, prioritise relationship over task in task completion, and have a slow-paced communication style. The results showed that Gen Y and Gen Z have some level of style-typing ability, that is, knowing their own communication style by making comparisons with peers. More of them practise style-flexing, as in fitting their communication to the target group to engage with them, but Gen Y have a stronger information-focus in their oral presentations. Their demographic background (gender, ethnic group, socio-economic status) do not influence their communication style, indicating the stronger influence of their generational cohort.

This study offers a description of communication styles of Gen Y and Gen Z in Malaysia, which is previously under-researched. The extant findings on the generational cohorts have concentrated on their traits (e.g., Seemiller & Grace, 2016; Smith & Nichols, 2015; Torocsik et al., 2014) and study behaviours (both Gen Y and Gen Z). Research on work behaviours are mostly on Gen Y (e.g., Hemdi et al., 2018; Jiří, 2016; Kraus, 2017) because Gen Z are only beginning to enter the workforce at this point in time. We have intentionally omitted a detailed investigation of their technology use as their technology-savvy behaviour is already established (e.g., Said et al., 2020), and they are known to be able to use of technology to multitask (Schwieger & Ladwig, 2018) and to obtain information through online channels (Rickes, 2016; Turner, 2015). As for communication, other researchers have already profiled Gen Y's preference for open, inclusive, and frequent communication at work (Abdul Malek & Jaguli, 2018; Soeib et al., 2015), and their need for frequent feedback (Stewart et al., 2017; Yeap et al., 2018). As for Gen Z, studies have also shown Gen Z's willingness to share information (Bencsik et al., 2016), particularly using visuals and emojis and acronyms (Rickes, 2016). To these findings, we add new findings on the awareness of Gen Y and Gen Z on the importance of style-flexing, that is, modifying their dominant communication style to suit the target group's styles. The finding suggests that Gen Y and Gen Z employees may be able to adapt their communication style to those of the Gen X and Baby Boomers who occupy higher hierarchical positions in the organisation. However, the findings in this study also indicated that the Gen Y and Gen Z may not have the ability to fit their communication styles to the group because of their limited style-typing skills. They may lack knowledge of communication styles to make useful assessments of where they stand in terms of their communication skills. However, further research using simulated situations is needed to verify the findings on the limited style-typing ability of Gen Y and Gen Z which are based on their perceptions. If weak style-typing and style-flexing abilities are prevalent across Gen Y and Gen Z, then they will benefit from training sessions on the dual concepts of communication style-typing and style-flexing, using materials such as Hartman and McCambridge's (2011) communication style inventory, which was used to develop the communication style questionnaire in the present study. With a better fit between the communication styles of multi-generational individuals either in academic institutions or the workplace, communication barriers will be lowered.

The study had also identified the Gen Y and Gen Z respondents as having an amiable communication style, that is, they are more responsive instead of assertive, prioritise relationship orientation over task, and have a slow pace in task completion. Their inclination to conform and cooperate means that they may not be able to handle conflicts, which are often inevitable in the workplace. The findings concur with Sriprom et al. (2019) who found that Thai Gen Z university students are high on the agreeableness trait of personality. They have difficulty working alone and making decisions because they are relationship-oriented. While Gen Y and Gen Z may like frequent feedback from their superiors

(Campiere, 2019; Stewart et al., 2017), they may not take well to criticisms. This, too, is unavoidable in the workplace as shown by Yeap et al. (2018). Over half (52.31%) of the Malaysian polytechnic graduates surveyed received positive comments all the time but 42.57% reported receiving criticisms frequently. An implication of the study is for employers to make their work expectations clear to Gen Y and Gen Z employees. Otherwise, task completion is compromised, leading to poor productivity. As amiable communicators, Gen Y and Gen Z value the opinions of others in decisions and plans. In the same way, they expect their views to be considered. Researchers (Abdul Malek & Jaguli, 2018; Soeib et al., 2015) have found the importance of open, inclusive and frequent communication, but a potent area to investigate is whether inclusive communication and similar communication styles of older generational cohorts can increase job satisfaction and retention of talents.

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Appendix 1: Questionnaire for Gen Y and Gen Z characteristics and communication style

GEN Y AND GEN Z COMMUNICATION STYLE

Section 1: About you

1. Your gender
[ ] Female
[ ] Male

2. Your age: ____

3. Your ethnicity:
[ ] Malay
[ ] Chinese
[ ] Dayak
[ ] Kadazan-Dusun
[ ] Orang Ulu
[ ] Indian
[ ] Eurasian

4. Your education background (choose one)
[ ] PMR or lower
[ ] SPM/ O Level
[ ] STPM/ A Level

5. You are currently (select one)
[ ] A student
[ ] Working for someone else
[ ] Self-employed
[ ] Unemployed

6. If you are working, state your income per month (skip this question if you are a student or unemployed)
[ ] Less than RM 2000
[ ] RM 2000 – RM 3999
[ ] RM 4000 – RM 5999
[ ] RM 6000 – RM 7999
[ ] RM 8000 and above

7. Your parents/guardian's income per month
[ ] Less than RM 2000
[ ] RM 2000 – RM 3999
[ ] RM 4000 – RM 5999
[ ] RM 6000 – RM 7999
[ ] RM 8000 and above

8. Your MUET Band score for English Proficiency
[ ] Band 1
[ ] Band 2
[ ] Band 3
[ ] Band 4
[ ] Band 5
[ ] Band 6

9. Your SPM results for Bahasa Melayu
[ ] Grade A (A+/A/A-)
[ ] Grade B (B+/B)
[ ] Grade C (C+/C)
[ ] Grade D
[ ] Grade E
[ ] Grade G

Section 2: Your characteristics (select one only)

1. I like to work in groups.	[ ] Strongly disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Neither disagree nor agree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly agree
2. I like my parents to make decisions for me.	[ ] Strongly disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Neither disagree nor agree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly agree
3. I like to be praised.	[ ] Strongly disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Neither disagree nor agree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly agree
4. I like people to listen to my opinions.	[ ] Strongly disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Neither disagree nor agree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly agree

5. I do not like to be criticised.	[ ] Strongly disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Neither disagree nor agree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly agree
6. I like clear rules.	[ ] Strongly disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Neither disagree nor agree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly agree
7. I like to talk with people face-to-face.	[ ] Strongly disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Neither disagree nor agree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly agree
8. I like to get encouragement from the people around me.	[ ] Strongly disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Neither disagree nor agree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly agree
9. I usually think negatively about things.	[ ] Strongly disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Neither disagree nor agree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly agree

Section 3: Your communication style

1. I have better communication skills than my friends.	[ ] Strongly disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Neither disagree nor agree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly agree
2. I often compare my style of communicating with others.	[ ] Strongly disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Neither disagree nor agree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly agree
3. I communicate in the same way as others.	[ ] Strongly disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Neither disagree nor agree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly agree

4. When I prepare powerpoint slides for oral presentation, I focus on the information I want to present.	[ ] Strongly disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Neither disagree nor agree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly agree
5. When I prepare powerpoint slides for oral presentation, I make them to suit my audience (people listening to me).	[ ] Strongly disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Neither disagree nor agree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly agree
6. When we meet for projects, I usually start the discussion.	[ ] Strongly disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Neither disagree nor agree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly agree
7. I talk more than I listen.	[ ] Strongly disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Neither disagree nor agree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly agree
8. When I talk, I need to express my feelings.	[ ] Strongly disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Neither disagree nor agree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly agree
9. When we do projects, I usually push members to get the job done.	[ ] Strongly disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Neither disagree nor agree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly agree
10. When we do projects, I usually want to know what the members think.	[ ] Strongly disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Neither disagree nor agree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly agree
11. When I am given work to do, I usually finish it quickly.	[ ] Strongly disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Neither disagree nor agree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly agree
12. When I am given work to do, I usually think a lot during each step and do it slowly.	[ ] Strongly disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Neither disagree nor agree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly agree

Section 4: Your study and working style

1. I can find information that I need for my projects easily.	[ ] Strongly disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Neither disagree nor agree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly agree
2. I can analyse information that I find from the Internet well.	[ ] Strongly disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Neither disagree nor agree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly agree
3. I can handle a lot of work at one time.	[ ] Strongly disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Neither disagree nor agree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly agree
4. I usually submit my work before the deadline (due date).	[ ] Strongly disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Neither disagree nor agree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly agree
5. I like to get feedback on my work in the same day.	[ ] Strongly disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Neither disagree nor agree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly agree

Source 8 (Scholarly)

Citation:

Jayabalan, N., Zafir, M. M., Jenny, M. L. D. S., Nor, A. A. R., & Muhammad, A. A. (2019). E-recruitment technology adoption among Generation Z job-seekers. *International Journal of Engineering and Advanced Technology*, *9*(2), 1880-1888.

Summary: This research describes the technological advance in the era of 4.0 today influencing to nowadays organizations in adopting E-recruitment trend in human resource management. An explanation of what is E-recruitment, the characteristics and working practices of E-recruitment in reaching out to job seekers have been mentioned at the beginning of the article. It also touches on the factor of Generation Z on how it this generally able to adapt quickly the digital change in the workplace while choosing Generation Z as the subject for this primary research. The critical point of this study focuses on the four areas which are Optimism, Innovativeness, Discomfort, and Insecurity in considering the response of the relationship between those areas with E-recruitment technology. The research provides a comprehensive understanding of Generation Z regarding the use of the current trend of E-recruitment is increasing.

Relevance: The article discusses human resource management and recruiting practices nowadays, where the E-recruitment trend is most adopted by most organizations in looking for talent, and Generation Z is the primary subject. That is the reason why relate to the topic of considering Generation Z's influence on the changes in management and communication practice, which is presented in the article on the aspect of recruiting.

Place in paper: Literature review, practical implication

E-recruitment Technology Adoption among Generation Z Job-Seekers

Neeta Jayabalan, Zafir Khan Mohamed Makhbul, Jenny Marisa Lim Dao Siang, Nor Azim Bin Hj Ahmad Radzi, Muhammad Ashraf Bin Anuar.

Abstract *- In line with the technological changes in the industry revolutionary era of the 4.0, today's organizations have also quickly adopted new or digital technology trends. One of these new trends is E-recruitment in human resource management. Online recruitment is also known as E-recruitment which is a HR software that uses technology in a particular web-based to guide and assist the hiring process in order to reduce the financial burden, improve the effectiveness of administrative and gain access to a wider pool of talent. A total of 230 data were collected from the Z generation respondents selected purposively convenience. The data was analyzed using the PLS structure equation model to identify the adoption of E-recruitment technology by generation Z. The results of the multi-level analysis showed that the expectation of positive results affects E-recruitment retrieval. Findings and suggestions provide valuable insights on E-recruitment and its implications in the modern era of revolutionary industry 4.0.*

Keywords- E-recruitment; Technology Readiness Index; optimistic; discomfort; insecurity; innovativeness.

I. INTRODUCTION

Recruitment is one of the important responsibilities and task in a HR department. Recruitment is the process of finding and hiring best-qualified candidates which can benefit most of the company [1]. However, the recruitment process had been influenced by technology which is known as E-recruitment. According to [2] E-recruitment is also known as online recruitment which is a HR software that uses technology in a particular web-based to guide and assist the hiring process in order to reduce the financial burden, improve the effectiveness of administrative and gain access to a wider pool of talent.

E-recruitment had been centred on major job sites and social media in order to reach the potential candidates faster. Although e-recruitment had bring many benefit to the human resource management field but it also bring along the disadvantages of it [3]. For example, a longer period of time is spend in sorting surplus and unsuitable candidates. Besides, higher percentage of hiring imperfect candidate to job match might also increase the rate of resignation. Therefore, it is important for us to further know and learn about e-recruitment and find the solution for problem it brings.

E-recruitment means that a company is using a new technology or the Web-based resources to recruit employees such as interviewing, finding, attracting candidates, screening applicants, and assessing candidates. In globalization, e-recruitment is one of the technology that is growing rapidly in the human resource management field. E-recruitment uses the internet to post and advertise vacancies. Communication can take place via email between employers and candidates to get the information about the organization and the jobs [4]. Moreover, Job seekers have more opportunity in finding the suitable jobs through the social networking sites such as Facebook, Google, and LinkedIn. E-recruitment allows the candidates to do an online testing for evaluating their different factors based on their different job profiles.

Globally, generation Z already join the workforce and now they going to be the major job seekers elsewhere. Generation Z is the generation born in the span of 1995 until 2010. Generation Y is before Generation Z, this generation is a Generation Y transition with increasingly developing technology [5]. According to Business today (2019) [6], 71 percent of digital generation thinks they are digitally proficient, but 97 percent worry that they lack the necessary soft skills. Digital era generation is also eager to shape the world of work in the future by leading and helping others, but argues that human interaction remains an important component in the workplace.

Although the generation has begun interacting with electronic devices since birth and growing up with social media, they still expect interaction among people at work. A total of eight out of 10 (81 percent of respondents) expect to learn from colleagues or others, not online, while 74 percent choose to talk face-to-face rather than text-based communication through technology. In addition, 55 percent chose to work in the office instead of working from home and 66 percent wanted to work in groups rather than alone [6]. Dell Technologist's study involves 4,300 Generation Z from Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam and 724 respondents from Malaysia also shows 90 percent of Generation Z have a profound interest in technology-related careers [6].

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As many as 41 percent of Malaysian generation Z are interested in information technology care, 44 percent cyber security and 54 percent technology and development research, while 98 percent of generation Z have used technology as part of formal education and 94 percent argue that technology offered by employers is the reason of them choosing the job offered [6].

Furthermore, e-recruitment has effectively increase the efficiency of the recruitment method which is one of the benefit provided to the HR manager in managing the process. Online recruitment is also known as E-recruitment, has many advantages to organization such as better match, low in cost, quick, less time, and wider area [7]. Other than that, E-recruitment will automatically store the data of the job opening for the recruitment management purpose and save the cost for all the hard copies of advertising job offers [4]. Moreover, e-recruitment can automatically delete all the unsuitable candidates and efficiently provide feedback to candidates who are unqualified. Other than that, e-recruitment also provides benefits to job seekers. In the modern generations, people like to use online applications rather than the traditional applications, because it can save money, time, and able to find more different scope of job offers, and post their resume through the e-mail [5]. Therefore, e-recruitment help the work of human resources management and job seekers become more convenient.

Besides, by using e-recruitment might face different challenges in the human resources management field. The current challenges is technology revolution towards artificial intelligence which the company need to pay the high star-up costs, maintenance costs and updating costs, in all industries. This is especially true for IT since their investment and financial possibilities are significantly more limited than those of larger companies [8].

Therefore, e-recruitment is not only a strategic decision, it is also a problem of financial capacity face by the IT industry. In addition, data security and confidentiality problem is also a challenge because many applicants will fear that their personal detail are not safe. Meanwhile, company will return the resume to the candidates if they are unqualified through the traditional method but e-recruitment enables the resume to stock in the database and the information can be traced back.

However, job seekers will also face some challenges if they have limited access to internet when using the online recruitment to find and apply for job vacancies, especially the individuals from certain regions of the world and the lower social-economic groups. Therefore, when using e-recruitment system, challenges may occur to the human resources management towards Industrial revolution 4.0 [9]. In this case IT companies Human resource department need to find out the technology readiness towards industrial revolution 4.0 on e-recruitment among generation Z. The purpose of the research to improve the behaviour intention of generation Z to use E-recruitment

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to [10] and [11], willingness of people to adapt and embrace new technologies in achieving their goals in the organization is also known as Technology Readiness (TR). TR is used to identify the predisposition of a person in use of the new technologies. Technology Readiness Index (TRI) is establish to measure individual trust on technologies. TRI has four sub area which are optimism, innovativeness, insecurity, as well as discomfort [12]. Innovativeness and optimism are the mechanism of TR or to be said as positive beliefs about technology. However, insecurity and discomfort are hindrance and has a negative thoughts on technology.

In this study, the dependent variable and independent variables are being chosen after the studying done for literature review. The four dimension innovativeness, optimism, insecurity, as well as discomfort are independent variables and intention to use e-recruitment technology is dependent variable that are adopted from research conducted by [10] and [11].

III. RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

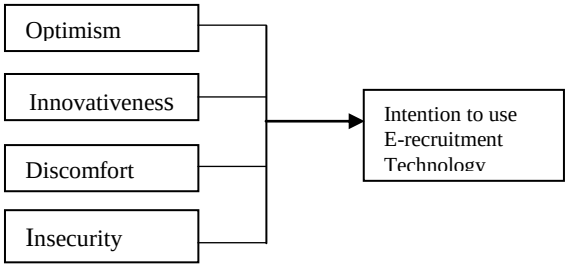


Figure 1

IV. HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

A. Relationship between Optimism and Intention to use E-recruitment Technology

Optimism was seen as the positive attitudes towards the intention to use new technology. It reflects a positive image on technology and trust technology will help people to increase flexibility, control, and efficiency [10], [11]. This shown that before new technology introduces, optimists have a positive effects on technology. In order to achieve the anticipated result, optimists will use effective optimistic strategies. [13] and [14], said that optimists having positive attitude which help in fostering more positive attitudes towards new technology. The openness of optimists makes them less likely to be escapists and more probable to accept their condition. As a result, optimists are willing and more prepared to use new technologies.

Technology optimists have self-confidence on the ability of mastering new technology makes them have an innate positive perception on new technologies. Optimism direct a positive behaviours and attitudes towards the use of new technology [15]. Therefore, optimists are categories as willing to adapt new technologies [16]; [17]. From past studied done by [18], found out that individuals with high optimism will have high acceptance on self-service technology. We can state that the optimists have the intention to use new technology as they accept new technology is functional, useful and convenient because they worry less on negative results or outcomes.

H0: There is no positive relationship between optimism and intention to use E recruitment among generation Z

H1: There is a positive relationship between optimism and intention to use E recruitment among generation Z

B. Relationship between Innovativeness and Intention to use E-recruitment Technology

Generally, innovativeness has make technology as a pioneer [19]. [20] defined innovativeness as individual willingness in exploring new technology that newly release into the market. Moreover, innovative person is always ready for the new technology and willing to try them base on professional knowledge.

High technology innovative individuals will have strong motivation and drives to try and use new technology as they enjoy and energize with new technologies stimulation. Highly innovative people are not really bothered about whether uses of technology are easy or not compared with less-innovative people. Highly innovative individuals may intend to experience challenging difficulties in using new technology [21]. Moreover, highly innovative people has less-complex trust on new technologies [22]. This means that they will not view new technology as hard or complex to understand. Therefore, highly innovative individuals will have more intention to use new technologies than those less innovative individuals.

H0: There is no positive relationship between innovativeness and intention to use E recruitment among generation Z
H1: There is a positive relationship between innovativeness and intention to use E recruitment among generation Z

C. Relationship between Discomfort and Intention to use E-recruitment Technology

Discomfort is a feeling of confusion and lack of control on technology [10], [11]. Discomfort on technology will affect individuals to believe that the technology is controlling them. Moreover, people will feel more complicate and uncertain about new things if they are having a low comfort and uncertainty on adopting new technologies [23].

Therefore, people who are uncomfortable with technology should adopt easier technology in order to attain a similar intention level to use new technology long with individual that have high comfort level. Likewise, to obtain the exact intentions of behaviour, these people must trust that new technology adoption will bring them greater benefits compare to those with a high comfort level [24].

According to [25] and [26], they found that uncomfortable on technology face by a person will cause them hardly to adopt technology because they cannot control the technology and feel anxiety about being control by the technology. Therefore, it can be seen that people who are highly uncomfortable to technology will perceive the new technology as a threat and eventually affect their intention to use the technology.

H0: There is no negative relationship between discomfort and intention to use E recruitment among generation Z
H1: There is a negative relationship between discomfort and intention to use E recruitment among generation Z

D. Relationship between Insecurity and Intention to use E-recruitment Technology

Security issue is the most concern by those people who want to use new technology, especially for financial transaction systems. Insecurity always refers to the feeling of lack of trust of technology, doubtfulness on the system and its capacity to function appropriately, and worry about its possible threat and harmfulness [11]. Perception of insecurity will be the barrier to adoption of new technology [27]. The studies of [28] and [29] reported that insecurity affects people attitudes negatively. The innate fear might be the reason why individuals avoiding technologies. Scepticisms of people towards new technologies may be the reason of their innate fear [30].

As stated by [10] and [11] individuals with high insecurity score will always feel unconfident on the new technology security, they certainly requires assurances to ensure it's safe and secure. They will only take the risks in adapting new technology if it brings a great benefit to them. [31] studies on consumers' behaviour towards online store also shows that individual's intention to do purchasing through network is affected by the security level on network. Therefore, we can argue that insecurity of an individual will affect their intention to use new technology.

H0: There is no negative relationship between insecurity and intention to use E recruitment among generation Z
H1: There is a negative relationship between insecurity and intention to use E recruitment among generation Z

V. METHODOLOGY

According to [32] research set out is a composed, precise, information-based, critical, objective, scientific inquiry or analysis into a particular issue embraced to find answers or answers for it. The creator likewise expressed that research incorporates the procedures of inquiry, examination, assessment, and experimentation. These procedures must be done deliberately, diligently, critically, objectively, and logically. [33] characterized a research methodology as the methodology in which the research purposes can be addressed. Fundamentally, there are two sorts of research techniques. These two kinds are known as 'quantitative research' and 'qualitative research [33], [34]. As expressed by [33], the fittingness of the sort use is dependent on the nature and motivation behind the examination.

This examination was embraced all through the peninsular of Malaysia focused on age Z as our objective populace. The survey was directed in Jun 2019, with objective respondents of 200 respondents determined by G power with minimum 90 samples, demonstrated after [35]. The nonprobability testing using comfort examining strategy was utilized [36].

The items in the self-administered survey were embraced from the past researcher according to table 1 on the TRI. The questionnaire comprised of three areas: statistic profiles, TRI and appropriation. During the procedure of information accumulation, researcher colleagues gave a short preparation to the respondents before they addressed the questionnaire. Information gathered had been breaking down utilizing Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS 25.0) and PLS-SEM version 3.2.8. Cronbach's Alpha had been utilized to measure the reliability [32].

VI. RESULTS ANALYSIS

To begin with, the measurement models of the sum total has been analysed for reliability, before testing speculative models, discrimination validity and convergence validity were tested. Table 3 shows the scores of measurement model and all heaps are higher than 0.70 which is the threshold proposed by [37]. The (AVE) average variance extracted of the agreements surpasses 0.5 [38] while (CR) composite reliability score indicate higher than 0.7 [37]. In this way, we can infer that Convergent ends are accomplished.

The analysation of VIF (Table 3) to test for potential issues of multicollinearity had identified a scope of underneath 3.3 of the VIF esteems for every one develops affirms adequate build validity by an absence of multicollinearity. This is additionally on the grounds that the qualities fall fundamentally underneath the base threshold of 9 [39].

Table 4 demonstrates that outcomes for the validity trial of discrimination. As Suggested by [40] and [41], AVE for all improvement ought to be in higher correlation among them and whatever else development model. As appeared in Table 5, all developments meet this model demonstrating development has the validity of discrimination. [37] demonstrates that the measured variable loading of items ought to be higher compare to cross-load by all at any rate 0.1 to show the legitimateness of discrimination adequate. As appeared in Table 5 contains all developments meeting this foundation. Therefore, we can presume that the validity of discrimination is accomplished.

[42] Additionally proceeded to exhibit the unrivalled performance of this strategy by means of a Monte Carlo reproduction study. All things considered, we have likewise tried the discriminant validity utilizing this new proposed strategy and the outcomes appeared in Table 4. There are two different ways of utilizing the HTMT to evaluate discriminant validity: 1 as a measure or 2 as a statistical test. For the first, if the HTMT worth is more noteworthy than HTMT.85 estimation of 0.85 [43], or HTMT.90 estimation of 0.90 [44] at that point there is an issue of discriminant validity.

Table 1 Convergent validity

Constructs	Loadings	CR	AVE	VIF
Discomfort1	0.708	0.872	0.577	1.493
Discomfort2	0.794			1.747
Discomfort3	0.742			1.58
Discomfort4	0.709			1.466
Discomfort5	0.838			2.058
Innovativeness1	0.805	0.883	0.653	1.795
Innovativeness2	0.791			1.627
Innovativeness3	0.836			1.762
Innovativeness5	0.8			1.783
Insecurity1	0.712	0.901	0.602	1.594
Insecurity2	0.745			1.698
Insecurity3	0.78			1.93
Insecurity4	0.785			1.91
Insecurity5	0.813			2.31
Insecurity6	0.814			2.362
Intention to use 1	0.866	0.923	0.8	2.14
Intention to use 2	0.913			2.656
Intention to use 3	0.905			2.458
Optimism1	0.797	0.895	0.631	1.773
Optimism2	0.817			1.994
Optimism3	0.752			1.646
Optimism4	0.768			1.844
Optimism5	0.835			2.055

Table 2 Fornell & Lackers

	DIS	INN	INS	INT B	OPT
DIS	**0.76**				
INN	-0.508	**0.808**			
INS	0.709	-0.503	**0.776**		
INT B	-0.759	0.616	-0.786	**0.895**	
OPT	-0.406	0.526	-0.441	0.529	**0.794**

Table 3 Cross Loadings

	DIS	INN	INS	INT B	OPT
Discomfort1	**0.708**	-0.312	0.406	-0.498	-0.166
Discomfort2	**0.794**	-0.484	0.601	-0.619	-0.371
Discomfort3	**0.742**	-0.307	0.528	-0.57	-0.349
Discomfort4	**0.709**	-0.45	0.473	-0.528	-0.31
Discomfort5	**0.838**	-0.374	0.654	-0.652	-0.325
Innovativeness1	-0.327	**0.805**	-0.364	0.461	0.37
Innovativeness2	-0.44	**0.791**	-0.433	0.494	0.375
Innovativeness3	-0.488	**0.836**	-0.462	0.571	0.492
Innovativeness5	-0.369	**0.8**	-0.355	0.452	0.456
Insecurity1	0.494	-0.454	**0.712**	-0.59	-0.294
Insecurity2	0.588	-0.378	**0.745**	-0.596	-0.353
Insecurity3	0.569	-0.386	**0.78**	-0.62	-0.372
Insecurity4	0.536	-0.438	**0.785**	-0.611	-0.406
Insecurity5	0.525	-0.321	**0.813**	-0.596	-0.256
Insecurity6	0.586	-0.368	**0.814**	-0.645	-0.369
Intention to use 1	-0.604	0.516	-0.605	**0.866**	0.463
Intention to use 2	-0.702	0.545	-0.745	**0.913**	0.476
Intention to use 3	-0.721	0.59	-0.748	**0.905**	0.481
Optimism1	-0.337	0.415	-0.401	0.478	**0.797**
Optimism2	-0.327	0.409	-0.311	0.411	**0.817**
Optimism3	-0.329	0.397	-0.342	0.397	**0.752**
Optimism4	-0.255	0.348	-0.261	0.325	**0.768**
Optimism5	-0.347	0.501	-0.408	0.461	**0.835**

Table 4 HTMT

	DIS	INN	INS	INT B	OPT
DIS					
INN	0.613				
INS	0.834	0.591			
INT B	0.891	0.718	0.897		
OPT	0.476	0.617	0.503	0.603	

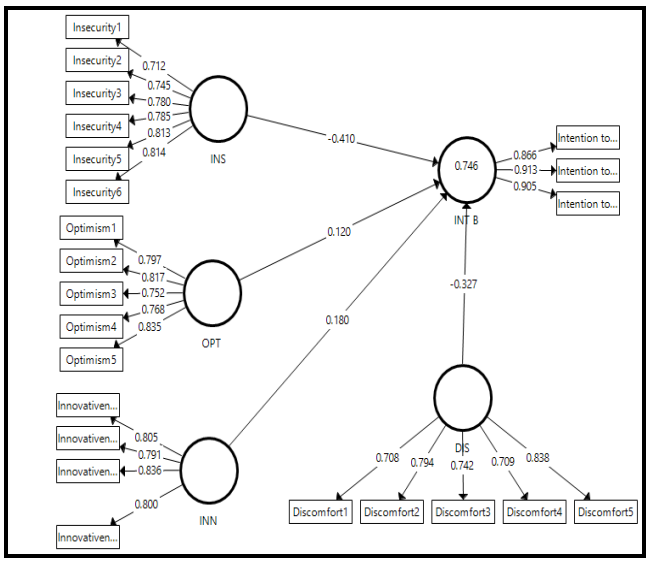


Fig. 2 Measurement Model

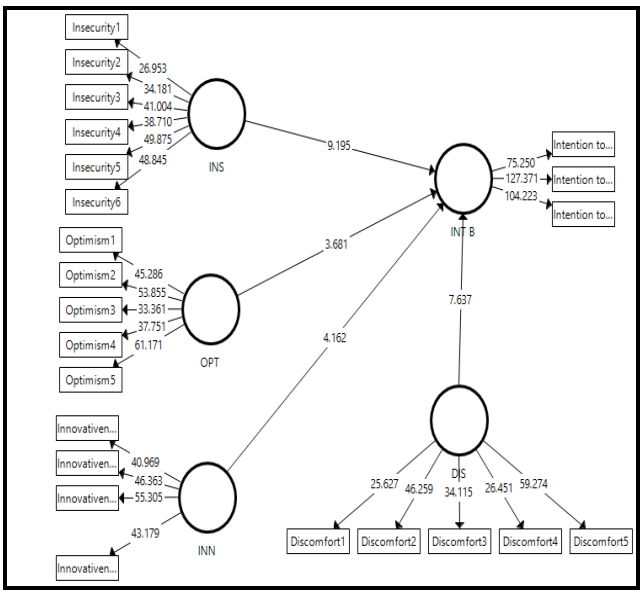


Fig. 3 Structural Model

Table 5: Hypothesis results

Hypothesis	Beta value	T Value	P Values	Decision
DIS -> INT B	-0.327	7.637	0	**Supported**
INN -> INT B	0.18	4.162	0	**Supported**
INS -> INT B	-0.41	9.195	0	**Supported**
OPT -> INT B	0.12	3.681	0	**Supported**

VII. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In this study, questionnaire was filled up by 230 respondents. Respondents were mostly from the age group of of 18 to 24 years, Race is others and undergraduate as education level. Reliability test resulted 0.843 under the pilot study, which demonstrates the questionnaire is perfect and dependable.

A. Bootstrapping Results of Smart PLS 3.2.8

The outcomes were obtain from 230 respondents and dissected using Smart PLS 3.2.8. To analyze the significance of statistical coefficients. [45] prescribe a base of confidence interval are measured based on 1.65 t-statistics values at $p \leq 0.1$. Similarly, [46] embrace that effect sizes of large 0.35, medium 0.15, and small effects 0.02. [47] highlighted the values for R 2 are substantial 0.75, moderate 0.50, and weak 0.25.

Determination of coefficient is identified in R Square under dependent constructs. As indicated by [48], he state that R square of 0.67 indicates as strong, 0.33 indicates of a moderate R square and 0.19 indicates as weak R square. While as per [49], the R square of 0.75 indicates as strong, 0.5 as moderate, and 0.25 as weak R square. [50] suggested that R square altogether ought to be equivalent or more than 0.10, this clarified the variance to be specific and considered sufficient as endogenous construct.

To reach a significance level, 5000 subsamples were utilized in initiating bootstrapping PLS option [51]. Thus, in view of this researcher's study, the R square is strong (0.746). Researchers need to be familiar on F Square so as to think about the model intensity. To determining a decent model, researchers refer to the effect size (f square). Refer to the study, large effects were identified, taking everything into account, researchers realized the Inner Model measurement met the requirement of the Modal.

Table 5 indicates the list of H1 to H4 hypothesis. In addition for all the hypothesis T-statistics value were stated. At the point when the hypothesis is identified as significant if the t-value indicates more than 2.58 ($p < 0.01$), or t-value indicates as more than 1.96 ($p<0.05$), or t-value indicates more than 2.33 ($p < 0.01$) for 1-tail test or t-value indicates as more than 1.645 ($p<0.05$). From Table 5 specify four hypotheses, stated as H1, H2, H3 and H4. This hypotheses are significant from the fact that the positive value were shown from the lower limit and maximum limit. This shows the hypothesis had turned out to be significant which is zero.

VIII. IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

A.Optimism

In this research is shows that there is a significant positive relationship between optimism and intention to use E-recruitment. According to [11] an organization can form a "customer advisory panels" with the function to provide recommendations into the issues regards to assign of servicing staff, the formulation of creative service design and the way to upgrade quality of service.

Recruitment organisation can also refer to this technique to form a "IT advisory panel" in order to upgrade the quality of service on the E-recruitment which in term lead to the increase of generation Z' willingness on using E-recruitment. The management can recruit fresh graduate to join into the development process of E-recruitment. After the recruitment they can started to apply TR scale on them to classify out who are the one with high score in optimism dimension. Afterwards, the management can retain those who are qualified and assists them to form a small responsible team. Thus, if any implementation problems occur, they are the one who will face the issues first. The 1st hand information about the E-recruitment receive by them are far more accurate than the prediction that have been made by the implementation body.

With a reliable information sources, the relevant department can figure out several strategies to precisely counter the problem occurs during the implementation of the E-recruitment system.

B. Innovativeness

The research shows that there is a positive significant relationship between innovativeness and intention to use E-recruitment among gen Z. Innovativeness was the positive driver for people with the intention to use new technology [10], [11]. It was important because innovativeness brings positive impact towards intention to use technology. Student are the important element on evaluate the using of new recruitment system, so the innovativeness of individuals plays an important role in increasing the intention to use E-recruitment. In order to improve student's innovativeness recruitment officers also play pivotal roles. As the role model for gen Z, the management should always utilise this innovative system and communicates on the function and benefits they gains on this the new recruitment system. Business management can specifically assign certain officers to be the speaker regards to this E-recruitment system to educate the generation Z on this system. As the officers change their attitudes towards innovative product, it can be positively influence the diffusion and acceptance of technology among the generation Z [52].

C. Discomfort

Discomfort is a negative influence on intention to use the technology [10]. To increase the intention to use of generation Z toward E-recruitment, business organization can provide more information and explain the usage of E-recruitment for generation Z. The information must be simple and easy to understand thus generation Z will not feel discomfort and this will also enhance knowledge of student about the usage of E-recruitment. The explanation must provide sufficient knowledge to generation Z regarding this advance technology, so generation Z will not feel unable to use the technology (E-recruitment). Therefore, there is a necessity for business organization to organise the talk regards to this E-recruitment system in order to enhance the understanding towards this system. In other words, instead of just giving the information in words on the papers, business organization should have some talk in each semester to educate the new comers as well as motivating the present generation Z to participate in this system.

D. Insecurity

The research shows that there is a negative relationship between insecurity and intention to use E-recruitment among generation Z. In order to decrease the level of the feeling of insecurity among users, organization should organize a security awareness program to the organization staffs itself. It aim to ensure the staffs are aware the importance of protecting sensitive and private information of the users, the reason why they should handle the users personal information securely and the causes of mishandling information [53]. By doing so, this will also help to creates or raises the confidence level of the users. This is because when the business organization management implement this program, it directly shows that they are concern about the security issues faces by the users.

In every organization, the feeling of insecurity to the new technology implication is the critical factors for peoples. Therefore, the organization should provide a high security system for the users in order to create a safe and secure environment when there are using the new technologies-based services. The data is importance as core of every business. If the organization inability to protect the user's personal data, it will be the end of the business [54].

E. Limitation of the Study

Throughout the complete research study conducted, encountered several critical limitations in the progress of the research that will undoubtedly bring tremendous influences to the research reliability and accuracy outcomes. The 1st limitation that are going to be described is about the sample size that adopted in this study. To be honest, this study consists of limited sample size as from our finalise discussion. The insufficient of the sample sizes might have restricted our research team to seek for wider and more complete data range. This is because in this research study, the research team only emphasis on the majority users of the E-recruitment which are generation Z and forgone all the minority users for instance, the staffs in business organization. Thus, there may be a possibility that the sample size which we have applied do not precisely signifies and represents all the users of E-recruitment.

The 2nd limitations of our research study will be fall on the survey questionnaires and its process. This situation occurs because the questions that the team use in the survey questionnaire are not fully designed by their own. Most of the questions are adopted from the past researchers' questionnaires which have been proven to be relevant to this research topic. Thus, the real meanings between what the research team intends to ask may be slightly different from the applied questions in certain extents. Although the variance between the actual implications is insignificant, but the team do not have any direct evidence to guarantee that this dissimilarity will not poses any influences on the final outcomes.

The 3rd limitation that the team discover that few of the respondents do not answer the question seriously. Hence, the researchers have the difficulties to obtain the reliable information which are more relevant to this topic. Therefore, critical bias and error will have high tendency to occur, meanwhile, it might drastically effect the preciseness and reliability of finalise outcomes. As the result, the data that the team collected from the target respondents might not support a strong relationship between the dependent and independent variables

F. Recommendations for future study

In this research, there are numerous of limitations the team have encountered. These weaknesses have been specifically mentioned and explained on above section. First of all, the expansion on the sample size of this research is necessary. This is because the as the sample sizes increases, the tendency to receive more precise results will also be greatly improved. Based on this statement, the research team should enlarge the research coverage areas.

This means that the researchers should increase the amount of the target respondents who involve in this research study. In other words, it also illustrates that the research team should not solely emphasis on the majority users of E-recruitment which are the generation Z only. All the minority users must also be included although this small population may not exert significance effect on the final results. By doing so, the accuracy and reliability of the research will definitely be enhanced as well as avoid critical bias and error to happen. Lastly, the team can also guarantee that the sample size which have applied will precisely signifies and represents all the users of E-recruitment.

The 2nd recommendations will mostly base on the improvement of the questionnaires and the process. To design their own questionnaires manually in this study rather than adopt the past researchers' questionnaires. This is because there are no other exactly same questionnaires regard to this topic. The past researchers' questionnaires can be the foundation for the team to build up their own unique questionnaires which in another meaning, the past researchers' questionnaires should only act as the references for the formulation of questionnaires. In this way, questions which are indirect and ambiguous in term of its meaning can be avoided.

The 3rd recommendation is that the future researchers can perform the online survey method to gather the result from all the target respondents in business organization. This medium will bring conveniences to both the researchers and the respondents. On the side of the team, they can save plenty of the cost and time that needed to collect back the questionnaires while for the respondents, they will have enough time to read and understand the questions without being rush to submit the questionnaires in a short notice of time. Therefore, the results that achieved in this kind of circumstances will more likely to be precise and reliable as compare to previous situation. Moreover, the researchers also need to conduct a short conversation with the target respondents first before giving them the questionnaires. The purpose of this short conversation is to communicate the affairs about the E-recruitment especially on its actual and multiple functions.

Last but not least, the 4th recommendation is that the future researchers can also try to emphasis on other related element since this research study is mainly focus on the 4 dimension in the technology readiness only which are optimism, innovativeness, discomfort and insecurity. This can be proven by the result of R^2 in the Multiple Regression Analysis. Through the results, it is crystal clear that the existence of other related factors that will exert influences on the dependant variable are undoubtedly. In this research, the secondary database which act as another source of resources also plays a pivotal role for the team to receive the information wanted in this study. Thus, business organization must always keep up-to-date regards the resources in their secondary database to support the researchers in obtaining valuable information

IX. CONCLUSION

In the nut shell, the research team really have gained a better and comprehensive understandings regards to the factors that influence the intention to use E-recruitment among generation. Based on what we have acquired from the study, we discover that the four independent variables which are optimism, innovativeness, insecurity and discomfort really exert tremendous effect on the intention to use. We prove that both innovativeness and optimism are the drivers that will increase overall technology readiness which in term lead to more intention to use the new technology.

At the same time, we also know that the insecurity and discomfort will always act as the inhibitors that reduce the technology readiness which causes drastically reduce in the intention to use advanced technology. Both of the drivers will exert influences among themselves, meanwhile, also will affect the both of the inhibitors. In other words, the effect will not just stop in inter group whereas it will also carry on between the intra group. The drivers as usual, affect positively the technology readiness and intention to use while the inhibitors will negatively affect the technology readiness and also the intention to use.

From the result in this topic, it is sufficient to conclude that the strongest influential factor that positively affect the intention to use E-recruitment will be the innovativeness accompany by the optimism factors that also reaches the second most influential factor towards the willingness to use E-recruitment. Both of the drivers are crucial in increasing the rate of respondents to use E-recruitment. The more the drivers available in area of the research, the higher the technology readiness it will be. This in term will result in the increases of intention to use E- recruitment technology.

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Source 9 (Scholarly)

Citation:

El-Menawy, S. M. A., & Saleh, P. S. (2023). How does the mediating role of the use of social media platforms foster the relationship between employer attractiveness and Generation Z intentions to apply for a job?. *Future Business Journal*, *9*(1), 65.

Summary: The article was written about the job seekers, particularly from Generation Z, are increasingly using social media and other online platforms for job search. The focus point of this study is to make clear the mediating role of social media platforms in how to shape the relationship between employer attractiveness and Generation Z's intention to apply for jobs. Additionally, some focal dimensions of employer attractiveness, which Generation Z seriously considers when choosing a job, are application and diversity, management, reputation, work environment, development and interest, and social and economic value. The article has mentioned employer branding and employer attractiveness, the general effect of social media platforms on Generation Z. At the end of the article, the study proves that social media helps enhance a company image, which also improves the possibility of attracting and retaining more candidates. Along with that, the choice of platform communication channel is a strong factor to leads to the success of hiring talents for the corporate.

Relevance: The article has specifically researched the mediating of social media's role in recruiting Generation Z workers. It relates to the topic of how the influence of Generation Z made a change in communication practices.

Place in the paper: Introduction, literature review

Future Business Journal

RESEARCH Open Access

How does the mediating role of the use of social media platforms foster the relationship between employer attractiveness and generation Z intentions to apply for a job?

Sara Mohamed Abdelaziz El-Menawy[1*] and Pancie Salah Saleh[2]

Abstract

The way Jobseekers apply for jobs has drastically changed due to the rise of digital technology. With the rise of social media Jobseekers nowadays typically utilize social networking sites or other online platforms to look for work and it has made it a vital part of the labor market, especially among the young generation. The aim of this research was to determine the mediating effect of Social Media Platforms on the relationship between Employer Attractiveness and Generation Z intentions to apply for a job. The researchers use a Judgmental sampling method among fresh graduates and final-year students of number of Private universities in Egypt. Structure Equation Modeling were then used to analyze the data. The finding of this research revealed that Social Media Platforms has a mediating effect on the relationship between Employer Attractiveness and Gen Z intentions to apply for a job. Moreover, when it comes to choosing an employer, the younger generations prioritize economic value, social value, Reputation and development-interest factors over the application-diversity, working environment aspects, and management and work life balance. Furthermore, this research revealed that, the significance of certain aspects of a job change depending on the participants' educational level and the study's program. The contribution of this research provides valuable insight into how employers are perceived by young job seekers. They can also be used to develop effective recruitment strategies and improve the communication between HR professionals and candidates.

Keywords Employer attractiveness, Employer branding, Social media platforms, Generation Z, Job pursuit intention

Introduction

Understanding how Generation Z enters the workforce is crucial as they start to graduate and enter the job market. Generation Z is defined by (Oxford English [1] as individuals born between the 1990s and 2010s. They are the generation of people who have changed their online behavior due to how they use technology. The main difference between Millennials and Generation Z, according to [2] is how they use technology when they were young. In addition to being constantly connected to their digital environments, [3] stated that Generation Z also spend a lot of time-consuming videos and interacting with their social networks. Moreover, [4] declared that they try to show off their reliable identities on social media. According to a study conducted by Chen et al. [5], Generation Z's social media usage has become a tool for shaping their personal brand and influencing job market performance. The genuineness of a Generation Z individual's online image can affect their job-seeking behavior. This is why social media has become a vital component of recruitment process [6].

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Employer may use branding techniques to build a distinctive image that sets it apart from its rivals [7]. it is clear that Employer reputation and image affect the organization's ability to attract candidates [8]. The concept of employer branding was first explored by Barrow and Ambler [9]. It is a process that aims to improve the image of an organization to attract and retain the best talent. In 2014, Sharma and Chhabra noted that it is a trend that is becoming more prevalent due to the increasing number of companies struggling to find qualified candidates. When job seekers are considering various organizations for their next job, they usually rely on number of attractiveness factors such as corporate reputation, diversity, work life balance and work environment to get a deeper understanding of the working conditions of the company.

Social media enables marketers to create distinctive interactions between their brands, customers, and employees [10]. Due to the rise of social media, customers, employees, and others have become more empowered and engaged in their relationships with businesses [11]. Organizations must exercise caution while managing and auditing their social media branding operations as viewers have grown more active [10]. While businesses are aware of the potential and advantages of social media marketing, many are still unclear about how to use it and gauge its efficacy, which makes it difficult to manage and implement social media campaigns [12].

With focus on the fact that Generation Z have grown up with social media and are now digital natives. They will likely start working for companies in the future, though the exact traits and working habits of this group are still unclear. According to [13], the expectations of Gen Z workers are different from those of previous generations. Without a comprehensive understanding of this group, businesses will not be able to find the ideal candidates. This will also affect their retention and recruitment efforts. To accommodate the needs of Generation Z workers, businesses should conceptualize and construct workplaces that are conducive to their talents. Moreover, Cennamo and Gardner [14], [15], Twenge [16] asserted that the difference between generations in how they prioritize an employer's attractiveness varies. According to a study conducted by [17], Terjesen et al. [18], there is still a gap in the knowledge about the preferences of various generations when it comes to the attributes of an employer's attractiveness. Also, there is a lack of reliable research on the preferences of professionals coming into organizations from Gen Z. This research aims to identify the dimensions of employer attractiveness among Generation Z and investigate whether there is a statistically significant difference in the perceived importance level of each attractiveness dimension based on gender, education, and study program. Taking into considerations the mediating role of the social media platforms in shaping Gen Z preferences to apply for a job. Also, the research was conducted in Egypt among students of private universities with various disciplines, explores the expectations of Gen Z workers and the characteristics of employers that they consider when it comes to choosing a job (Figs. 1, 2).

The structure of this research is as follows to accomplish the purpose of this research. To build the groundwork for the empirical research on employer

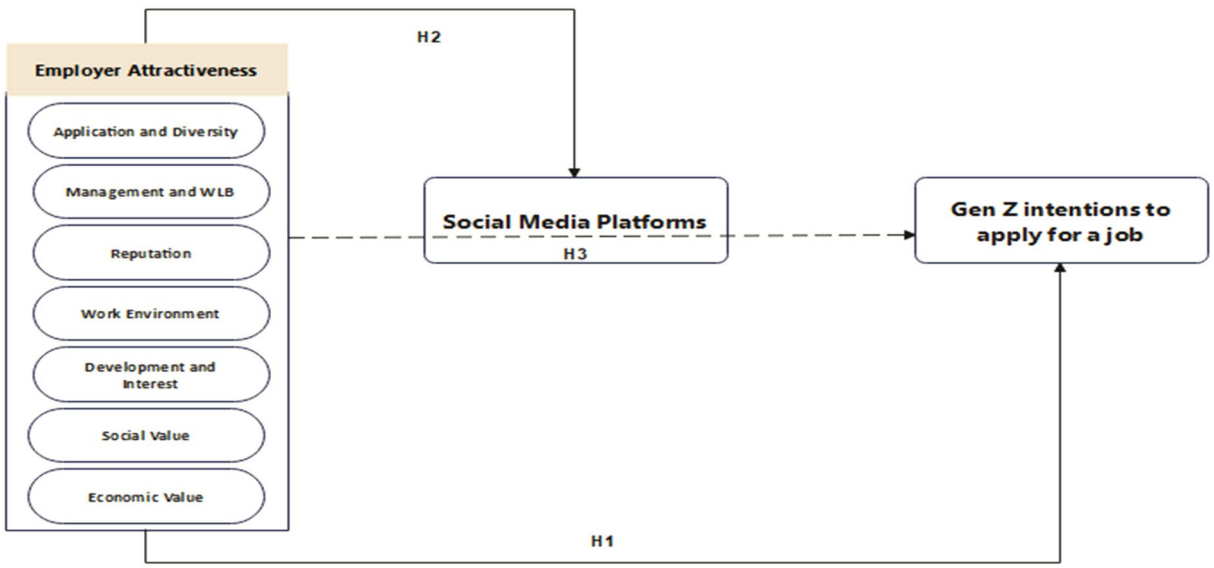


Fig. 1 Research conceptual model

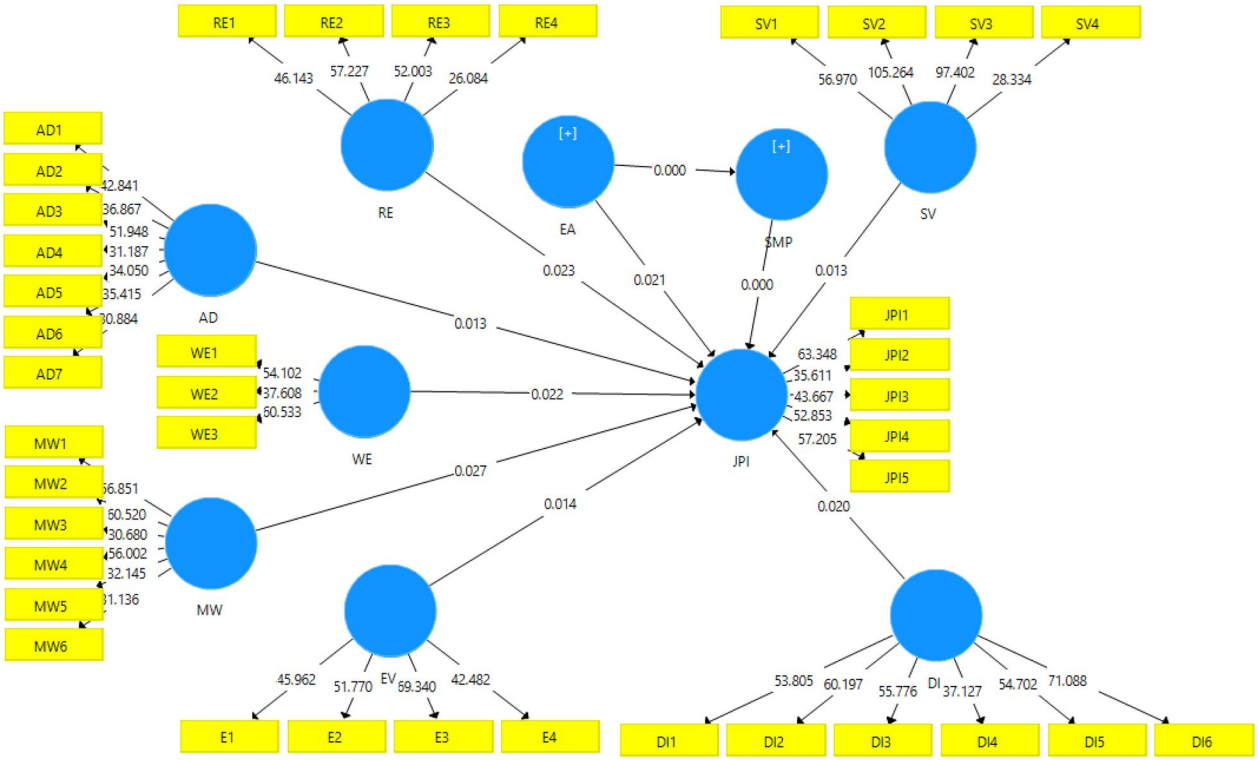


Fig. 2 PLS-SEM algorithm mediation

attractiveness, thorough literature review is carried out, and the various traits of the generation z are reviewed. The social media platforms and Gen Z preferences to apply for a job. The methodological processes are then displayed. The empirical portion then begins with a description of the research sample, and dimensions of employer attractiveness are found using Structure Equation Modeling analysis. This research extends the existing literature and contributes to the theory by testing the research model in a different context, applying it to current students in the private universities in Egypt.

Literature review and research hypotheses

Employer branding and employer attractiveness

Due to the various demographic factors and trends that affect the labor market, companies are now revising their positions. It is clear that not every candidate is interested in the same job position at the same company. Instead, there are multiple positions that are available for the same candidate in the market. This has caused the HR department to rethink its role and how it sells the jobs. Franca and Pahor [19] emphasized that it's beneficial to seek help from areas that used to fall under the category of pure marketing disciplines. After examining the image and reputations of companies, the concept of employer brand emerged. According to [20] they declared that companies are looking for new ways to retain and attract skilled and experienced workers due to the global shortage of qualified and experienced individuals. According to Urbancov et al. [21] Employer branding programs can help organizations attract and retain skilled workers and improve public awareness. Moreover, employer branding refers to a corporation's reputation and value proposition. It also includes a set of principles and tools that can help companies improve their image. Furthermore, the management of a company's employer brand involves planning, developing, and communicating its value proposition. This stage involves coming up with a set of goals and values that are tied to the organization's culture and goals. The second stage involves developing a strategy that will help attract and retain workers. Finally, the third stage involves aligning the internal and external brands to ensure that the organization's image is easily recognized. employer attractiveness is defined as the perceived benefits a potential employee anticipates receiving by working for an organization [22]. Hence, it affects recruiting and employee retention [23]. An attitude or expressed overall good affect toward an organization, toward considering the corporation as a desirable entity with whom to establish some interaction, is another definition of employer attraction [24], p. 221). Organizations should advertise their employer brand to recruit talent. Attractiveness

and accuracy are the two key metrics for determining an employer brand's success. Understanding what appeals to job searchers is crucial for firms in a severe talent shortage since it affects both employee retention and recruiting [25]. In contrast, company independent information sources like word-of-mouth, employee recommendations, and online reviews are thought to be more reliable because they are less likely to be manipulated by organizations [26]

Previous studies have demonstrated a significant correlation between employer attractiveness and employer brand [22, 27]. Employer branding is the idea of "creating a clear view of what makes a firm different and appealing as an employer" both internally and externally [28], p. 51). In order to create a positive employer brand image, distinctiveness must be carefully crafted. This influences the brand's appeal and attractiveness in the long run. Organizations must focus on employer attractiveness to draw in job candidates and differentiate their brand [, 8]. Being attractive is a quality of the employer brand [29].

According to [30] the attractiveness of an employer is operationalized based on the attributes that candidates consider when making their job selection. These attributes can then be categorized into different groups according to the preferences of potential employees, which makes it easier for them to choose an employer. Although [31] defined the concept of employer attractiveness as a combination of factors that include the location, salary, and culture, (O'Brien [32]) differentiated the concept from symbolic elements. This concept is commonly used in empirical studies. According to [30] the attributes that candidates consider when choosing an employer are usually can be used by prospective employees to determine which organizations they should choose based on their preferences. Literature has various suggestions on how to categorize employer attractiveness. The Scale was suggested by [30]. It features five different values which is represents a scale that can be used to determine an organization's level of attractiveness according to the perception of the employees and Job Seekers. The five values defined as follows:

The Interest Value is an individual's interest value is determined by the extent to which they are attracted to a company that provides a stimulating work environment and innovative work practices, The concept of Social Value is defined as the extent to which individuals are attracted to organizations that provide enjoyable work environments, good relationships, and a cooperative atmosphere. The Economic Value of an individual is determined by how much they are attracted to an organization that provides them with high-quality employment and compensation. The concept of Application Value is used in our research to measure the level of attraction that individuals have to an organization that values them and provides opportunities for them to develop their skills and knowledge. A person's Development Value is linked to the confidence and recognition that they receive from an employer, as well as their career-boosting experiences. In this research we also add a Management and work-life balance value to the Employer Attractiveness measurement, which indicates the extent to which people are attracted to an employer that provides them with opportunities to balance their private and professional lives. Moreover, we also add Reputation to the Employer Attractiveness measurement.

The characteristics of generation Z

Based on the work of Mannheim in 1952 and presented in management research, the term generation denotes individuals who were born at the same time as the historical or social events that occurred during that period. The proximity of such individuals to similar environments can influence their perception and behavior (Connolly 2019, Mannheim 1952). Moreover, Benson and Brown [33], [17], Lyons et al. [34], Twenge et al. [16] declared that the concept of generation has gained widespread recognition among management practitioners and academics. It stems from the belief that various generations have their own work attitudes and values, which dictate the kinds of work environments and management practices that they prefer.

The most racially and technologically diverse generation is Generation Z, according to the Institute for Emerging Problems (2012). Social networking is a crucial aspect of Generation Z's existence, and they have a casual, direct, and distinctive communication style. They are a generation that values. According to a study by Dan Schawbel [, 35], Generation Z is less driven by money than Generation Y and is more entrepreneurial, trustworthy, tolerant, and open-minded. Based on the findings of Singh and Dangmei [13] Generation Z is the most demanding, acquisitive, materialistic, and entitled generation to date. It also tends to be impatient, lacking the ambitions of previous generations, suffering from attention deficit disorder with a high dependence on technology and a low attention span. Moreover, Mihelich [36] declared that the Generation Z has a strong feeling of responsibility for the environment and is particularly worried about environmental issues. Furthermore, generation Z want to be heard and although they are tech aware and have made technology a part of their identity, they lack problem-solving abilities and have not shown that they can look at an issue, put it in context, analyze it, and come to a decision. Consequently, the following general hypothesis is formulated.

H1 Employer attractiveness Significantly Impacts Generation Z intentions to apply for a job.

H2 There is significant relationship between Employer Attractiveness and the use of Social Media Platforms.

The effect of social media platforms on generation z

The rise of social media and online job portals has drastically changed the way recruitment is conducted. Today's younger generations are looking for jobs on the Internet. Besides job portals, applications and other social media platforms also play a crucial role in the recruitment process. Nowadays, the recruitment strategy is more individualized and focused [37]. Moreover, social media has made it much easier for companies to find candidates who are not actively searching for work. In the past, it was very challenging to reach out to these individuals. Since people can easily access information about companies and individuals due to the widespread use of the Internet, employers should monitor how they market their businesses online. Moreover, it is important for job seekers to monitor their social media profiles to make sure that they are not only presenting themselves as a credible candidate, but that they are also contributing to the company's success. Also, declared that over 70% of recruiters check an applicant's social media page before making a decision. The most popular and extensively used social media include the social networking site Facebook, the microblogging site Twitter, the video-sharing website YouTube, the photo-sharing website Instagram, and niche social media sites like LinkedIn and Golden Line (portals with a recruitment and professional-business profile). 86% of employees have coworkers among their friends on social media, according to research by O'Connor, Schmidt, and Drouin, while 77% of people use social media at work. The fact that 44% of people share information about their jobs on social media is significant from the perspective of the topic of this essay [38, 39].

The distinction between personal and professional social media platforms is one of the various methods to classify social media platforms [40, 41]. User behaviors are essentially unrestricted in personal social media platforms, exposing a wide range of details about different aspects of their lives [42]. Almost 2.89 billion people use Facebook, the largest personal social media platform [43]. Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok are some additional significant personal SM platforms. LinkedIn, the largest professional social media platform, has nearly 800 million users. In these platforms, more constraints (both explicit and implicit) are imposed upon the user, sharing a larger depth of professional information (e.g., work history, professional affiliations, accomplishments), but less information from other facets of life. Accordingly, we hypothesis the following hypothesis:

Job pursuit intention

Positive social media posts are typically shared by staff who have great opinions of their employers and produce real information about their work and abilities [44]. Based on the research by [45] they declared that due to the increasing number of people using social media, both employees and employers are trying to promote their brands. Both parties should take the necessary steps to protect their online reputations. Moreover, [46, 47] revealed that the rise of social media has shown that it is no longer just a place for informal communication and entertainment. It has also become a vital part of people's lives, as it allows them to connect with their networks. Most of companies nowadays are sharing content related to their business and also about their employees on different social media platforms, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. Furthermore, [47] and Malaska and Nadeem (2012), stated that, LinkedIn has become the social media platform that businesses, professionals, and employees most frequently utilize. As the largest professional network in the world, LinkedIn has inevitably become a crucial social media tool for businesses [48]. Professionals from all over the world use LinkedIn to access the most recent business material, connect with current and former coworkers, seek professional advice, and look for potential job vacancies [49, 50]. Students use LinkedIn to showcase their capabilities, accomplishments, learned skills, and prospective work interests in order to develop a distinctive brand in the cutthroat job market [51]. By adding their work experience, recommendations from former coworkers, professional credentials, and other information to their LinkedIn profiles, professionals maintain and improve their personal brands [52, 53]. LinkedIn is a platform used by staff members to discuss their jobs, career experiences, and accomplishments [54]. The promise of an employer's brand is enhanced through social media. This process involves leveraging existing employees to endorse the organization's message and provide a voice for the brand. Social media affordances also help the employer brand reach its target audience and increase its visibility. Therefore, the following hypothesis is formulated.

H3 The use of Social Media Platforms has a mediating effect on the relationship between Employer Attractiveness and Gen Z intentions to apply for a job.

Methodology

This research aimed to find out what Generation Z thought about the various aspects of an employer's attractiveness and whether social media platforms influenced their perception of an employer's attractiveness and whether they would be more inclined to apply for a job. Also, this research was conducted on fresh graduates and final year undergraduate students from private universities in Egypt. The participants are from different majors (Marketing, Human Resource Management, Finance, Business Technology), which is a group of individuals that are expected to be highly skilled and sought after by employers.

Data collection and sample design

This research utilized a quantitative method to analyze how generation Z views the workplace's attractiveness in Egypt and how this influences their choices when it comes to apply for a job. Social media platforms also played a role in this relationship. It was carried out through a Judgmental sampling method among fresh graduates and final-year students of number of Private universities in Egypt. The researchers were able to enroll them through various means, such as social media groups, mailing lists, and personal contacts, and the participants were chosen from private universities in Egypt. The researchers conducted the survey online among the students, who are expected to graduate within the next couple of months and join the workforce and also the fresh graduates. All the participants had been chosen from different majors. Three hundred questionnaires were distributed and 200 complete and valid questionnaires were received.

As shown here in Table 1 it could be concluded that the sample group's proportions, with females comprising 49.2% and males 50.8%. The sample group's age breakdown indicates that the majority of the respondents, 52%, are aged between 21 and 22, while 32.7% are below 20 years old. The remaining 2% are aged 23–24 or above. Moreover, the majority of the respondents have a bachelor's degree, with 20% stating that they have a master's degree, and another 17% having a doctorate. Furthermore, according to the specialization, a high proportion of them claimed to have studied various fields of business (65.3%), such as finance (73.4%), human resource management (76.9%), and marketing (76.9%), Among the most popular study subjects among the respondents were international business (92.5%) and entrepreneurship (93.5%).

Generally, the data collected by the research questionnaire revealed valuable information about the educational backgrounds of the respondents, which can be used to inform future research and improve the recruitment and marketing strategies of companies.

Table 1 Respondent's profile

Demographic variable and category		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	101	50.8%
	Female	98	49.2%
Age	< 20	65	32.7%
	21 – 22	111	55.8%
	23 – 24	18	9%
	25 +	5	2.5%
Education	Bachelor's Degree	252	63%
	Master's Degree	80	20%
	Doctorate	68	17%
Field of specialization			
General business administration	Yes	130	65.3%
	No	69	34.7%
Finance	Yes	146	73.4%
	No	53	26.6%
Marketing	Yes	117	58.8%
	No	82	41.2%
Entrepreneurship	Yes	184	92.5%
	No	15	7.5%
International business	Yes	186	93.5%
	No	13	6.5%
Human resource management	Yes	153	76.9%
	No	46	23.1%
Other fields of business	Yes	152	76.4%
	No	47	23.6%

Measurement development

The Independent Variable "employer attractiveness" scale was adapted from Berthon et al. [30] taking into account some modifications to fit the respondent's culture, this was set to make it easier for the respondents to understand. This scale was modified by Dabirian et al. [55] added two dimensions to the scale: work-life balance and management. In addition, this scale was modified by Schlager et al. [56] by adding Reputation to the Scale. A Five-Point Likert scale was used to assess the importance of each item (1—not important at all, 2—unimportant, 3 – neutral, 4—important, 5—extremely important). The dependent variable" Job Pursuit Intention" scale was adapted from Highhouse et al. [57]. The Scale of the mediator variable "social media" was adapted from Collins and Stevens [58]. This scale was developed originally to be used in general marketing. Consequently, it was modified to match the objectives of this research to know the mediating role of Social Media platforms in the

relationship between Employer Attractiveness and Generation Z intentions to apply for a Job.

Data analysis

The researchers used partial least squares (PLS) in the analysis of structural equation modeling to test the hypothesis of this study. The study also analyzed the structural model and the measurement model's validation. The advantages of using partial least squares over the traditional methods were numerous. It helps minimize inaccuracies in the calculation of variables.

Results

Reliability and validity of the measurement

It could be concluded from Table 2 that the validity and reliability measures of the different constructs are presented in Table 2. The first one, which is Employer Attractiveness, exhibited an average variance of 0.878 and an average composite reliability of 0.980. The construct's Cronbach's alpha of 0.977 also indicated that the items within it are related to each other. While Social Media Platforms' composite reliability and internal consistency score of 0.202 and 0.719 indicates that it may be less reliable and consistent than the other constructs. However, they still have acceptable factor loadings ranging from 0.320 to 0.699. But its individual components show that they still follow the same underlying concept. Moreover, The Job Pursuit Intention's composite reliability and internal consistency score of 0.814 and 0.956 indicates that it is highly reliable. Its Cronbach alpha of 0.943 also supports its reliability. Furthermore, the different constructs of Employer Attractiveness dimensions that are related to the concept of work life balance, development, and interest, social value, and management and work environment exhibited high internal consistency. They also have high alpha values ranging from 0.8 to 0.957. This is concluding that the different constructs used in the research are reliable and valid indicators of the concepts they are related to. They support the use of such constructs in future studies.

As shown in Table 3, the results of the Larcker and Fornell criterion for assessing the validity of various constructs. The value of the diagonal is the average variance of each construct, while the off diagonal is the correlation between them. According to the results, the average variance (AV) of each construct is higher when compared to the correlations between them and other constructs. Although the link between Working Environment and Social Media Platforms is relatively high, this suggests that there might be overlap between these two constructs. Further research on their operationalization and conceptualization is required.

Table 4 illustrates the results of the HTMT analysis, which is a type of test for discriminant validity that involves calculating the ratio between two constructs. If the ratio falls below 0.9, then the discriminant validity can be upheld. The table shows that the HTMT ratios for all the constructs were below 0.9, which indicates that the discriminant validity of each pair of constructs can be upheld. This means that the measures used in the analysis exhibited good discriminant validity.

As shown in Table 5, it represents the model's testing quality with regard to the two main variables, namely, job pursuit intention and social media platforms. The R Square represents the variance in the dependent factor's value, while the R Square Adjusted considers the model's predictors. The table indicates that the R Square for job pursuit intention is 0.583, which implies that about 58.3% of the variance can be explained by the model's independent variables. On the other hand, the adjusted value indicates that this figure drops to 56.3% after taking into account the predictors. The R Square for social media platforms is 0.315, which indicates that about 31.5% of the variance can be attributed to the model's independent factors. On the other hand, the adjusted value shows a slight decrease when the model takes into account the predictors.

Generally, from the above discussion it could be concluded that, the values indicate that the model can provide good explanatory power when it comes to job pursuit intention and moderate power when it comes to social media platforms. Nevertheless, it is crucial to keep in mind that these values may be affected by the model's specific measures and variables, and these may not be generalized to other situations.

Testing research hypotheses

The following Table 6 summarizes the results of a mediation study that analyzed the link between various factors that affect job pursuit intention. These include social media platforms and employer attractiveness.

From Table 6 it could be concluded that In H1, the notion that an employer's attractiveness can influence job seekers' minds is supported by the hypothesis's path coefficient − 23.129 and p-value 0.015. and this is showing a significant relationship between the two. These hypothetical ideas try to determine how an employer's attractiveness affects job seekers' intentions. In addition to economic and social status, other factors like reputation and work-life balance can also have an effect Generation Z intention to apply for a job. As shown from the above-mentioned table, the hypothesis H2 indicates the relationship between the social media platforms and an employer's attractiveness. The path coefficient for its relationship is 0.562, while the p-value is 0.001. This

Table 2 Construct reliability and validity measures

Construct	Indicator	Factor Loading	AVE	CR	Cronbach's Alpha
Employer attractiveness	AD	0.937	0.878	0.980	0.977
	DI	0.953			
	EV	0.949			
	MW	0.944			
	RE	0.930			
	SV	0.948			
	WE	0.897			
Social media platforms	SMP1	0.411	0.719	0.202	0.649
	SMP2	0.601			
	SMP3	0.320			
	SMP4	0.563			
	SMP5	0.554			
	SMP6	0.699			
	SMP7	0.683			
	SMP8	0.587			
	SMP9	0.617			
Job pursuit intention	JPI1	0.916	0.814	0.956	0.943
	JPI2	0.872			
	JPI3	0.887			
	JPI4	0.923			
	JPI5	0.912			
Application and diversity	AD1	0.876	0.750	0.954	0.944
	AD2	0.872			
	AD3	0.901			
	AD4	0.834			
	AD5	0.851			
	AD6	0.865			
	AD7	0.860			
Development and interest	DI1	0.884	0.822	0.965	0.957
	DI2	0.917			
	DI3	0.908			
	DI4	0.885			
	DI5	0.916			
	DI6	0.929			
Economic	E1	0.890	0.815	0.946	0.924
	E2	0.916			
	E3	0.920			
	E4	0.885			
Management and work life balance	MW1	0.901	0.771	0.953	0.940
	MW2	0.909			
	MW3	0.842			
	MW4	0.909			
	MW5	0.868			
	MW6	0.836			
Reputation	RE1	0.879	0.778	0.933	0.904
	RE2	0.909			
	RE3	0.897			
	RE4	0.841			

Table 2 (continued)

Construct	Indicator	Factor Loading	AVE	CR	Cronbach's Alpha
Social value	SV1	0.923	0.840	0.955	0.936
	SV2	0.944			
	SV3	0.940			
	SV4	0.858			
Working environment	WE1	0.896	0.810	0.927	0.883
	WE2	0.887			
	WE3	0.916			

Table 3 Discriminant validity of construct (Fornell and Larcker Criterion)

	AD	DI	EC	EA	JPI	MW	RE	SV	SMP	WE
AD	0.866									
DI	0.869	0.907								
EC	0.872	0.900	0.903							
EA	0.937	0.953	0.949	0.937						
JPI	0.695	0.676	0.687	0.709	0.902					
MW	0.873	0.873	0.896	0.944	0.646	0.878				
RE	0.859	0.861	0.848	0.930	0.653	0.858	0.882			
SV	0.866	0.907	0.879	0.948	0.685	0.870	0.864	0.917		
SMP	0.574	0.526	0.547	0.562	0.588	0.507	0.533	0.523	0.449	
WE	0.795	0.838	0.819	0.898	0.607	0.823	0.813	0.828	0.469	0.900

Table 4 Discriminant validity (Heterotrait and Monotrait Ratio (HTMT))

	AD	DI	EC	EA	JPI	MW	RE	SV	SMP
DI	0.914								
EC	0.932	0.957							
EA	0.973	0.985	0.997						
JPI	0.737	0.711	0.733	0.737					
MW	0.925	0.920	0.962	0.985	0.683				
RE	0.929	0.926	0.928	0.990	0.706	0.931			
SV	0.921	0.959	0.945	0.990	0.727	0.925	0.938		
SMP	0.610	0.524	0.581	0.559	0.600	0.515	0.554	0.531	
WE	0.868	0.908	0.905	0.969	0.663	0.900	0.906	0.906	0.593

Table 5 Testing quality of the model

Variables	*R* square	*R* square adjusted
Job pursuit intention	0.583	0.563
Social media platforms	0.315	0.312

is reflecting the significant relationship between Social Media Platforms and Employer's Attractiveness.

While in hypothesis H-3, the effect of social networking sites on the connection between job seekers' intentions and companies' attractiveness is analyzed. The path coefficient and p-value of 0.240 and 0.001, respectively, suggest that these sites mediate the link between the two.

It could be concluded that the result of the study indicates that the employer's attractiveness has a positive

Table 6 Results of hypotheses testing (Mediation Test)

Hypotheses	Path coefficient	Stand error	*T*-statistics	*P*-value	Decision
H_1 : EA > JPI	−23.129	9.454	2.446	0.015	Significant
$H_{1.a}$: AD > JPI	4.012	1.540	2.604	0.009	Significant
$H_{1.b}$: MW > JPI	3.298	1.418	2.325	0.020	Significant
$H_{1.c}$: RE > JPI	3.470	1.435	2.417	0.016	Significant
$H_{1.d}$: WE > JPI	3.124	1.284	2.434	0.015	Significant
$H_{1.e}$: DI > JPI	3.633	1.464	2.482	0.013	Significant
$H_{1.f}$: SV > JPI	3.863	1.486	2.601	0.010	Significant
$H_{1.g}$: EV > JPI	3.873	1.489	2.601	0.010	Significant
H_2 : EA > SMP	0.562	0.062	9.067	0.000	Significant
H_3 : EA > SMP > JPI	0.240	0.071	3.389	0.001	Significant

effect on generation Z intentions to apply for a job. It also found that social media platforms can partially mediate this link. Moreover, the result indicated that the employer attractiveness dimensions (application and diversity, management and work-life balance, reputation, working environment, development and interest, social value, and economic value) have significant positive effects on generation Z intentions to apply for a job.

Discussion and implications

The aim of this research was to identify the various attributes that employers consider when it comes to hiring and retaining Gen Z talents. In a sample of 200 students in Egypt, the research was conducted to determine the differences between the various attributes of employers. Although the dimensions of employer attractiveness were highly rated, the significant differences can be determined based on the requirements of Gen Z workers. For instance, they really consider the development and personal growth and how the employer will invest in their skills to maximize their competencies. In addition, they highly rate the attractive pay and benefits as one of the important dimensions they consider when they decide which job to apply for. Moreover, want a fun work environment that is conducive to their personal development and a positive relationship with their superiors. Other factors such as workplace diversity, as well as the employer reputation and work life balance which may be provided in flexible working hours and remote working are also taken into account to attract talent. This is support what was believed about Generation Z attitudes according to Chillakuri and Mahanandia [59] and Schroth [60]. Moreover, the results of this study revealed that the low rankings of the application value and interest dimensions contradict the expectations of this generation's leaders regarding their goals and ethical practices. This was contradicted with [61]. This suggests that the development of a comprehensive understanding of this generation's expectations should be conducted through a systematic approach. Moreover, the results of this research can act as a launching point for the development of a more accurate understanding of workers' expectations from Generation Z towards the attributes of the Employer Attractiveness. Furthermore, the results of this research can be used to compare the expectations of Gen Z talents with those of their counterparts in other studies. Also, in research conducted by Liu et al. [50], the Generation Z prioritize the development value as the first value they consider when they decide to apply for a job. Moreover, in research by Wallace and Colleagues (2012) asserted that the interest value was ranked as the most important value when it comes to choose their future employer. Furthermore, the study conducted by [62] revealed that economic value was at the center of students' perspectives on cultural, disciplinary, and generational factors. They were not able to identify the underlying factors that influenced these differences. Nevertheless, our research serves as a starting point for further research that explores the multiple disciplinary, cultural, or generational elements of knowledge that shape Generation Z perceptions of the different attributes of the employer attractiveness that may affect their choices to apply for a job. The findings of this research contribute to the literature by providing insight into the factors that influence the attractiveness attributes of employers. It also shows how the use of different social media platforms such as (LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok) can affect Generation Z decisions to apply for a job and choose a specific employer. In addition, that this research can help employers develop effective branding strategies. Moreover, the findings of this research show that the various dimensions of employer attractiveness were relevant to the participants. The mean scores indicate that the importance of the dimensions of an

employer's attractiveness is acknowledged by the applicants. This is in line with studies conducted by [63] and [64] Furthermore, in this research, the classification process used to determine the expectations of each group was carried out based on the education, gender, and study program.

The way an employee sees the organization can become a resonance of their perceptions, which is why it is important that an organization takes into account the needs of its external and internal markets when developing its messages. The study revealed that various factors, such as Development interest, Economic Value, Social Value, besides the working environment, the company reputation, and to what extent the organization provides the employees with the Work-Life-Balance. All of those attributes can affect the intentions of Generation Z to apply for a job. Consequently, this finding is quite vital from a professional and academic perspective. The attributes of employer attractiveness can help them create effective marketing and HR strategies that are aligned with the needs of its employees and job candidates. Furthermore, the research revealed that a positive image of an organization is very important in attracting candidates. In addition to being able to manage the various aspects of its brand, social media activities can also help improve the company's image. Even if individuals have different images of the organization and its logo, the latter still exerts an influence on the preferences of potential employees.

Conclusion

The results of our research indicate that social media can help improve a company's corporate image, which in turn increases the likelihood of attracting and retaining more candidates. In addition to its content, the platform's communication channels also play a vital role in its success. This is by utilizing symbolic brand attributes in social media, companies can stand out from the crowd and develop a distinct personality. One of the most important factors that employers consider when it comes to building their social media presence is having a distinct personality and this is can be achieved in their social media platforms and specifically most our sample stated that LinkedIn is considered the most trustful platform when it comes to look for a job. This can help them identify their ideal candidate and reach a wider audience. However, it's also important to avoid providing too much information about the company. Doing so might cause people to think that the company is not interested in them or that they are not capable of handling the situation. It was concluded that in order to become more competitive, employers need to become more agile in their approach to improve the attractiveness of their brands to young job seekers. This can be done through the development of new technologies and strategies that can help them attract and retain the right talent. The findings of this research have practical implications for HR professionals. It further reinforced the academic literature on the topic of employer attractiveness and how it affects the decision of generation Z in applying for a job. Also, the role of the use of social media platforms by the employer to reach and influence generation z decisions to apply for a job. Also, this is research provided the perceptions of Egypt's generation Z towards the attributes of employer attractiveness.

Limitations and future area of research

In Egypt, certain restrictions on education, culture, or discipline may prevent the generalization of findings about Generation Z. These can identify the effects of varying cultural and educational factors on the population. Our research focused on the mediating role of social media platforms in the relationship between Employer attractiveness and generation z intention to apply for a job, we may take into account the different elements such as social identity consciousness, employer prestige, career awareness and career self-efficiency when assessing its role for generation Z into their decisions to apply for a job. We recommend that future studies apply Longitudinal analysis, since our study was conducted as a cross-sectional analysis, we are not able to determine the extent to which the attributes of employer's attractiveness that respondents value influence their employment decisions. This research focuses on generation Z perceptions of the attributes of employer attractiveness to apply for a job. For many job seekers, their expectations and observations about the attributes of employers vary significantly from one another. This study is not applicable to the older generation, such as the Baby Boomers and Millennials. Future research should focus on choosing Students from a wider range of academic background and colleges; different generational cohorts like millennials, etc., Human Resource managers, middle- and upper-level managers and executives; and Generation cohorts from different geographies to understand how Gen Z is now more interconnected with the Gen Z population of other geographies and the world through Internet culture. Suppose there are any similarities or differences in the employer. In that case, preferences can be attributed to them, which will lead the organization to improve further and adapt their talent acquisition strategies due to the similarity/dissimilarity of the found results. Furthermore, we would suggest that future studies explore the various elements of brand appeal that generation Z consider when it comes to choosing an organization for their future employment such as Organization's sustainable

development strategy, Gender diversity and Remote work environment. Understanding these factors can help businesses attract and retain skilled workers. Finally, the generalizability of the research findings is questioned due to two major factors. First, it only analyzed a single generation the workplace which is generation Z, and the second is that it used a small sample size for quantitative study. Future research on this topic is suggested to use qualitative approach with both job candidate and HR managers to close the gap between the HR professionals and the job candidates.

Abbreviations

SMP	Social media platforms
Gen Z	Generation Z
AD	Application and diversity
DI	Development and interest
E	Economic
MW	Management and work life balance
RE	Reputation
SV	Social value
WE	Working environment
EA	Employer attractiveness
WE	Working environment
JPI	Job pursuit intention

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Author contributions
SM is the corresponding author of this research and PS is co-authors participated in this research. PS was a major contributor in writing the literature review of the manuscript. SM was a major contributor in preparing the methodological part and the conceptual framework besides the discussion, conclusion, and future area of research. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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Summary: Ethical leadership is the main theme of this article, where the author discusses ethical principles and values that a leader should have in the organization. Specifically, the article focuses on a review of literature on ethical leadership under Generation Z's eyesight. The article goes through basic theories, definitions, dimensions, antecedents, consequences, and managerial implications of ethical leadership within the eyes of Generation Z. The dimensions of honesty, justice, integrity, altruism, and care for values are the important leadership behaviors that Generation Z conceives of as ethical leaders. Later in the article, it clearly states that achieving ethical leaders will create positive influence when the leaders are role models for anyone else to practice ethical behaviors in the organization. To that, the essential organization is to provide ethical training to managers about the kind of behaviors that ethical leaders demonstrate.

Relevance: The article is relevant to the topic of Generation Z's influence on organizations by emphasizing management practices to the leader role, specifically manager. The manager is the role model for subordinates, so ethical leadership is a standard for assessing the candidate manager during the hiring process and a guideline for consistent practice during work.

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ETHICAL LEADERSHIP IN THE EYES OF GEN Z: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract - Ethical Leadership emerges when a leader guides others using ethical principles and values, which include trust, integrity, empathy, justice, and charisma. Ethics also involves a person's moral character and intentions. This research focuses on a review of literature on ethical leadership in the eyes of Generation Z (Gen Z). Few articles provide an overview of the current library on this issue. The purpose of this paper is to provide a brief literary overview of Ethical Leadership in the vision of Gen Z. This paper will focus on the basic theories, definitions, dimensions, antecedents, consequences and managerial implications of ethical leadership within the eyes of Generation Z. It is hoped that this paper will be useful to researchers who are drawing up research proposals on the issue.

Keywords: ethical leadership, gen z, integrity, altruism, honesty, empathy

1. Introduction

Leadership is crucial to managing an organization well. Leadership is the process in which one influences a group of people to a common goal (Northouse, 2016). Although there are many ways to understand this term, the core of this definition is that leadership is a process that involves influence, occurs within a group, and involves a shared goal. In other words, leadership involves affecting others so that individual and collective efforts a common goal (Yukl, 2013).

The need for ethical leadership has been on the rise lately, especially with the number of recent scandals in the political and corporate realities in the world. Powerful leaders can do things that are unethical but appear legitimate and influence other members of the organization to commit a crime of obedience. They can prioritize their own personal interests for career and financial gain at the expense of members of society and organizations (Hinrichs, 2007). The interest of academics in conducting research into the ethical aspects of leadership is growing as public confidence in politics and corporate leaders is declining.

The success of a company is heavily influenced by leadership that places ethics as the primary foundation. Leaders with ethical principles determine the success of the organization. Leaders who believe in ethical values demonstrate behavior that is consistent with justice, transparency, accountability, honesty, and care (Northouse, 2016). They not only apply these values personally, but they also actively promote ethical practices through clear communication, provide a consistent example, and strengthen those values as the basis of a healthy culture in the company.

Gen Z is the youngest generation to enter the labour force. The 2020 Indonesian Population Census published by the Central Statistical Agency shows that the number of Indonesians in Gen Z amounts to 27.94% of the total population of Indonesia, which comprises 270.20 million people and is the most numbered generation today. Therefore, this literature review focuses on ethical leadership in the eyes of Generation Z as the workforce that will dominate the working world in Indonesia in the years to come.

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2. Literature review

2.1 Basic theories of ethical leadership

Leadership theory

In the early 20th century, leadership studies used attributes, abilities, such as intelligence and skill levels, and personality aspects as criteria that were important to researchers. The emphasis on the style or behavior of leaders changed in the late 1940s due to the inability to consistently prove that individual character is the only precursor of good leadership. This method basically argues that a leader's actions are the aspects that make his leadership effective. In situations like this, research on leadership effectiveness focuses on two main ideas: task orientation and interpersonal aspects in the relationship between leader and follower (Bryman, 1992).

Other views began to dominate in the late 1960s. Leadership style alone is not enough to determine success. Therefore, the reasons that situations create suitable conditions for a leader's success are known as contingency approaches, among which are Fiedler's Contingency Theory in 1967, Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership in 1969, House's Path-to-Goal Theory of 1973 and Kerr and Jermier's Leadership of 1978. The leadership decision-making behavior changed from autocratic or directive to consultative and participatory developed by Vroom and Yetton in 1973 (Aronson, 2001).

In the early 1980s there was dissatisfaction with behavioral approaches to leadership and situational roles. The weaknesses of this approach lie in understanding leadership as small-group supervision and ignoring the larger issues of leading the entire organization into the future. This led to the emergence of new leadership perspectives (Bryman, 1992). There are many researchers who investigate the phenomenon of charismatic leadership in this new era and associate it with Burns' idea of transformational and transactional leadership (Conger & Kanungo, 1998).

In relation to ethical leadership, researchers compared the ethical aspects of transactional and transformational leadership (Kanungo & Mendonca, 1996). Transactional leaders are thought to emphasize control strategies and gain the trust of followers; this can lead to the destruction of the self-esteem of the followers and direct their functions as programmed robots and are considered to have unethical moral consequences. However, transformational leadership is considered ethical because it focuses on empowering strategies aimed at changing the attitudes, beliefs, and core values of followers. Leadership in organizations tends to create a shared culture, values, and assumptions that are determined by a leader's personal beliefs. A highly transactional culture considers personal interests more important than organizational interests. The subordinates are strictly monitored, coerced, and controlled in this context, and they are not much involved in decision-making. However, transformational organizations emphasize teamwork and encourage discussion of visions, goals, and values. Transformational leadership produces a moral commitment between leaders and followers that unites them to higher goals together as a whole. This view of ethical leadership seems to suggest that transformational leaders have a moral influence on their followers, while leaders who use transactional strategies or dictatorship are unethical (Bass, 1998).

Although transformational leadership and other ethically leadership styles do not give room for transactional leadership or directive to be judged ethically, however different cultural norms in societies also influence the evaluation of ethic or not ethic a leadership style is, including transactional or directional leadership. A kindly autocratic leader can be seen as both effective and ethical. In certain situations, transactional leadership seems to make moral sense. For example, these leaders put more emphasis on day-to-day management than leadership; they may be responsible for ensuring that the organization maintains its goals and codes of ethics. If leaders are considered to act fairly, their followers are also inclined to act justly, feel respected, and are treated fairly and will probably endeavour more. The above shows that ethical

leadership depends on the level of moral development or the extent to which the process of influence is motivated by ethical values (Bird, 1999).

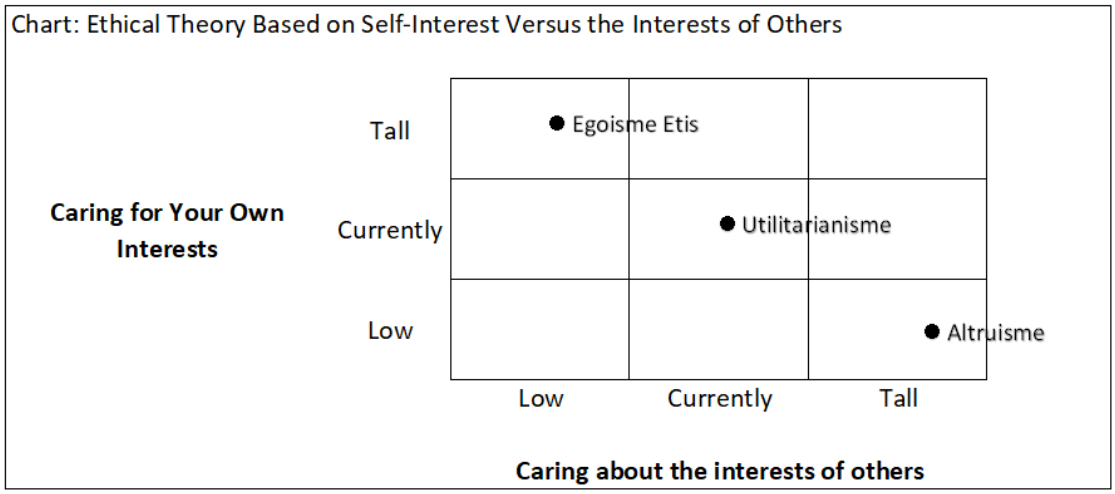
Entering the 21st century, leadership experts have come to the conclusion that they have not yet reached a consensus on the correct definition of what leadership is. Some people argue about whether management and leadership are different processes, while others focus on the characteristics, abilities, or elements that relate between them. Leadership will always have different meanings for different people due to generational differences and growing global influence. Basically, it is difficult to find a clear definition of the concept of leadership because it is so complex.

Though there are many ways to understand leadership, some of the main elements of this phenomenon can be found: leadership is a process, leadership involves influence, leadership occurs within a group, and leadership involves a common purpose. Based on these elements, leadance can be defined as the process of persuading one to a group of people to a common goal (Northouse, 2016).

Ethics theory

Studying ethics and leadership brings us to two areas: the theory of the character of a leader and the theories of leadership behavior. The ethical theory when applied to leadership is about how leaders act and how they behave as human beings. Essentially, ethics is the study of the standards for determining good and bad behavior. There are different ethical theories because philosophers have developed different ways to judge ethics. Morality is one thing that never changes, regardless of different perspectives. Basically, morality is about how an action affects others.

The ethical theory of leader behavior consists of two types: the teleological theory, which comes from the Greek word "telo", which means "purpose" or "use", and the deontological theories, which focus on the tasks or rules that govern the actions of a leader. The consequences of one's actions determine whether a particular behavior is good or bad. Three approaches -- ethical egoism, utilitarianism, and altruism -- are used to assess the consequences of moral behaviour (Northouse, 2016).



According to the theory of ethical egoism, people should act this way to the greatest good for themselves. Leaders with this orientation will choose careers or jobs that are pleasant for them (Avolio & Locke, 2002). In some business contexts, where culture or employees influence decisions to maximize profits, ethical egoism is common. According to utilitarianism, we should act to the greatest good for many people. According to this perspective, the right moral

action is an action that minimizes social costs while maximizing social benefits (Schumann, 2001). Altruism is related to utilitarianism which is the opposite of ethical egoism. According to atruism, action can be considered moral if its primary purpose is to serve the best interests of others, regardless of their own interests (Bowie, 1991).

The deontological theory, which derives from the Greek word "deos", which means "task", is different from the teleologic theory. From a deontological perspective, intent is a morally relevant component of action. As long as a leader acts in accordance with his responsibilities or based on moral principles, he acts ethically, regardless of the outcome. According to the teleological theory, the ethics of action depend on the outcomes.

To explain the ethics of leaders, teleological and deontological theories are needed. Good leaders must not only be effective and ethical, but they must also act according to their duty and have some of the greatest concepts of goodness in their minds (Ciulla, 2009).

Teleological and deontological theories talk about ethics from the point of view of the attitude or behavior of a leader. This theory is known as the theory of good qualities (Pojman, 1995). Moreover, it is believed that moral and moral qualities are not possessed from birth, but are learned and acquired through practice. Families and communities around them teach people to be good people. A moral person according to Aristotle has the characteristics of courage, serenity, kindness, self-control, honesty, socialization, humility, justice, and objectivity (Velasquez, 1992). Velasquez suggested, by applying ethics to management and leadership, managers should develop qualities such as perseverance, public spirit, integrity, honesty, loyalty, kindness, and humility.

Table 1: Fields of Ethical Theory

Behavior	Character
Consequences (Teleological Theory)	**A theory based on good traits**
• Ethical egoism • Utilitarianism • Altruism	
Duty (Deontological Theory)	

Ethical leadership is when a leader helps his followers overcome conflicts by applying change (Heifetz, 1994). This method combines workers' principles, organizational principles and community principles in their workplaces. Having the authority to help followers overcome the conflicting values that emerge in the working environment, the culture of a society that is changing rapidly, and from a moral point of view is the role of leadership. Burns (1978) stated, in line with Heifetz, that leaders should engage with their followers and help them deal with their personal problems relating to conflicting values. This relationship raises the morality of leaders and followers.

If someone is considered an ethical leader and can influence ethical outcomes, subordinates should see him as an attractive, confident, and legitimate leader (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005). This can be achieved by engaging in behaviour that is clearly appropriate, such as openness and honesty, as well as being motivated by altruism such as treating employees fairly and carefully. Leaders show ethical awareness by paying attention to the good of the group, the impact of methods and goals, the long-term and not just the short-term, and the interests and opinions of various stakeholders (Treviño, Brown, & Hartman, 2003).

To attract the attention of its followers to the moral message, an ethical leader must also be able to communicate ethics clearly and use power to support it, be careful in making decisions for an organization that conforms to ethical principles, and assume that the ethical side is always the right basis for making decisions. Leaders should emphasize the importance

of ethical behaviour and its benefits, as well as inform employees that maintaining ethics is an important part of their work (Cheteni & Shindika, 2017).

The most important principles for ethical leadership are honesty and integrity, including the consistency of actions with the values adhered to, behavior intended to convey or enforce ethical standards, justice in decision-making and the distribution of rewards that do not choose love or use rewards to encourage inappropriate behaviour. It is also a behavior that shows affection and concern for the needs and feelings of others that is not an attempt to manipulate, abuse, and exploit others for personal gain (Yukl et al., 2013).

2.2 Definition of ethical leadership and Gen Z perspective

Definition of ethical leadership

In the 1920s, leadership was defined as the ability to instill the will of a leader in his followers and cultivate respect, obedience, loyalty, and cooperation. In the 1930s, the activities of many people were gradually organized to certain goals meant as leadership. In addition to the prestige and power derived from external positions or circumstances, leadership in the 1940s was based on the ability to persuade or direct its followers. In the 1950s, leadership was defined as the action taken by a leader within a group. The other members of his group his leadership spontaneously. In the 1960s, leadership meant moving others in the desired direction. In the 1970s, the term "discretionary influence" was used to describe leadership. This term refers to the behavior of a leader under his control that may differ between individuals. Although the study of leadership was very complicated in the 1980s, it was quite clear that leadership is to inspire others to do things the way a leader wants them to do. In the 1990s, leadership was defined as a persuasive relationship between a leader and his followers who wanted real change to common goals (Ciulla, 2009).

Researchers have begun to consider ethical leadership as a combination of behavior or leadership style as a whole, not just the ethical aspect of other leadership styles (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005; De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008, 2009; Kanungo, 2001). According to the Webster Dictionary, the basics of ethics include what is good and bad, as well as moral responsibilities and obligations. An ethical leader driven by a proper system of belief and judgment, not self-interest, but rather benefiting followers, organizations, and society. Researchers emphasize the importance of ethical leadership in terms of how one leader affects others (Kanungo, 2001; Aronson, 2001).

Ethical leadership is the demonstration of normatively appropriate behavior through personal actions and interpersonal relationships and the promotion of its behaviour to its followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making. Leaders are ethically open in communication and clear about the responsibilities and expectations of organizations, as well as communities (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005).

Followers supervised by ethical leaders have a higher chance of success, affiliation and engagement with better organizations (Kalshoven, Den Hartog, De Hoogh, 2011). If ethical leadership is combined with the code of ethics that applies in the workplace, employees will feel more motivated to do their efforts and more committed (Piccolo et al., 2010). Ethical leaders care about others, are fair, honest, and encourage their followers to behave ethically (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005). Because of its conceptual resemblance to transformational and authentic leadership styles, ethical leadership has gained critical review (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Chughtai, Byrne & Flood, 2015; Walumbwa et al., 2008).

Ethical leaders are composed of two behavioral components: ethical people and ethical managers (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005). Self-perception as an ethical person and an ethical manager are two important pillars that shape a reputation of ethical leadership. Characteristics of ethical people include integrity, honesty, and trustworthiness, behavior to do the right thing, concern for society, openness, and personal morality. In decision-making, an

ethical person holds values, objective and fair, cares about society, and follows rules of ethical decision making.

The CEO is regarded as the Chief Ethics Officer of an organization because he is an ethical manager and responsible for creating powerful values that attract the attention of employees and influence their minds and behaviors. Characteristics of an ethic manager such as giving an example or as an example through visible actions, giving appreciation for the ethical and disciplinary actions of the unethical, actively communicating ethics and values to his subordinates.

In addition to finding ways to focus organizational attention on ethics and values, an ethical leader must also set the principles that will guide the entire worker. In the era of the implementation of new systems in today's companies, where more employees work independently, off-site, and without direct supervision from management, ethical executive leadership may be more important now than ever. Values are the bonds that unite organizations like this, and these values must be communicated from the highest level of the organization (Treviño, Hartman, & Brown, 2000)

Ethical leadership in the eyes of Gen Z

Gen Z is considered to be the greatest transformation in the generation of workers (Mathur & Hameed, 2016). These workers have some characteristics that affect the way they interact and are oriented in the workplace. Gen Z born in an era of rapid digital technology development is a generation characterized as digital natives or i-generation. Since Gen Z was born in the world of technology, they feel comfortable and most importantly surrounded by the environment. They're always online with a variety of devices without end, so other forms of socializing are very difficult for them. Compared to the previous generation, Gen Z didn't care so much about the concept of fighting. They're more practical and smarter than wise, more impatient, more agile, and constantly looking for new challenges. They are not afraid of the constant change because through the world of the Internet there is a lot of information that can be obtained and can be used to find solutions in solving their problems (Bencsik, Horváth-Csikós, & Juhász, 2016).

Gen Z grew up in an uncertain and complex environment, which shaped their perspectives of work, education, and the world as a whole. They have different expectations at work. Gen Z has an excellent knowledge of technology and language. Employers must be able to prepare themselves to engage Gen Z by communicating well, helping them adapt to the corporate culture and community, and making them effective employees in the digital age (Elmore, 2014).

According to Graeme Codrington & Sue Grant Marshall's hypothesis, there are five human ages that are categorized from the year of birth. Generation X is a group of humans born between 1965 and 1980, while generations born between 1981 and 1995 are called Generation Y or Millennials. Gen Z is also known as Generation i, Generation Net, or Internet generation born between 1996 and 2010, and the last generation is Generation Alpha born between 2011 and 2025 (Komalasari et al., 2022).

Generation X (age 59–44), Generation Y (age 43–29), and Generation Z (age 28–14) are part of the current labour force population. To ensure that three different age groups can work together in one working environment, management faces a new challenge to ensure that the company runs well. The sooner the company plans to manage Gen Z, the stronger it will be in starting competition in a highly competitive industry (DeRosa, 2018).

Some of the characteristics that can be identified of Gen Z are (Tumbol, 2021):

a. Media interfaces (Mediavora)
   Research conducted on younger generations in the United States shows that Generation Z spends more than 7.5 hours a day with one or more media.
b. Multitasking

Previously multitasking was associated with a female brain pattern, but it turned out to be a feature that marks today's Gen Z that can listen to music, talk, and watch simultaneously while studying, opening books, and doing homework.

c. Hyperconnections
Gen Z wants to connect to multiple networks at once.

d. FOMO: Fear of Missing Out
Gen Z always checks the gadget to stay up-to-date and fastest in getting the latest information so that no information is missed.

e. Tolerance
Gen Z is present in an era of openness, along with increased awareness of pluralism and the strengthening of relativism that nurtures tolerance for differences. Some of Gen Z believe that truth is relative and subjective, and are afraid of losing the moral compass. They tend to oppose "authority" and are open to accepting differences, norms, morals, and diversity perspectives.

f. Real-time
This generation grew up in an open culture and always interacted with each other so it became very expressive and communicative to convey what they felt and thought at the same time.

g. Interactive
Gen Z is very active and interactive in communication carried out through networks in the communities in which they are involved.

Leading Gen Z requires not only openness, but also the hard work of the leader. A leader who wants to reach Gen Z successfully must use the language of leadership welcomed by the youngest generation in the labour force. Better performance and organizational success can be achieved by leaders who apply a philosophy that prioritizes relationships, results, service, and development to better work performance and successful organizations (Aguas, 2019).

Leaders must be accustomed to the different nature of each generation to reduce the possibility of conflict. The right leadership style will help the business its goals. To be a leader for Gen Z there are certain attitudes that must be, namely to be a good and worthy example, to build a positive communication relationship, and to show the purpose of the organization (Komalasari et al., 2022).

The leaders that Generation Z needs must be able to affiliate and motivate them to the desired achievement. Gen Z is looking for exemplary leaders to be imitated through what they do and focus on empowering others and achieving the potential they expect. In leadership literature, some of the most popular theories focus on ethical leadership. These theories include transformational leadership, servant leadership, authentic leadership and spiritual leadership (Yukl, 2013). The key values emphasized in the ethical leadership of these theories are:

a. Integrity: communicate openly and honestly, keep promises and commitments, act in a manner consistent with the values adhered to, acknowledge and accept responsibility for mistake, do not attempt to manipulate or deceive people.
b. Altruism: enjoy helping others, be willing to take risks or sacrifice to protect or benefit others, prioritize the needs of others over their own needs, volunteer in activities that require extra time and are not part of formal job requirements.
c. Humility: treating others with respect, avoiding status symbols and privileges, acknowledging limitations and mistakes, being humble towards achievements, emphasizing the contributions made by others when collective efforts are successful.
d. Empathy and recovery: helping others overcome emotional stress, encouraging acceptance of diversity, acting as mediators or peacemakers, promoting forgiveness and reconciliation after divisive conflicts.

e. Personal growth: encourages and facilitates the development of self-confidence and individual abilities, although not essential to the current job; provides opportunities to learn even if there is a risk of making mistakes; provides support and training when necessary; helps people learn from mistakes.
f. Justice: to encourage and support fair treatment of people, to oppose unfair practices or policies, to resist attempts to manipulate or deceive people or to undermine or violate their civil rights.
g. Empowerment: consult with others about decisions that will affect them, give appropriate autonomy and freedom to subordinates, share sensitive information with them, encourage them to express their concerns or different views without being defensive.

The core values of ethical leadership above are in line with the leadership desired by Gen Z.

2.3 Dimensions of ethical leadership in a Gen Z perspective

Ethical leadership runs leadership through principles to influence followers who are morally good or deemed right (Rakhma, 2022). Ethical Leadership is an assessment of employee perceptions of ethical behaviour derived from the leadership behavior with indicators consisting of (Pahrudin, Marina, & Agusinta, 2018):

a. Honesty
b. Justice
c. Integrity
d. Alturism
e. Care for values

Ethical leaders are seen as fair and principled decision makers characterized by concern for others and the wider society, as well as behaving ethically in their personal and professional lives (Brown and Treviño, 2006). As far as leadership is concerned, ethics is about what leaders do and how they behave and the goodness they do. When making leadership decisions, ethical issues involve implicitly or explicitly the choices made by leaders and the way they respond to a situation influenced by ethics and values held firmly. So it can be concluded that ethics should be an essential part of the ethical leader's self-concept as well as a guiding principle for leaders in every action they take (Giessner et al., 2015).

According to the findings of the experts, there are two dimensions of ethical leadership behavior that can be used to evaluate ethical leadership. These two dimensions are the moral person and the moral manager. Ethical leadership must include moral character as a manager and as an individual. Ethical leaders have qualities such as honesty, integrity, openness, respect, and principles in decision-making as well as caring for others. Managers' moral aspects of ethical leadership behavior relate to how leaders use their power and position as leaders to encourage and promote ethical behaviour and ethical standards in the workplace (Brown & Treviño, 2006). Moral leaders should set a good example for their employees to be moral (Brown & Mitchell, 2010).

The other dimensions of ethical leadership are as found in the Ethical Leadership at Work questionnaire (ELW) which covers components such as justice, integrity, ethical guidance, individual orientation, power sharing, role clarification, and concern for sustainability (Kalshoven, Den Hartog, De Hoogh, 2013). The need to explore the phenomenon of ethical leadership in organizations is triggered by an increasing public concern that cannot accept organizational leaders who are indifferent to moral responsibilities, let alone engage in unethical behaviour (Kanungo & Mendonca, 1996).

2.4 Antecedents and consequences of ethical leadership

Researchers have long believed that personality such as integrity is crucial to assessing effective leadership and research has proven it. For example, research studies have found a link between the perception of effective leaders and the perceptions of honesty, integrity, and trustworthiness of leaders (Posner & Schmidt, 1992; Kouzes & Posner, 1993; Den Hartog et al., 1999), as well as cognitive beliefs such as care in work, professionalism, and reliability have been associated with effective leadership styles (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). Based on the results of the research, there is a link between these personal characteristics and ethical leadership, as well as leaders who are ethically regarded as honest and trustworthy.

An ethical leader is considered to be fair and principled, behaving morally in relation to others and to himself. It is called by researchers the moral aspect of ethical leadership because it represents an observer's view of a leader's personal nature, character, and altruistic impulses. Nevertheless, the moral manager dimension is another important component of ethical leadership revealed by this research. In this aspect of ethical leadership, a leader seeks to proactively influence the behavior of his followers with ethics. They do this by conveying messages and ethical values, providing examples of ethical behaviour explicitly, and using a system of reward and punishment to make their followers accountable for their conduct. In short, research shows that ethical leaders are honest, caring, and principled leaders, and who make decisions in a fair and balanced manner (Treviño, Brown, & Hartman, 2003).

Ethical leaders also often talk about ethics with their followers, set clear ethical standards, and use appreciation and punishment to ensure that standards are followed. Ethical leaders not only speak well; they also become proactive leaders and do what they say (Brown & Treviño, 2006). Based on studies referring to the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to know the antecedents of ethical leadership, it has been found that the beneficial attitude of leaders to ethical behaviors and perceived behavioral control is an important antecedents of ethic leadership.The study investigated how leaders' attitudes to behavioral ethics, subjective norms of ethical behavior, and perceived behaviors control may contribute to ethical intent and, in turn, ethical leadership (Rahaman, Stouten, & Guo, 2019).

The two factors determining the antecedents of ethical leadership are the individual leader and the situational impact. Leaders must have proper attributes and personalities for ethical leadership (Brown & Trevino, 2006; De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008, Kish-Gephart, Harrison, & Treviño, 2010). Moral development is inevitable and some people experience it at a certain stage of their development. Leaders with a higher level of moral development are generally considered more ethical than leaders with a lower level of ethical development.

The theory of self-identity offers an additional explanation of moral behavior. A person with a strong moral identity has the motivation to act in a way that is consistent with his ethical values and beliefs. Moral identity is not important as a determinant of behavior when people agree to ethical behavior. Although most people who do not have a strong moral identity still adjust to social norms, if there is no agreement on a moral issue, then judgment of the ethical consequences of an action becomes more important as a determinant (Reynolds, 2006).

Situations can greatly influence moral behavior that occurs in the social environment (Brown & Trevino, 2006; Kish-Gephart, Harrison, & Treviño, 2010). The uncertainty and lack of government regulation can lead to more risky decision-making and illegal activities intended to improve the financial performance. When performance targets are very difficult to, there is high pressure to increase productivity, there are strict competition for reward and progress, and organizations do not have strong cultural values and norms about ethical behaviour and the responsibility of individuals can encourage and support unethical behavior by leaders and members.

Research on the correlation of ethical leadership has shown a positive relationship between the dimensions of ethic leadership behavior and the various attitudes and behaviors of followers as consequences, such as commitment, satisfaction with leaders, trust in management,

job satisfaction, and OCB (Organizational Citizenship Behavior) or extra-role behavior (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005; De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2009; Mayer et al., 2009). Although there is a positive correlation between the dimension of justice and the clarification of roles in ethical leadership, there is no positive correlation between the effectiveness of the top management team perceived and the division of power (De Hoogh and Den Hartog, 2008).

Not much research has been done to date that explicitly discusses the relationship between ethical leadership and effectiveness.a. However, honesty and integrity are highly effective leadership qualities for middle managers (Den Hartog et al., 1999). A positive correlation between interactive justice and performance was also obtained from the results of research, where fair treatment among individuals resembles the element of justice in the ethical behavior of leaders (Ayree, Budhwar, & Chen, 2002). Ethical leadership has a positive and significant impact on employee satisfaction. In other words, if job satisfaction is to be improved, leaders must behave ethically, build good relationships, and shift their focus to leadership (Pahrudin, Marina, & Agusinta, 2018).

Recent research concludes that ethical leadership is crucial to predicting services provided, job satisfaction, and labour turnover (Theriou, 2024). Ethical leadership can drive employee voices so that can be heard by management and support digital startup innovation. Digital startups prioritize employee opinions and desire to build better HRM functions so that employees can share ideas within the organizationi. Management responses to employee opinions are needed because digital startups see it as an important way to encourage innovative behaviour (Hosseini, 2023).

3. Conclusion: managerial implications

Gen Z is the generation that in the coming years will dominate the workforce in the company and ethical leadership irrespective of the choices of leadership styles carried out in the management of the company will affect the employees of the Gen Z in commitment, satisfaction to the leader, confidence in management, employment satisfaction, and extra-role behavior that exceeds the demands of their work (OCB: Organizational Citizenship Behavior) (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005; De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2009; Mayer et al., 2009). It is therefore important for management to be able to present leaders with ethical leadership within their company in order to destroy the ethical culture to the company's goals.

When companies want leaders who behave ethically and use appreciation and punishment to ensure their subordinates behave in the same way, it is unlikely that employees behave unethically and have employment conflicts. This can be achieved through the recruitment of ethical leaders, the establishment of procedures that assess the moral development or integrity of managers as leaders and role models of ethics for their subordinates. Ethical leadership tends to bring follower confidence not only to superiors but also to organizations that in turn help managers to make employees more engaged.

One way to encourage ethical behaviour in organizations is by providing ethical training to managers about the kind of behaviours that ethical leaders demonstrate. Training can be provided in the form of workshops or other interactive and practical training models so that training participants can learn to practice and understand how to do, and can strengthen or activate the moral identity of leaders. By developing relevant training programmes and interventions within organizations to promote ethical leadership can drive the ethical intentions of leaders by changing their attitudes and beliefs of control over ethical behavior (Rahaman, Stouten, & Guo, 2019).

The use of signals in the corporate environment is another way to encourage ethical behavior to activate moral identity. This can be done by using posters, slogans, or material symbols that contain moral constructions and prominent concerns (Aquino & Freeman, 2009). Moral identity is very important to many people when defining themselves in society, because

most people want to see themselves generally well. Therefore, leaders and employees must be motivated to maintain their moral identity to avoid false identity. Leaders who have a high score in moral identity assessment are expected to behave in a way that matches their moral identities, including showing examples of ethical leadership (Mayer et al., 2012).

From a practical point of view, Gen Z judges effective leadership as being exemplary, understanding, and team-oriented. These three abilities are crucial to today's organizations. Corporate leaders must be able to adapt their leadership styles to encourage collaboration and autonomy. Therefore, it is suggested that intergenerational leaders should be able to communicate in acceptable languages and provide space for Gen Z to express themselves (Aguas, 2019).

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Summary: The article is a study about employer attractiveness through social media, which provides the subjective experience and perception of seekers about the advanced development of social media platforms as a resource for job applicants. Along with that, the research also incorporates the employer's selection of social media for communication with candidates and promotes the employer's attractiveness. The key themes that emerge from the study include ease of information, navigation usability and user-friendliness, person-job and person-organization fit, reliability and timeliness, positive and cost-effective marketing, value creation for employers, and privacy concerns. The study expects to provide HR managers with strategies to enhance their recruitment approach through social media, making the organization's image appeal to job seekers.

Relevance: The study researches the use of social media for the recruitment of talent, which corresponds with the habit of Generation Z for using social media as a primary platform for communication. This study will provide insight into what current strategies organizations are following to compare with the applicability of Generation Z in influencing communication practices.

Place in the paper: Literature review

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Employer Attractiveness Through Social Media: A Phenomenological Study

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The purpose of this paper is to gain insights into the subjective experience and perception of job seekers about the extensive use of social media as a source of recruitment and selection by the employers and its influence on the overall employer attractiveness. Four focus group interviews were conducted, audio-taped, transcribed, and analyzed by following the procedure of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) laid down by Smith and Osborn (2007). By employing IPA, the themes which emerged under the study are: ease of information; navigational usability and user friendliness; person-job fit and person-organization fit; reliability and timeliness; positive and cost effective marketing; value creation for the employers; and privacy concern. The present study posits to assist the human resource managers in formulating strategies pertaining to social media recruitment and selection so as to create an image of attractive employer. Although IPA has been predominantly used within health psychology, it has been uncommon in the recruitment literature so far. Since IPA is a phenomenological account of an individual's personal experience and perception about an object or event, it allowed determining the richness of job seekers' perception and the extent to which it is similar or different across each participant groups. Also, the current study is one of the pioneers in uncovering the perception of job seekers about social media recruitment and selection process in the Indian context. Keywords: E-Recruitment, Selection, Employer Attractiveness, Social Media, Job Seekers, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

In a highly competitive market scenario, being able to attract high-quality human resource is considered as a true competitive advantage for an organization (Gatewood, Gowan, & Lautenschlager, 1993; Turban & Greening, 1997). One way of doing so is via online recruitment, a method of attracting job seekers via internet (Cullen, 2001). In this regard, corporate websites have gained popularity in the last decade, making it essential for employers to grab the opportunities it offers in terms of reaching potential candidates and attracting them to apply for a given job position (Pfieffelmann, Wagner, & Libkuman, 2010; Walker, Feild, Giles, Bernerth, & Short, 2011). The effectiveness of corporate website facilitates the companies in differentiating themselves from their competitors, which in turn leads to overall organizational attractiveness (Cober, Brown, Levy, Cober, & Keeping 2003; Maurer & Liu, 2007; Scott & Lane, 2000; Van Birgelen, Wetzels, & van Dolen, 2008). However, on a contrary, recent study on e-recruitment suggests that there has been a decrease in the use of corporate websites by employers since late 2007 due to the paradigm shift towards social networking sites (Bradwell & Reeves, 2008). One of the main reasons for this changing trend

can be attributed to the features of social networking sites which enable the recruiters to maintain constant connectivity and long term conversation with the job seekers (Bondarouk & Olivas-Lujan, 2013; Wandel, 2008). Furthermore, the advantage of using social networking sites lie in the ease of identity sharing, which can be utilized by the employers to develop and effectively communicate their own organizational identity (Smith & Kidder, 2010). In this regard, a survey conducted by Jobvite (2012) revealed that around 92% of employers in USA are currently using or planning to use social media recruiting, 43% of recruiters who use social media recruiting saw an increase in candidates' quality, 73% have successfully hired a candidate through social media recruiting, and 31% of recruiters using social media recruiting have seen a sustained increase in employee referrals. Additionally, Facebook officials declared the presence of more than 500 million users and 1 million companies and entrepreneurs from around 180 countries across the globe (www.facebook.com) followed by LinkedIn which has more than 75 million professionals exchanging information, ideas, and opportunities with each other (www.linkedin.com). Similarly, a large number of Indian organizations have implemented social media recruiting due to the escalating usage of social networking sites by the job seekers throughout their job search process (Kumar & Suneja, 2015). According to a survey conducted by Ma Foi Randstad in 2011, 82% of Indian job seekers are extremely focused on using the social media such as Facebook and LinkedIn to reach their employment goals quickly and more efficiently, 87% use the social media to find information about an organization's work culture, 75% track movements and events of their favorite companies to update themselves and prepare for job interviews, and 75% would hesitate joining a company, if their current employees have given negative reviews about the company. These figures suggest that social media platforms are no longer restricted to recreation purposes, but are extended to serve the organizations as an appropriate cyberspace to promote and connect themselves with current and prospective employees (Doherty, 2010; Wilson, Gosling, & Graham, 2012). Organizations use their Facebook profiles to announce job openings, LinkedIn to search for potential applicants, and advertise on blogs, Twitter or YouTube regarding the events and activities undertaken by them (Beer & Burrows, 2007; Dearstyne, 2007). Moreover, social media has also created the opportunity for organizations to enhance their image as an employer (cf. Smith & Kidder, 2010) due to these sites being most commonly used by students, job seekers, and professionals (Henderson & Bowley, 2010).

Accordingly, the popularity of promoting an organization through social media has provided opportunities for Human Resource (HR) professionals to get involved in activities beyond their traditional HR tasks. Recruitment becomes more interesting and efficient by tweeting a job opening or head hunting through vast number of Linked profiles (Guillory & Hancock, 2012). It also facilitates employees to blog about their experience of working in an organization, which further may lead to enhancement of the organizational image followed by increase in the number of applicants interested in that company (Ellison, 2007; Henderson & Bowley, 2010). Furthermore, recent studies have found that social media has not been used solely to disseminate information about job openings or attracting the potential candidates, but employers have also started screening the candidates through different social media tools like Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter (Caers & Castelyns, 2010). As the existent literature maintains that social media usage by employers have elevated in the last few years, equipping organizations with the power of sharing information, networking, and identity building, studies are warranted to explore the linkage between social media and different HR practices (Davison, 2011). Additionally, organizational attraction has been frequently measured in the e-recruitment context (cf. Chen, Lin, & Chen, 2012; Highhouse, Lievens, & Sinar, 2003; Van Birgelen et al., 2008; Williamson, King, Lepak, & Sarma, 2010), but studies measuring the same in social media recruitment context are still at premature stage. Besides, although research has been conducted to understand the perception of job seekers about internet recruitment (cf.

Teoh, Tan, & Chong, 2013), there is paucity of research which uncovers the perception of job seekers about social media recruitment (Madera, 2012) and selection process as a whole (Berkelaar, 2014). Consequently, objective of the current study is to gain insights into job seekers' perception about social media recruitment and selection process and the influence it has on the overall employer attractiveness. Since, qualitative research design is considered as a suitable approach to study perception and feelings shared by a homogeneous group of individuals (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009; Patton, 2005; Ritchie & Spencer, 2002), the present study takes up a phenomenological approach to uncover the underlined perception of job seekers in India.

Literature Review

Social Media

"Social media is defined as 'a group of Internet-based applications build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user generated content" (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 61). Perdue (2010) noted that the enormous growth of social media, especially in terms of users, carries many implications for transforming businesses; encouraging the organizations to be engaged in more and more activities via social networks (Correa, Hinsley, & De Zuniga, 2010). In the United States alone, 86% of the top 100 companies use at least one social media platform (Coon, 2010), and websites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter have become one of the prime sources for attracting and acquiring job applicants (Cooper, 2007). Nevertheless, social media has also reduced the efforts on the part of applicants and allows them to apply for a job position by a few mouse clicks (Chauhan, Buckley, & Harvey, 2013). Consequently, recruitment firms have also began to use social media as a tool for searching desired candidates, making it worthwhile for the job seekers to have presence on these websites (Cooper, 2007).

Social Media Recruitment

Use of social media to communicate about the job openings and attracting the potential candidate to apply for a given job position is what constitutes of social media recruitment (Henderson & Bowley, 2010). In this regard, Smith and Kidder (2010) suggested that companies should make use of social networking sites to enhance their organizational identity. The authors further stated that in contrast to the corporate website, which generally provides background information, an organization's Facebook page offers variety of options like creating and publishing calendar of events that can be viewed by all the users. Such events may include recruitment, on-campus interviews, corporate social performance, or any other event that an organization may wish to host. Furthermore, Facebook pages are completely free, which reduces the burden and cost of constantly updating and maintaining the organization's website (Smith & Kidder, 2010). Similarly, LinkedIn offers great opportunities for the HR professionals to recruit from the numerous profiles, followed by Twitter and YouTube, which allows public relation departments to communicate and promote their organizations by making use of the free advertisement space (Tuten, 2008). Moreover, since social networking sites are informal source of recruitment (cf. Zhao & Rosson, 2009), it is likely to provide positive, negative, and more detailed information to prospective employees than the formal sources, which in order to attract job seekers, may contain the positive aspects only (Breaugh & Mann, 1984). Additionally, the existent literature suggests that people trust social media, trust the people in their network and not only do they seek and share opinion but "they also act on the opinion they receive" (Jansen, Sobel, & Cook, 2010, p. 3858). The true power of social media

in terms of recruitment lies in the trust that is built into an employer recommendation from one acquaintance to another (Cooper, 2007) which is lately termed as the 'word of mouse' (Van Hoye & Lievens, 2007). Although, the benefits of social media could be of major interest for companies willing to establish an image of attractive employer, it involves a risky environment where employers need to be transparent and honest while communicating with the job seekers (Jones, Temperley, & Lima, 2009); failing which may deteriorate an employer's image in the job market (Cable & Turban, 2001; Riordan, Gatewood, & Bill, 1997). Resultantly, developing an understanding of job seekers' perception about social media recruitment is relevant in the present digital scenario and the current study is one of the pioneers in this realm.

Social Media Selection

With the visibility of personal information on the social media platforms and usage of these information by employers for personnel screening and selection has led to the emergence of digital social contract, a new proactive transparency expectations from organizations to workers (cf. Berkelaar, 2014). The employers have reported to be using the online information to evaluate job candidates during personnel selection (Berkelaar & Buzzanell, 2014; Berkelaar, Scacco, & Birdsell, 2015; Jeske & Shultz, 2016). Another study by Caers and Castelyns (2010) reported that employers review the personal information on sites like Facebook and LinkedIn for screening the candidates, which in turn, creates the risk of selection biases even before the first round of interview. The privacy concern within social networking sites (cf. Dwyer, Hiltz, & Passerini, 2007) and violation of online privacy (cf. Bauer et al., 2006) by the employers for personnel screening and selection has been a noteworthy agenda for research in the last decade (García-Izquierdo, Aguinis, & Ramos-Villagrasa, 2010; Lievens & Anderson, 2002). However, what influence the social media selection may have on attractiveness of an employer is a question yet to be addressed in the literature from job seekers' perspective. The present study, therefore, takes up the lead to bridge this gap by examining the perception of job seekers about social media recruitment and selection and the resultant impact on the overall organizational attraction.

Research Gaps

The extant literature on e-recruitment has majorly focused on the contents, stylistic features, and timeliness of the corporate employment websites, which leads to the formation of positive attitude towards the website and in turn leads to employer attractiveness. Also, most of the studies have been conducted in the US and European context and there is paucity of studies capturing the perception of job seekers about the electronic sources of recruitment in the emerging economies, like India. Similarly, although, scholarly attention has started shifting from the corporate employment websites to the social media based recruitment, and more recently towards the social media screening and selection practices, there are paucity of measures to capture the perception and attitude of the job seekers towards this paradigm shift. India, with a large young population base and most of its population in the working age group, has to potential to supply ample amount of workforce in the global job market. However, little is known about how the job seekers in India are making sense of the linkages between social networking sites and HR practices such as recruitment and selection. Similarly, how the job seekers perceive about the employers making use of social media tools for recruitment and selection is a question unanswered in the recruitment literature.

Research Objective

In order to bridge the research gaps, the present study takes up a qualitative approach to gain insights into the perception of job seekers about the use of social networking sites for recruitment and selection and whether or not they feel attracted towards the employers making use of these social media tools. A qualitative inquiry is the suitable approach when one is trying to make sense about the lived experiences of the target population and aims to gain an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon experienced by a homogeneous group of individuals. It also provides enough scope to the participants so as to share their lived experiences and perception about a particular event or phenomenon in question.

Method of the Study

Researchers' Background

We would like to present our background so as to enable the readers to build a perspective for making inferences about our findings. The first author of this paper is a doctoral scholar in the area of Human Resource Management in a business school in South India, where she is actively conducting research work in the areas of e-recruitment and job search from last 4 years. The second author of this paper is an associate professor and was formerly working with the same business school in the Department of Human Resource. He has successfully guided PhD students in the areas of e-recruitment sources and employer branding. The third author of this paper is a doctoral scholar in Department of Finance and has been trained in conducting focus group interviews. All the authors have previously published articles using qualitative research methods.

Participant Selection

Purposive opportunistic sampling (cf. Willig, 2013) was used with an objective to find the appropriate sample to address the research question of the present study. Smith and Osborn (2007) have also recommended purposive sampling for IPA studies so as to find a more closely defined group of participants for whom the research question will be significant. The target samples, therefore, were the final year job seeking students from some of the renowned educational institutions located across two major cities in India namely; New Delhi and Hyderabad. Selection of the cities was based on the ease of accessibility to a large student population, representing different parts of the country.

Data Collection

After seeking permission from the institutional review board, comprised of senior faculty members at our university, and deans of the other educational institutes identified for data collection, first and third authors conducted a total of 4 focus group interviews consisting of 8 students in each group. Out of the total number of participants, 13 were females and 19 were males. Focus groups are identified as the 2nd most extensively used method of data collection in IPA studies, after semi-structured interviews (Brocki & Wearden, 2006). Selection of participants was based on a two-fold exercise. We first asked all the final year students across different disciplines about their average social media usage per day and whoever found to be spending more than two hours a day were then asked about their usage of social media for the purpose of job search. Finally, we approached the respondents who reported to be spending at least 30 minutes a day on social media for job hunting and requested

them to participate in the focus group interviews. We briefed the participants about the purpose of this study and assured them about the confidentiality of their responses. All the focus group interviews were subject to be audio-recorded for the purpose of further analysis and we obtained participants' consent for the same. The time duration for each focus group was approximately 40 minutes. As theoretical saturation was evidenced after 4th focus group, the data collection exercise was called off. The demographic details of the focus groups are presented in Table 1.

Table-1: Focus Group Demographics

Focus Group Numbers	Gender composition		Mean Age
	Male	Female	
1	3	5	23.13
2	6	2	23.25
3	5	3	22.13
4	5	3	22.38

Data Analysis

We used Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to explore the perception of selected participants regarding recruitment and selection through social media and how they perceive about the employers making use of different social media tools for the same. IPA involves detailed examination of the participant's personal perception regarding an event or an object (Smith & Osborn, 2007). Accordingly, IPA is a suitable approach when one is trying to find out how individuals are perceiving the particular situations they are facing and how they are making sense of their personal and social world. Research questions in IPA projects are usually framed broadly and openly and the aim of the study is to say something in detail about the perceptions and experiences of the participants under study. The analysis of present study was based on the guidelines by Smith and Osborn (2007). First and second authors transcribed each focus group interviews and generated significant statements from the same. We removed similar statements after extracting all significant statements from the four transcriptions. Subsequently, we derived meanings out of the significant statements by reading the transcription again and again. These were further organized into clusters of themes which emerged from the participants' discussions and were common to all the focus groups. The step-wise task description of data analysis is presented in Table 2.

Table-2: Step-Wise Detail of Data Analysis

Step	Task	Task description
1	Transcription	The interview tapes were transcribed in order to learn about the perception of the job seekers. It also included noting down of significant nonverbal and paralinguistic communications.
2	Looking for themes in the first case	The analysis commenced by reading and rereading the first transcript, numerous times, to fully get acquainted with the text. These were then coded into seven main themes.

3	Connecting the themes	This step involved compilation of themes and discovering connections between them. The clustering of minor themes into major themes was done from the first list and a 'master list' was created from the previous compilation of themes.
4	Continuing the analysis with other cases	The remaining transcripts were coded by using the 'master list of themes' as a guideline for the subsequent transcripts.
5	Writing up	Summary of the interviews were written by incorporating the themes that have been elicited from the data.

Results

Following are the seven themes which emerged after conducting the analysis.

Theme 1: Ease of information

A large number of participants were of the view that social media helps them to gather relevant information about the prospective employers within no time through sources like company's Facebook page, LinkedIn, and YouTube videos. Unlike traditional recruitment techniques or the corporate websites, social media with its global reach and real-time adaptability has the potential to connect the job seekers with the organization in the first stage of their information search process with better and more appropriate information. The ease of long term conversation, constant connectivity and instant feedback by the employers enable the potential applicants to gather all the desired information about the organization and the job.

> Through social media it has become very easy for us to interact with the prospective employers from India and abroad and unlike the company's website, it's more of a two-way communication between the employers and job seekers [laughs]. We need not wait to get our query satisfied [...] and fetch the [required] details at any point in time. (Participant from group 2, female, 22 years)

Furthermore, in addition to the information and videos shared by the organization on its Facebook page or YouTube, social media platforms like LinkedIn also allows the job seekers to connect with the recruiters and current employees of the organization and obtain job preview. As a result, the features of social networking sites move beyond the information provision (cf. Teoh et al., 2013) of the corporate websites and help the organization to enhance its image by catering to the informational needs of the job seekers.

> Social media based recruitment provides the possibility of getting a sense of a typical day at work [...] we can get connected with the recruiters and other employees [currently working in the company] on Facebook, LinkedIn, or twitter and get all the information we are looking for. (Participant from group 1, male, 24 years)

Theme 2: Navigational Usability and User Friendliness

Majority of the participants opined that the familiarity with the social networking sites makes it convenient for them to navigate through pages in pursuit of information (cf. Chen et

al., 2012). The participants reported to be scanning through the post, videos and images shared by the company, reading the comments, and keeping in touch with the recruiters without facing any difficulty pertaining to the use of social networking sites. They further stated that social media has enabled them to compare one employer with another just by browsing through the profiles available on the sites like LinkedIn, Facebook, and Jobster etc. Besides, few participants also reported that availability of videos and images on the social media reduces the boredom and makes the job search process interesting for them.

> When I talk about social media recruitment [...] one word which comes to my mind is user friendliness. Searching for job related information on the websites you are not familiar with makes the job search process a tedious one [...] but since the organizations [have] started using social media channels for recruitment, as a job seeker I feel like returning to these pages as and when required. Yeah [...] also just by easily flipping through pages with a few mouse clicks on websites like LinkedIn and jobster.com we [as job seekers] have access to a long list of companies wherein we can apply by checking all the details. (Participant from group 1, male, 25 years)

Theme 3: Person-Job Fit and Person-Organization Fit

Person-job fit and person-organization fit (cf. Carless, 2005) emerged as one of the significant theme under the study. More than 60 % of the participants stated that information provided on the social media, especially, through the blogs where the existing and former employees post about their job experience, helps job seekers to ascertain whether there is a fit between the organization and their own interest. Also, it enables them to appraise the compatibility between their competencies and the task to be performed.

> The experiences shared by the existing and former employees of a company helps in getting a clear picture about the job description, career-related opportunities and even small details about the organization, [...] which are generally [in most cases] not available on any company website. Social media helps us in determining whether the job suits our interest and matches our skill sets. (Participant from group 4, female, 22 years)

Theme 4: Reliability and Timeliness

The participants opined that social media facilitates in speedy and timely communication and provide a platform to the employer to share relevant, accurate, and timely information with the prospective employees. The chances of any delays in sending or receiving the information are ruled out as the company needs not to communicate with each applicant individually. Moreover, the job seekers are no longer dependent on company's owned website to obtain information, which mostly provides positive insights only. Furthermore, the job seekers reported to be have trust in the information provided by the current employees or acquaintance on the sites like LinkedIn and Facebook which enables them in making an informed decision about job pursuit in a particular organization.

> By using social media, resumes and applications can be received from prospective employees within seconds and employers can respond [revert] to the applicants with equal efficiency [...] and [...] these social networking sites will not provide the eye-catching information only but would share the true and

> reliable picture of an organization too. Hmm [...] it [social media] helps because while checking the blogs posted by existing employees or by consulting them on LinkedIn or Facebook we can get accurate and true information about the job conditions and working environment of the company. (Participant from group 4, female, 26 years)

Theme 5: Positive and Cost Effective Marketing

All the participants were found to share the common belief that social media are the less expensive and cost effective method of recruitment and it also helps in positive marketing for the company as an employer. This belief also supported the earlier definition of social media given by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010). The participants also stated that the continuously flashing links about the job opening or any other events hosted by a company catches their attention while browsing through the social media platforms and creates awareness about the company and the various activities associated with it, which in turn, makes the company popular.

> Social media reduces many costs for the company by enabling various campaigns through different social networking sites. Hmm [...] it [social media] also helps us [job seekers] in developing familiarity with the company through various links and pages on Facebook and by subscribing to these pages we can also get latest updates about the company and its events on day to day basis. Yeah [...] it makes the company popular among us [job seekers]. (Participant from group 3, male, 25 years)

Theme 6: Value Creation for the Employers

The participants reported that social media helps to create value, create an image of desirable employer and strengthen the organizational culture-value proposition. Companies make use of blogs, Twitter, Facebook and instant messages so as to continuously keep current and future employees updated with regard to the value proposition of the company including the corporate social performance, non-monetary benefits offered to the employees, career development opportunities, achievements and awards etc. It helps in attracting potential employees towards the organization, and leads to the job pursuit intentions. Moreover, it also helps in retaining the existing employees in a long run.

> Organizations [employers] are using the social media to showcase their business ethics, employee friendly policies, […] CSR [corporate social responsibility] initiatives, […] and other awards and achievements […] in addition to the videos that shows us [job seekers] the attractive premises of the company and introduces us [job seekers] to the set of happy employees and customers associated with the company. Such information creates a positive outlook [viewpoint] towards the company [employer] and helps the organizations to attract talent towards them. Hmm […] definitely it helps the employers to build a favorable image in the job market, adding to the number of job seekers applying for the company. (Participant of group 2, male, 14 years)

Theme 7: Privacy Concern

Although, majority of the participants were found to be holding positive views about recruitment through social media, few participants also expressed their privacy concern and reported about the negative impact of social media usage by the employers for screening the candidates. They were of the view that social media should not be used to gather personal information about the candidates for screening and selection purposes. The employers, therefore, should be cautious before selecting or declining the candidates based on the personal details, posts, and pictures on their Facebook and other social media profiles. As reported by the participants, such steps, if taken by the employers, will allow the potential applicants to perceive negatively, which in turn, will adversely affect the image of an organization in the competitive job market. In this regard, findings by García-Izquierdo et al. (2010) also suggested that use of such personal information through online mediums during screening and selection process is discriminatory and unfair, intrusive, and invasive of applicants' privacy.

> Attracting potential employees through social media channels has not harm [...] but its usage should be restricted to recruitment and marketing [employer branding] only. I have read about an employee who was fired [terminated] by his employer based on the post he had shared about his working experience on his Facebook profile, [...] there is an instance where an applicant was denied a job due to details of some personal conflict shared by him on social media. This is bad [unethical], the employers are not supposed to dig [probe] into the personal details of their potential or existing employees or peep [spy] into the personal lives of the applicants while selecting them. [...] certainly it will spoil their image as an employer. (Participant of group 3, female, 24 years)

Discussion

The findings of the current study provide valuable insights into how the social media involvements by the employing organizations are being perceived by the young and potential job seekers. From all the emerged themes in the study, it is evident that organizations which make use of social media and invest time and resources for taking advantage of the available mediums are perceived positively by the job seekers. According to the young job seekers, going online through social media and reaching a larger mass of potential applicants can help the organizations in forming a virtual image of a favorable employer. Also, these social media platforms are perceived to be extensively used by the organizations for recruitment and screening purposes. However, in order to take the maximum advantage of social media for attracting potential applicants, it is necessary for the HR managers to make sure that what they promise and propose as an employer is valid and long-lasting. Nevertheless, employers should also take a note of applicants' negative reactions on social media usage for screening and selecting the job applicants. Moreover, such steps also violate the privacy norms associated with these websites and further leads to damaging the image of an employer (Bauer et al., 2006). Consequently, the employers are required to ensure transparency and promote fairness in the screening and selection process. Therefore, findings of the present study posit to assist the HR managers in formulating recruitment and selection strategies with respect to social media and cater to the pre-employment information needs of the potential applicants in an effective manner; so as to create a virtual image of an attractive employer in the competitive job market.

Limitations and Direction for Future Research

Sample of the present study includes final year job seeking students only, and does not capture the perception of other potential candidates. In the future research, it would be interesting to see how the employed and unemployed job seekers (cf. Wanberg, Basbug, Van Hooft, & Samtani, 2012) perceive about the role of social media in recruitment and selection process. The study can also be taken forward by collecting data from the HR managers of different organizations, who make use of social media as a tool for recruiting and screening the desired candidates. Such study will provide a clear understanding of the opportunities and threats of using social media as a part of recruitment and selection process by the organizations. Furthermore, quantitative studies can be conducted to understand the influence of perceived privacy risk (Yoon Kin Tong, 2009) and fairness perception (Truxillo, Steiner, & Gilliland, 2004) on employer attractiveness in the social media recruitment and selection realm. Future studies can also take up a scale construction exercise to measure the attitude and perception of job seekers towards different social media usage by the employers. Additionally, employer attractiveness is not restricted to attracting the potential employees only, retaining the existing pool of talented employees is equally important for every organization (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). Resultantly, another direction for future research could be investigating the effectiveness of social media as a tool for workplace learning (Thomas & Akdere, 2013) in talent management context.

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Karácsony, P., Izsák, T., & Vasa, L. (2020). ATTITUDES OF Z GENERATION TO JOB SEARCHING THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA. *Economics & Sociology, 13*(4), 227-240. https://doi.org/10.14254/2071-789X.2020/13-4/14

Summary: The study has taken the context where job search habits and job postings have changed tremendously due to the evolving digital advancement, which allows job seekers to search for jobs, communicate, and do applications with recruiters mainly through online portals or social network platforms. The research goal is to consolidate the presumption that the labor market becomes habituated to the needs of the new generation and makes an effort to reach out to people via new platforms. Along with that, the study wants to reinforce the belief that social network trends cannot be avoided as a method of recruitment. The article gives an expression of the digital present nowadays, the characteristics of Generation Z, and the rise of the online labor market. The author affirms the importance of this research because of gives awareness of the changes that have taken place in a time when the needs of the new generation are rising, at the same time, pushing organizations to constantly adapt the supply to the needs and to keep the young unemployment to the lowest rate.

Relevance: The research has relevance to the topic of the influence of Generation Z on corporate management and communication topic by assessing the significant relationship between the use of social media and job search habits and the significant relationship between the use of social media and the choice of a workplace for Generation Z.

Place in the paper: Literature review

ECONOMICS & Sociology

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ATTITUDES OF Z GENERATION TO JOB SEARCHING THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

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ABSTRACT. Social media is a relatively new player in the online labour market, with an increasingly important role among the younger generation. The aim of this research was to assess the job search habits and opinions of young people, particularly university students. The survey was conducted on the students in Austria and Hungary via e-mail and social media in March 2020. In analysing the results, we look at what today's younger generation is focusing on when looking for a job, and how companies adapt to the new situation that has been brought about by the widespread use of social media. The purpose of this study is to examine the trends in online job search among "Generation Z". As the survey shows, Generation Z prefers online job search over older methods just as they spend a huge portion of their free time on social media platforms. The data shows that while traditional types of recruitment such as newspaper advertising are on the decline, the function of social media is no longer simply immersed in entertainment and chat, but also spread actively on recruitment and human resources management.

Keywords: digitalisation, social media, Facebook, job search, Z generation

Introduction

In recent years, job search habits and job postings have changed radically (Jansen et al., 2005). Before the World Wide Web became so commonplace, the usual method was to deliver application documents by mail or in person. Companies mostly tried to recruit using printed media, posters, or even in person. This has now completely changed because digitalisation has nearly fully replaced the old methods, for both the applicant and the job provider (Sullivan, 2013). Nowadays, jobseekers try to search for jobs mainly through online portals or social networks and they mostly contact the company digitally, using an electronic application form or via e-mail (Petschar & Zavrel, 2016; Lenart-Gansiniec, Sułkowski, 2020).

The main purpose of our research was to strengthen our presumption that the labour market is now adapting to the needs of new generations and is trying to reach young people via new platforms and also that social networks have become unavoidable as a method of recruitment.

1. Literature review

1.1 Digital Presence

With the introduction of online job portals and social media, recruitment has completely changed: today's younger generations search for a suitable job on the Internet (Beard et al., 2010) due to steep ICT development (Lechman, 2018) and their usage in HRM practices (Bilan et al., 2019). In addition to job portals created for this purpose, social media platforms and applications also play a major role in the job search process. Today's recruitment strategy is personalised and more targeted than ever (Kluemper & Rosen, 2009). Companies can provide much more information than before. Applicants can even watch promotional videos on YouTube about the company and access websites where they can get information from other applicants and employees, as well as read blogs and opinions about the company that is relevant to them. Under such circumstances, firms need to place great emphasis on developing and continuously updating their own profile (Chapman & Webster, 2003).

Social media allows a company to search for candidates who are not necessarily looking for work. This is a huge change as in the past it has been very difficult for companies to reach those who are not actively looking for work (Davison et al., 2016). With the increase in widespread usage of the Internet, it has become very easy to get information about a person or a company, so companies also need to constantly monitor what they share and how they advertise themselves as an employer (Slovensky & Ross, 2013). In addition, it is also important for the jobseeker to consciously manage their own social media profile by paying attention to what they share online, as almost 70% of recruiters visit the applicant's social media profile, and what they see there influences their decision (Savković et al., 2016).

As of 2020, more than 4.5 billion people are already using the Internet and, from that, 3.8 billion people are using some form of social media according to the research in the Digital 2020 (datareportal.com, 2020) reports, which also found that almost 60% of the Earth's population is online and by the middle of the year more than half of its population will be using social media in some form (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, TikTok, etc.). According to their survey, in 2019 a person would spend an average of 6 hours and 43 minutes online each day. This is 3 minutes fewer than last year's average, but still, if we calculate it, we spend more than 40% of our time surfing the Internet with 8 hours of sleep. Of that, we spend 2 hours and 24 minutes on some social media interface that 83.7% of Internet users actively using. Of course, this period varies from country to country. 53% of our time spent online is done via a smartphone, 44% via a laptop or desktop computer, 2.7% via a tablet, and 0.07% via other means such as a game console. 50% of mobile Internet is used only for communication applications such as Facebook Messenger or WhatsApp. Facebook is still the most used social media platform with 1.95 billion users. Currently, marketers could reach half of the young adults worldwide (between 18 and 34) through Facebook (Digital 2020).

2.2 Characteristics of Z generation

According to Jobvite's research, in 2019, 41% of the younger jobseekers said that they were looking for job postings mostly on social platforms and younger generations like Z were

increasingly preferring online methods and communication. Based on these surveys, 65% of young workers responded that career-building opportunities are the most important aspects to them when choosing a job. Since we are talking about the present and future generations, we should be aware that their long-term behaviour will determine future trends in recruitment.

Generation Z (1995-2010): They are also called digital natives because they grew up with digital devices from almost infancy (Prensky, 2001). It is natural for them to be able to contact anyone at any time and that most of their friends are online. They share their social life constantly with the public and personal freedom is very important to them. They are not afraid of the transition from "traditional" to "digital" either because they were born into it. They are the world's first global generation (Karacsony, 2019). This means that members of this generation, although living in different parts of the world as a result of globalisation, are affected by the same events and trends. They watch the same movies, listen to the same music, and, perhaps most importantly, they connect with each other through the Internet and social networking sites (McCrindle and Wolfinger, 2010), have the same features of online purchase behaviour (Nikodemska-Wołowik et al., 2019; Victor et al., 2019).

2.3 Online labour market

Online job portals have been with us since the 1990s and are widely used nowadays as well (Navickas et al., 2019). The essence of these websites is that the employer places an advertisement with information regarding a vacant position and waits for candidates to apply (Mičík and Mičudová, 2018). Such approach to hiring becomes widespread in business, and in some cases, it can significantly shift business results due to hiring skilled employees via use appropriate channels of communications in recruiting (Bilan et al., 2020). Jobseekers can search based on specified data such as experience, education, language skills, salary, etc. They can upload their CV and cover letter and can easily send their applications for several advertised positions (Suvankulov et al., 2012).

Online social media networks such as LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram can be defined as web-based services that allow individuals to create a public or semi-public profile within a limited system and choose a list of users to share their connection with (Nicoli and Papadopoulou, 2017; Mazurek, Korzyński, & Górska, 2019). The basic features of LinkedIn allow employees and employers to create profiles. Users are able to track companies and search for companies or organisations they are interested in. Recruiters and HR employees are increasingly using LinkedIn to find potential candidates because they can very simply find the users who are relevant to them with keywords and a single click (Fertig, 2013).

Nowadays, social media is also influencing people in their decision making, so it is important that companies use social media as a marketing tool correctly (Maida, 2011; Bartosik-Purgat, 2019). Companies have to be innovative and develop alternative marketing strategies in order to meet the expectations of young people (Montana and Petit, 2011), which in turn, have further continuation in expectations regarding possibilities of remote work and higher remuneration due to higher technology-based skills' level (Saksiriruthai, 2018). Various online platforms such as social media allow the marketing specialist to obtain additional information about their target market and take advantage of it (Yankow, 2017). Surveys show that companies are increasingly using social networks to screen and select applicants (Stoughton et al., 2013).

2. Methodological approach

2.1 The aim of the research

The aim of the research is to: assess the online job search habits of young people belonging to generation Z; explore their expectations and experiences with companies' ads; and to highlight the current importance of social networks for job search and supply. This topic is important in allowing us to be aware of the changes that have taken place in terms of the needs of the new generations, so that we can continue to adapt the supply to the needs and to keep youth unemployment to a minimum. The Internet and online social portals play a huge role in the lives of young generations, so it is important to know their opinions and habits when looking for a job.

2.2 Data collection methods

The methodology of the research was implemented through an online survey. The survey consists of 21 questions, which mainly focus on the respondents' opinions and habits in relation to job search via the Internet and social media. There are three types of questions in the questionnaire. Most questions are closed-ended, where the respondents' answers are limited to a fixed set of responses that can be easily used for computer processing. 14 questions had predefined easy-choice options; 4 scaled questions that focus on the respondents' attitudes using a Likert scale; and the rest were short, open-ended questions. The first part of the questionnaire mainly examined the demographic information of the respondents, by age and nationality. The second part is focused on the respondents' "Internet habits" such as how much time they spend online, and the third part assesses their job search methods and experiences.

The survey was conducted in March 2020, mainly with the participation of international students who were students at Johannes Kepler University in Linz and Széchenyi István University in Hungary. The main target audience were members of Generation Z. The questionnaires were distributed to students via e-mail and Facebook. Due to the limited size of the work, only the selected questions will be presented and visualised with diagrams. Percentages are always given by the percentage of people who had completed a given question. Decimal results on the figures have been rounded to whole numbers for easier transparency and illustration.

During the research process, we received 234 responses mostly from university students. In the evaluation process we used only those questionnaires which were fully completed. The respondents' demographics constituted of people from 27 different nationalities, 4 continents (52.6% European, 34.2% Asian, 7.7% American and 5.6% African) (Figure 1).

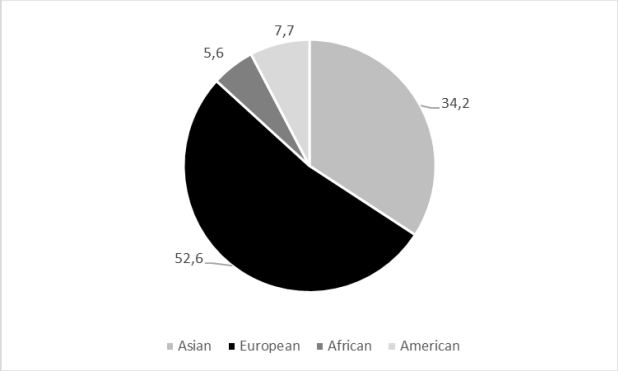


Figure 1. Origin of respondents, percentage
Source: own data

2.3 Demographic data of respondents

The majority of respondents (84.61%) were under 25 years old and therefore a member of Generation Z, which greatly contributed to us being able to examine the opinions of this generation. These results are important because we are mostly interested in the views of this age group as they are the ones who will soon graduate from university and enter the workplace. Of these, 35% were under 20, 26.5% between 21 and 22, 23.1% between 23 and 24, and 15.4% 25 years or over (Figure 2).

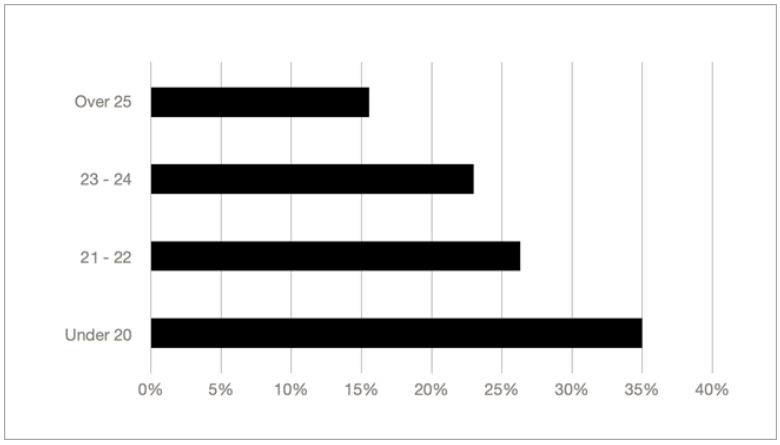


Figure 2. Age of respondents, percentage
Source: own data

3. Empirical results and discussion

Technology plays a grand role and shapes the lives of young people all around the world. Generation Z, who were born into the world of the Internet, not only use it to search for information but also to create their own content, such as posting videos on social media platforms – even on a weekly basis (Swartz et al., 2017). In the following Figure 3, we can see how much the respondents consider themselves to be an intensive social media user. This could be assessed using a Likert scale from 1 to 7, where 1 indicates a passive user and 7 indicates an intensive user. We can see that the majority (79.5%) gave values ranging from 5 to 7, they classify themselves rather an intensive user. In addition, 37.2% of them chose the highest rank (7). Only 3.4% of the responders chose the lowest rank (1).

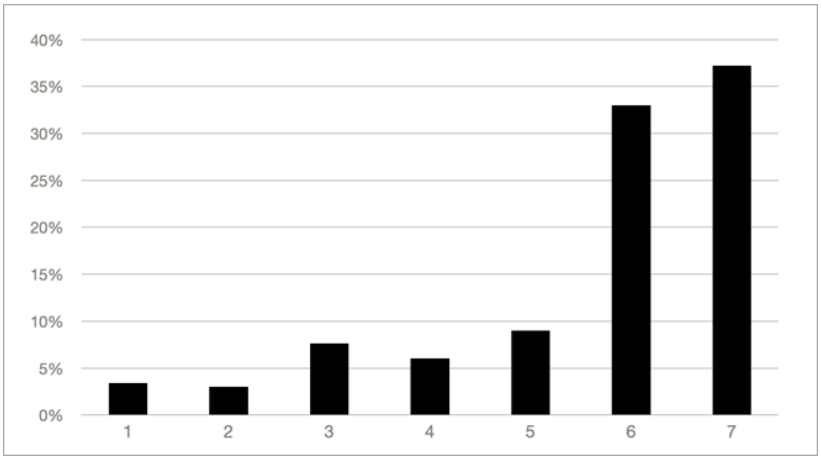


Figure 3. The usage intensity of social media users (1-passive, 7-intensive)
Source: own data

In figure 4, we compared how many hours per day the respondents spend on social media platforms. The results show that 11.1% spend more than 6 hours; 17.9% between 4 and 6 hours; the majority (31.6%) use it from between 2 to 4 hours; 30.3% between 1 and 2 hours; and only 9% use it for less than an hour. These results roughly match the results of Digital 2020, which says people spend an average of 2 hours and 24 minutes a day on social networks.

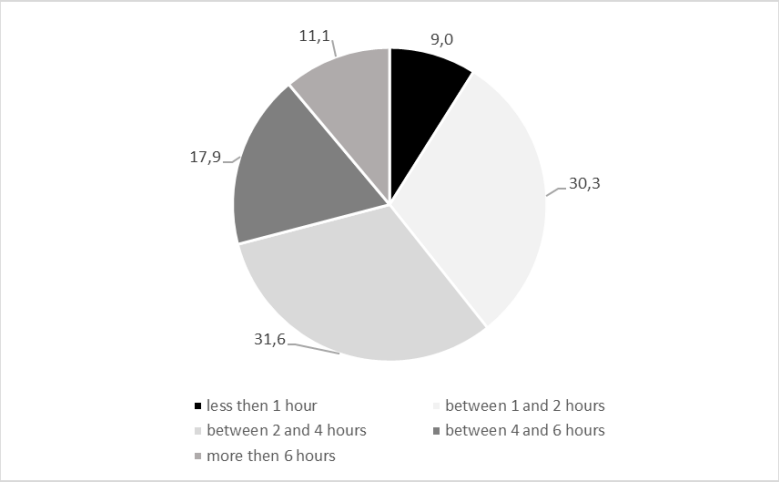


Figure 4. Average time spent on social media per day, percentage
Source: own data

The following figure 5 shows data on the job search habits of respondents. We learned from our responses that they primarily use the Internet to search for jobs. The three most chosen responses were social media (45.7%), online job portals (21.4%), and the company's website (14.1%), and through friends and family (10.2%) These data show that almost half of the respondents (45.7%) marked social media as a possible method for finding a job. The employment agency received only 5.6% of responses. On the other hand, the job search in newspaper advertisements is clearly declining, as only 3% of our respondents would use this method.

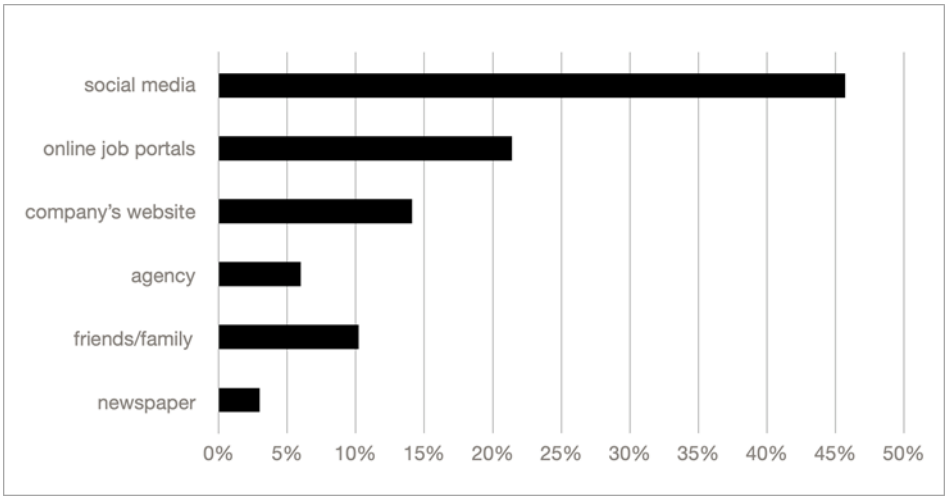


Figure 5. Job searching methods of the respondents, percentage
Source: own data

When asked if they had already received an offer or advertisements through an online job portal, 72% answered yes, of which 49% received an offer or an advertisement more than

once. In addition, 68% of respondents said they had applied for a job through an online job portal at least once, and 37% indicated that they had gotten a job that way.

When we asked respondents which social media platform they get the most job offers from, 63% stated Facebook and 47% LinkedIn. We also learned from the responses that most of the offers came from Facebook groups that were created for job search and advertising. From this, we can see that more companies, corporations, and even individuals are already using social media to recruit new employees. Furthermore, platforms like Instagram or Twitter don't seem to be really suitable for job searching, but companies use them as a marketing ploy to stay in the public eye and increase their awareness as well as advertise themselves or their products – this is an observation we made during the course of the study.

Figure 6 shows which social networking sites are the most popular among young people. It is important to note that these social media sites can be used mainly for leisure, recreation, chat, games, and even shopping. The figure clearly shows that the most used social media platforms were Facebook (34.4%), LinkedIn (26.9%), and Instagram (12.4%). These social media platforms are the most visited websites in the world (Hootsuite, 2020).

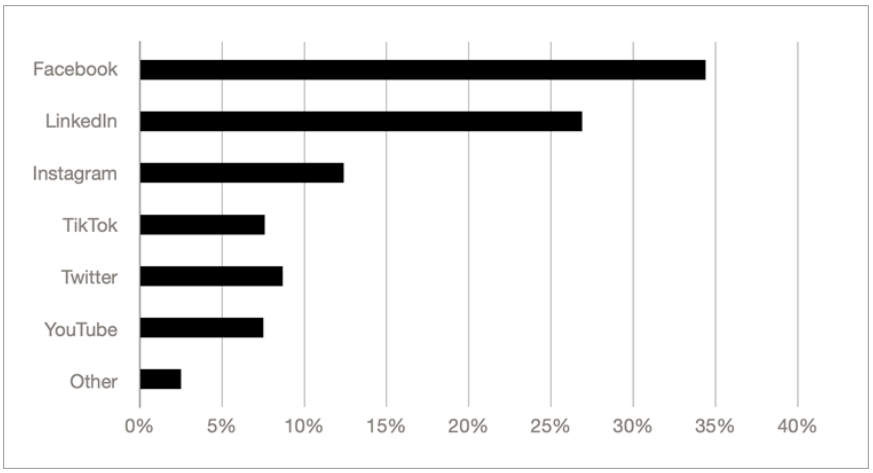


Figure 6. Popularity of different social media platforms, percentage
Source: own data

As it is very easy to access information through the Internet these days, next we will focus on how much this is exploited by young people. One of the survey's closed questions was "Have you ever watched a promo video about a company you were interested in?" where 87% of respondents answered "yes" and 13% said "no", and those between the ages of 20 and 22 had the lowest percentage of who had not yet watched such a video (19%). Finding information is greatly facilitated by the presence of websites such as glassdoor.com, which is designed to allow current or former employees to write anonymous opinions about the company where they work or have worked. This type of information gathering is already very common and does not cause problems for the majority of Generation Z to do it (Madia, 2011). Employees are increasingly checking online comments before making their final decisions (Stamolampros et al., 2019).

Just as a user needs to pay attention to what they share about themselves on the Internet, the same applies to companies. The difference is that, in the case of companies, emphasis can also be placed on the promotion of the company. This assumption is reinforced by the diagram in the following figure (7), where, with the help of the Likert scale (1-not important, 7-very important), we can see that 46.6% of the respondents consider the profile of the company and opinions of the other users to be at important to some degree and may affect their decisions.

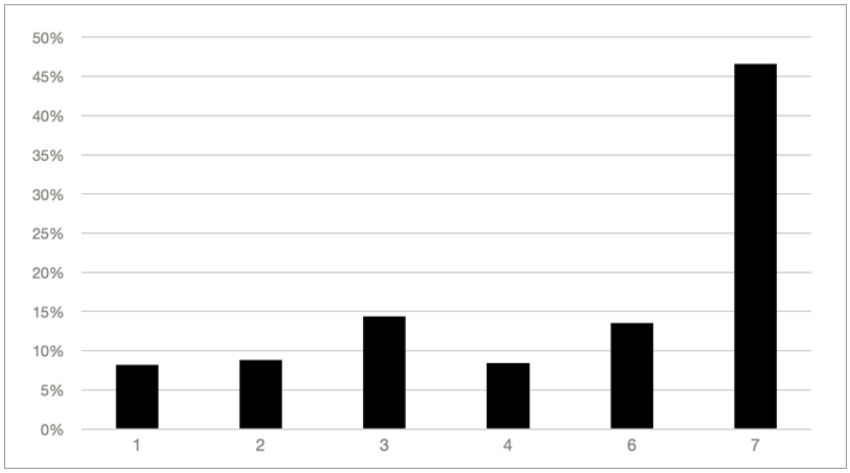


Figure 7. Importance of the company's social media profile, percentage
(1- not important, 7- very important)
Source: own data

After that, we wanted to know how reliable social media platforms are. The latter question was open-ended, so that a respondent would be able to briefly explain his or her bad experience. Several classified the following factors as bad experiences: that they never received a response to their application; the constant "bombardment" of e-mails from job portals; and that, in many cases, the job description was very deficient or even untrue. This information gives a good idea of what a company needs to pay attention to, such as providing a more accurate job description of the position being advertised. In addition, there was a single case where the respondent felt that their application had not been accepted due to discrimination.

In Figure 8, the Likert scale shows that participants have a very positive opinion about the reliability of online job search (1-unreliable, 7-absolutely reliable). 67.1% of respondents chose the higher ranks on the scale (5-7), according to which online job search is rather reliable. However, interestingly, the majority of votes peak at 5 points, which indicates that 30.3% of respondents, although they consider online job search reliable, would not give it a value of 7 because of their experience or caution.

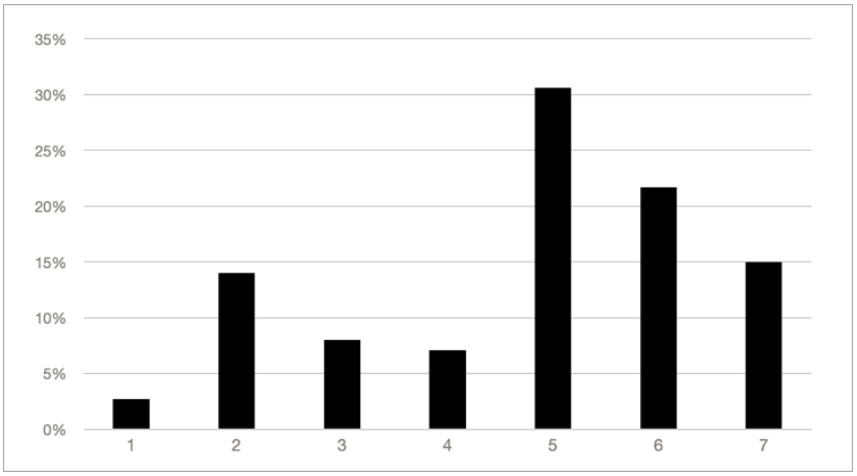


Figure 8. Respondents' opinions about the reliability of the online job search, percentage
(1-unreliable, 7-absolutely reliable)
Source: own data

3.1. Application of multiple linear regression analysis

Based on the literature review and previous research, we have identified the following hypotheses to justify our research results:

H1: There is a significant relationship between the use of social media and the job search habits of Generation Z

H2: There is a significant relationship between the reliability of a company profile and the choice of a workplace for Generation Z

To verify our hypotheses, we performed a regression analysis.

According to research in the literature, the generation Z prefer the opportunities provided by social media to search for jobs. To prove this, we performed a regression analysis of the data obtained from our questionnaire survey, where the independent variable was the use of social media, while the dependent variable was the job search habits of the generation Z. The results obtained are detailed in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Regression model of hypothesis 1

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	0.343[a]	0.118	0.114	1.901	0.118	30.936	1	232	0.000	1.961

a. Predictors: (Constant), Socialmedia

b. Dependent Variable: jobsearchhabits

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	111.850	1	111.850	30.936	0.000[b]
	Residual	838.799	232	3.616		
	Total	950.650	233			

a. Dependent Variable: jobsearchhabits

b. Predictors: (Constant), Socialmedia

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.709	0.451		6.006	0.000
	Socialmedia	0.428	0.077	0.343	5.562	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: jobsearchhabits

Source: *own compilation*

As the Model Summary section of Table 1 shows, the R value is 0.343. The R value represents the correlation value between the use of social media and the job search habits of the younger generations. The R Square value is 0.118 and the Adjusted R Square value is 0.114. Since, the Adjusted R Square value is 0.114, it can be concluded that the independent variable accounts for nearly 11% of the variation in the dependent variable. The ANOVA section of Table 1 illustrates that the F value is 30.936. Since the F statistic is significant at 0.000 it can be said that social media plays an important role in job search habits of younger generations. The Beta value is 0.343 at a significance level of 0.000. It indicates that social media contributes significantly to job search habits of younger generations. The t value is 5.562 and the associated p value is 0.000. As the p value is smaller than 0.05 it can be concluded that the independent variable reliability predicts the variation in the dependent variable and the relationship between them is significant.

The employer branding of companies also includes the development of the organisation's Internet profile. Young generations prefer to look at the website of the company of their choice, in many cases, decide to choose the company as their future job based on the website. Thus, the Internet profile of companies plays an important role in finding talented employees.

Table 2. Regression model of hypothesis 2

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	0.412[a]	0.170	0.166	1.466	0.170	47.371	1	232	0.000	1.870

a. Predictors: (Constant), jobchoice

b. Dependent Variable: companyprofile

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	101.793	1	101.793	47.371	0.000[b]
	Residual	498.536	232	2.149		
	Total	600.329	233			

a. Dependent Variable: companyprofile

b. Predictors: (Constant), jobchoice

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	3.179	0.328		9.694	0.000
	jobchoice	0.399	0.058	0.412	6.883	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: companyprofile

Source: *own compilation*

As the Model Summary section of Table 2 shows, the R value is 0.412. The R value represents the correlation value between use of company Internet profile and the job choice of younger generations. The R Square value is 0.170 and the Adjusted R Square value is 0.166. Since, the Adjusted R Square value is 0.166, it can be concluded that the independent variable accounts for nearly 17% of the variation in the dependent variable. The ANOVA section of Table 2 illustrates that the F value is 47.371. Since the F statistic is significant at 0.000 it can be said that company Internet profile plays an important role in job choice of younger generations. The Beta value is 0.412 at a significance level of 0.000. It indicates that company Internet profile contributes significantly to job choice of younger generations. The t value is 6.883 and the associated p value is 0.000. As the p value is smaller than 0.05 it can be concluded that the independent variable reliability predicts the variation in the dependent variable and the relationship between them is significant.

Based on the regression analyses presented above, we accept both of our hypotheses.

Conclusion

Theoretical part of this paper explains that the transitional crisis is influenced by different institutional, Generation Z is about to enter the job market and companies need to know how to reach them. According to Schroth (2019), 74% of members of the Z generation will communicate digitally, and only 26% face-to-face. With the rapid and instant exchange of information, entertainment, gaming, dating, and mobility, the Internet and social media make up a huge part of people's daily lives. The labour market is an inevitable part of digitalisation, and companies have begun to recognise it (Mau and Kopischke, 2001). Based on our results, we conclude the following:

• The increasing use of the Internet and the spread of social media make it clear that companies have to make their job advertisements available online. The majority of our survey participants (79.5%) classified themselves as more intensive social media users.

• The most used platforms are Facebook (34.4%), LinkedIn (26.9%), and Instagram (12.4%). More and more small and large companies are using Facebook to recruit, as 63% of those surveyed have already received a job offer through it. LinkedIn is also very popular (47%), which is a social media platform specifically designed to connect jobseekers with providers.

• Classic job searches such as advertisements in newspapers are becoming less popular due to digitalisation since only 3% of respondents chose that they would use this method. From this, we can also see that the role of social media is already essential in job search and companies need to innovate their recruitment processes.

• Respondents also frequently browse companies' websites, as 46.6% of respondents have already used it to inspect their potential future workplace.

• In addition to its widespread use and popularity, young people claim it is safe to look for a job on the Internet, but, in many cases, there is still room for improvement, as many complained about false job descriptions.

Summarising our research findings, we can state that there is a clear connection between the use of social media and the job search habits of the younger generations, for which it is worthwhile for companies to develop marketing in the future so that they are available on as many social media platforms as possible. Furthermore, the Internet profile of companies also has an impact on the choice of workplace for the younger generations, so companies need to be appealing and meaningful in every aspect in order to attract today's young people.

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Source 13 (Scholarly)

Citation:

Kraidenkov, Y., & Sviridova, L. (2021). Management of Generation Z staff in the digital economy. *SHS Web of Conferences*, *116*, 00015. https://doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/202111600015

Summary: The article discusses the management of Generation Z staff in the digital economy, also known as the Fourth Industrial Revolution. The author has provided general information about the industry of 4.0 and what it should look like. Furthermore, there is also an explanation of the process of the evolution from the third industrial revolution to the current 4.0 industry. The research was conducted because the author wants to identify different generations that may affect the work efficiency of a team compiled from different generations, then determine the values of generations and find the cause of conflicts between their representatives. The research also mentions the recommended approaches to human resource management of Generation Z.

Relevance: The research is relevant to the topic by focusing on the harmony of Generation Z personality with other generations in the workplace, along with, developing the guidelines for management practices with Generation Z employees by evaluating their characteristics and happiness levels at the workplace.

Place in the paper: Literature review

Management of generation Z staff in the digital economy

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Abstract. This article is a continuation, which examines the difference between generations and their common qualities for forming a successful team, but with a focus on generation Z. Materials on the comparison of generations X and Y are published in the journal Vestnik PNIPUV in the article Team building in the digital economy [1]. This article presents an analysis of the current state of generations X and Y with the relevant research points and recommendations for team building of personnel of generations X and Y. In 2019, at the time of the publication of the first part of the article, our team started a project to conduct their research in the part of Generation Z. Participants in this study were young people born between 2003 and 2005. The study ended in January 2021. A total of 1,14 people were interviewed during the period: high school students, university students, and first-and second-year students of universities in the cities of Moscow, Samara, Nizhny Novgorod, Novokuibyshevsk, Syzran.

1 Introduction

According to experts from the Boston Consulting Group (BCG), the Fourth Industrial Revolution is now taking place. Its features include the following:

a) formation and development of fully automated industries interacting with each other and with consumers using artificial intelligence and cloud services.

b) exponential growth of the number and scale of innovations, generated solutions of non-relevant industries.

c) exchange of ideas and experience within the framework of the onset of the digital economy and changing the perception of the company-client links.

This revolution was first mentioned by German industrialists at the Hanover Fair in 2011. Then it was said that the fourth industrial revolution is now beginning, where Germany must play a leading role. This statement is not justified, since from the creation of the European Union, the German economy has been acting as its "locomotive". To accelerate the internetization of production, the industry development strategies "Platform Industry 4.0" and the state program "Industry 4.0" have been developed and launched. This is also the predicted beginning of this trend for our economy.

2 Materials and methods

Any development begins with a foundation. Let us take a look at the main stages of the Industry 4.0 (Fig.1).

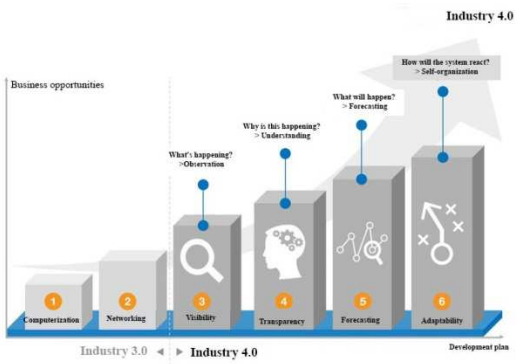


Fig. 1. Main stages of the Industry 4.0

The development and subsequent formation of the Industry 4.0 requires the results of the third industrial revolution (Fig. 1., first two stages).

Stage 1. Computerization.

This term refers to the provision of all major components of production with means for real-time digital control. The use of modern equipment initially allows switching to digital control, in the event of the use of outdated or analogue equipment, its modernization or replacement is necessary.

Stage 2. Networking. This implies the combination of isolated technologies into a single shared environment. Network interaction allows combining automatic design and production procedures with process control tools, organizing remote maintenance, etc.

Stage 3. Visibility. This concerns the creation of a digital alter ego of an enterprise for correct forecasting of situations in the future and rapid response in the present. The main difficulty in this aspect is not so much technical, but the reliability of data collection both in case of multiple data sources and in the absence of the ability to collect without human participation.

Stage 4. Transparency.

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Stage 5. Forecasting.

Stage 6. Adaptability.

Stages 4, 5, 6 may be separated for description only, since their implementation is interconnected. Transparency means linking digital display to analytical systems. It (link) allows competently extracting knowledge, patterns from the data array. This opens up the possibility of adapting analytics to production technologies (forecasting). Forecasting ability opens up the possibility of automating functions related to adapting a business to changing external conditions (adaptability).

When entering the path of the fourth industrial revolution, it is necessary to change the mentality of each individual: from performer to managers and the whole company. The cultural and social atmosphere that makes it possible to realize the advantages of the Industry 4.0 is based on two major milestones:

1. Ready for change. Openness to innovations, continuous professional growth (this concept must be distinguished from the career growth), commitment to change.
2. Free social interaction at all levels. It is ensured by a democratic style of leadership, the opportunity to openly express views and active participation in the evolutionary process.

3 Results and discussion

Analyzing the current situation with the generation Z in Western companies and comparing it with the situation with the Generation Z in Russia, we should address the peculiarities of the mental model of behavior of employees of the Generation Z in Russia.

The modern Generation Z requires a special approach in organizing their professional activities in Russian companies, which is based on the focus on emotional orientation in the management of employees of the Generation Z.

The study carried out by successful executives and companies revealed that emotionally intelligent or competent leaders achieve far greater results than those who rely more on intellectual intelligence or management knowledge. According to the results, “emotionally reasonable companies” understandable to people are increasingly superior to companies without such understanding. Today, the representatives of the Generation Z have already entered the market. The time has come to understand the peculiarities of the mental model of behavior of the Generation Z for the successful management of its development and effective management in Russian companies.

In 2019, at the time of the release of the first part of the paper, the authors started a project to conduct their research in part of the Generation Z. The participants in this study were young people born between 2003 and 2005. The study ended in January 2021. In total, 1 thousand 14 people were interviewed during the period: high school students, students of secondary educational institutions and first and second year students of higher educational institutions from Moscow, Samara, Nizhny Novgorod, Novokuybyshevsk, Syzran.

The previous paper presents the analysis of the current state of the Generations X and Y with the corresponding research areas and recommendations for team building of the Generations X and Y [1, 2, 3].

Some publications reflect the disadvantages of the theory of generations, below are two main ones and the description of how they were taken them into account in this study.

1. *The theory of generations was created by American scientists following American experience, but the United States is large in order to equally describe generations from respectable areas of California, and, for example, residents of Iowa, where farmers historically lived.* In our study, we expanded the geography of the sampling from Syzran to Moscow, while trying to maintain the same type of groups of young respondents (for example, the interviews were conducted in ordinary general academic schools: not lyceums and gymnasiums).

2. *In addition to the historical circumstances forming the personality, it is influenced by a huge number of other factors that may completely offset the first.*

Table 1. Study of the current state of generations.

Research area	Generation		
	X	**Y**	**Z**
What does it mean to be happy?			
Enjoy the respect of people	13%	7%	0%
Have a good and interesting job	33%	20%	4%
Have a good family	27%	33%	31%
Feel free	7%	13%	31%
Living well, in abundance	20%	27%	35%
What is the means of achieving the goals?			
Initiative, entrepreneurship, ability to express oneself	17%	22%	46%
Respect for traditions	3%	3%	4%
Personal efforts	6%	6%	27%
Mutual assistance, trust in people	11%	11%	0%
Family	19%	19%	0%
Professionalism	22%	17%	8%
Material security	8%	8%	4%
Responsibility	14%	14%	12%
Conditions for success?			
Good education	22%	22%	15%
Material security	19%	17%	4%
Useful contacts	11%	14%	19%
Luck (occurrence, concurrence of circumstances)	8%	8%	7%
Freedom to fulfil one’s needs and abilities	14%	19%	43%
Legality as a state-mandated procedure	3%	6%	0%
Stability in the country	17%	11%	4%
Respect for moral principles	6%	3%	8%

Note:
Generation X born in 1962-1981
Generation Y born in 1986-2002
Generation Z born in 2003-2005-present

In order to reduce the statistical error from the influence of other factors, we increased the sampling to 1 thousand 14 people, which made it possible to reduce the level of influence of such factors as family, environment, financial level on the results of the study.

The authors decided to conduct their research for several reasons: firstly, to try to identify differences in generations that may affect the work efficiency of a team compiled from different generations.

Secondly, to determine the values of generations and find the causes of conflicts between their representatives.

Thirdly, to conduct studies of our citizens from our cities with our mentality in order to eliminate the influence of the differences in Western and Russian culture.

The format of earlier studies by our colleagues (described in the previous part) was taken as the basis for the present study to comply with the correctness of data comparison in the future.

Let us give a brief description of generations paying more attention to the Generation Z as the representatives of this generation are already beginning to enter the age of labor relations.

The characteristics of the generations X and Y is given in the previous paper [1]. Below are the main abstracts for these generations and their comparison with the Generation Z.

During the study, the roles of participants were determined according to the classification of R.M. Belbin.

Let us briefly describe the roles for this classification.

Type: Implementer.

Character traits: Conservative, executive.

Positive qualities: Leadership potential, practicality, energy, self-discipline.

Acceptable disadvantages: Lack of flexibility, resistance to unverified ideas.

Type: Coordinator.

Character traits: Calm, confident, manageable.

Positive qualities: Good listening skills, ability to consider and evaluate the merits of all proposals. Strong motivation to achieve the goals.

Acceptable disadvantages: Common in terms of intelligence and creativity.

Type: Motivator.

Character traits: Very nervous, responsive, dynamic.

Positive qualities: Internal drive and willingness to fight inertia, inaction and self-deception.

Acceptable disadvantages: Tendency to discontent, irritability and impatience.

Type: Idea generator.

Character traits: Individualist, serious, unorthodox.

Positive qualities: Giftedness, ingenuity, intelligence and knowledge.

Acceptable disadvantages: “Has head in the clouds”, underestimates the practical details or the need for a protocol.

Type: Provider.

Character traits: Extrovert, enthusiastic, inquiring, sociable.

Positive qualities: Contacts people well and develops something new, shows resilience in a difficult environment.

Acceptable disadvantages: Loses interest in work when its initial attractiveness passes.

The study revealed the following correlation of roles (total study participants – 1,014).

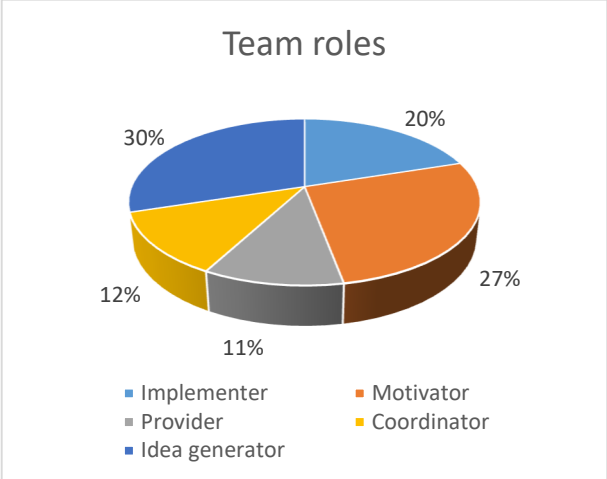


Fig. 2. Generation Z role behavior

The main findings of the study are as follows:

Similar to past generations, the new generation continues to correlate family values and wealth with the criteria of happiness, but the significance of feeling free has significantly grown. At the same time, recognition by people does not matter at all for the representatives of this generation.

As a means of achieving goals, the modern generation does not principally consider such tools as professionalism, family, mutual assistance and trust. The main focus of the generation is on initiative, entrepreneurship, personal efforts and responsibility. The main condition for success for the young generation is freedom to realize its needs and abilities. At the same time, the importance of education, material security and stability of the outside world has significantly decreased, compared with both the Generation X and the Generation Y.

Against the background of the above, the results on determining roles in the team are quite self-contradictory. The respondents least want to be motivators and generators of ideas, although it is these roles that are inherent in the need for self-realization and freedom. Denying the importance of professionalism, education and respect among people, the representatives of this generation more want to be implementers and coordinators in teams.

This contradiction makes it possible to put forward a hypothesis – either this generation has not yet decided on its roles due to its low age, or it, in principle, does not want to be determined and does not see any meaning in this. As a result, some company executives conclude that it is easiest to not deal with the employees of the Generation Z. In fact, this new generation includes thinking employees, ready to work with excessive inclusion in activities, capable of solving super-complex

tasks and ready to implement ambitious projects in a rapidly changing external harm. Only a competent approach is needed in managing the employees of the Generation Z.

Recommended approaches to the human resources management of the Generation Z

The companies, especially in the field of information technology, are interested in the efficiency and professionalism of the activities of the employees of the Generation Z.

The personnel market in IT until 2020-21 has maintained stable indicators of demand for personnel. The development of IT technologies, their applicability in previously atypical areas for them and the automation of processes hold IT specialists as one of the most popular in the labor market. The number of vacancies for remote work and development outsourcing has significantly increased.

The employees of the Generation Z are characterized by the rejection of higher education and the ability to obtain the necessary knowledge from sources that they have been taught to use since childhood. Besides, they are skeptical of the curricula of higher educational institutions and choose exactly what they really need. The combination of initiative and entrepreneurship as a means of achieving the goal (expressiveness – 47%) gives them entrepreneurial abilities. Moreover, for the sake of realizing their goal, they are ready to work from a position of excess activity, performing more in the process of activity than is prescribed by the job description.

Every new employee of the Generation Z who comes to the company must understand that for him personally the work of the company is a chance to succeed. In this, the employee of the Generation Z relies solely on his own efforts, these efforts shall only be addressed in the right direction of innovative technologies and improving the efficiency of the company. To this end, HR service of the company needs to implement a number of measures taking into account the peculiarities of the mental behaviors of this generation:

– to assign to a new employee Z a mentor – a professional with significant production experience in the company, the so-called “carrier of corporate culture ”;

– a professional mentor together with HR employees conduct an interview with a novice about the prospects for development and advancement within his personal career and possible prospects overcoming his misunderstanding of mutual assistance and lack of trust in people.

Practice shows (Rosatom – Greenatom, LLC VF Tanker of the Volga Shipping Company) the feasibility of creating a site that forms a new employee’s understanding of the career path, for example, the analysis of the Career Tree with key competencies necessary for career growth for each type of career:

– each new employee of the Generation Z is included in the career planning system;

– the company should cultivate a talent management program in which to recognize, evaluate, develop, rotate are one of the main areas of activity in the effective management of employees of the Generation Z.

– HR service of the company assigns a development manager to each new employee, who assesses the level of his adaptation to the new operating conditions, performs monthly and then quarterly monitoring at the initial stage;

– it is desirable to create a retention system with new employees of the Generation Z taking into account the main indicator of the mental model: “Freedom to realize your needs and abilities” while achieving successful adaptation.

It is impossible to cheat and manipulate them. Quite often, the attempts to focus their activities from the standpoint of generally accepted laws and regulations (KPI system and grades) acceptable to categories X and Y are unsuccessful, result in failures for the HR service and the categorical exit of employees of the Generation Z if they were not explained their preferences from using this system openly and intelligently.

To retain a new employee of the Generation Z it is necessary to give him the opportunity to fulfill his great desire to become a realizer or integrator in projects with mandatory personal growth through increasing his personal competencies, self-development and self-actualization in project management, team building, effective communications, time management, stress management. All this should be included in the personal development plan of the new employee of the Generation Z. Thus, it is possible to eliminate the loss of interest in the work of employees of the Generation Z when its initial attractiveness passes. One important feature of personnel management in large Russian companies may lead the Generation Z employees to spontaneous exit. According to the results of the international study of personnel engagement (2011) by Gfk Tusnmark, uncomfortable working conditions in large corporations are a feature of Russian business in companies where the number of employees is 1000 or more. So, pressure from the company to work for many hours in a row is 33%, and stress at work is 47%, while in Western companies these figures are 23% and 37%, respectively.

The employees of the Generation Z distinguish 2 performance management poles that sufficiently provide control from the professional mentor and at the same time form a sense of freedom and trust in the employee so necessary due to his mental model of behavior. Control is possible with the help of trackers, which act as a regulator in the teamwork, as well as between employees, and between an employee and a mentor. At the same time, it is possible to monitor working time, physiological indicators, control the desktop, content, as well as control the history of the browser. Such sensitive and not obvious control is easily accepted by the employees of the Generation Z. However, it is obvious that at any time the employee’s activities may be monitored, and this deprives the employee of the opportunity to violate the requirements imposed on him.

Today, due to the circumstances associated with the pandemic, many employees work in remotely using instant messengers and cloud technologies. The personal

responsibility of staff members is of great importance in these circumstances. Despite the absence of a tight schedule, a system of trust in the employee is formed, when the result is monitored and not the process of activity itself. A state of continuous presence at work is formed, always in communication, which, nevertheless, allows perceiving this situation as a feeling of independence and the opportunity to live our lives, which is extremely important for Z-category employees: "We believe that you know how and what to do and trust you".

4 Conclusion

Continuous communication, open discussion with the employees of the Generation Z in organizing all complex issues are the main tools of HR managers and mentors. At the same time, the employees of the Generation Z do not need a lot of communication. This is especially important when setting a task. The instructions should be short with a specific follow-up algorithm and specific indicators of the desired result for all items of the proposed action algorithm. All this should be communicated to the employee of the Generation Z verbally and in writing. Communication should be short, more through social networks and video services.

The employees of the Generation Z need a qualified and competent professional – a leader who must constantly demonstrate his "advancement" in modern means of communication so that not to lose confidence and respect as a leader. But this is not enough for the employees of the Generation Z. They are oriented towards the principle of "equality" considering it possible to behave "on equal terms" with their direct supervisor if they realize their own high level of professionalism and competence. Often, they do not recognize the existence of traditional levels of management and mandatory subordination to the immediate manager. All this must be explained to the employees of the Generation Z quite patiently and logically.

Even if there is no "hot news" on the agenda it is necessary to hold scheduled meetings, individual interviews on specific results of activities and possible achievements of high results in activities for the employees of the Generation Z. It is necessary to make sure that the employees of the Generation Z feel continuous support and understanding at all levels of management provided absolute transparency and openness of information. Even with the slightest concealment of information, the employees of the Generation Z may permanently lose confidence in company management [4, 5].

The assessment of professionally important and personal qualities of the employees of the Generation Z showed that high motivation to achieve successful results in the activity is formed in the process of implementing ambitious projects, which are based on complexity on the verge of real opportunities and appropriate remuneration (Freedom to realize their needs and abilities – 43%, Initiative, entrepreneurship, ability to express oneself – 46%). Often the employees of the Generation Z accept the "Principle of long reins". At the same time, under no circumstances should the immediate leader loose these "reins".

Besides, it should be understood that the existing system of benefits and compensation for most employees, including the Generations X and Y, may be absolutely indifferent to the Generation Z.

The assessment of professionally important and personal qualities of working employees of the Generation Z showed that high motivation to achieve successful results in the activity is formed in the process of implementing ambitious projects, which are based on complexity on the verge of real opportunities and appropriate remuneration (freedom to realize their needs and abilities – 43%, initiative, entrepreneurship, ability to express oneself – 46%).

The means of achieving these goals include initiative, entrepreneurship, the ability to express themselves, and orientation to their own efforts. Here it is important to consider the competent formation of their internal motivation to achieve successful results in their activities through the formation of high self-esteem and a high level of goals [6, 7].

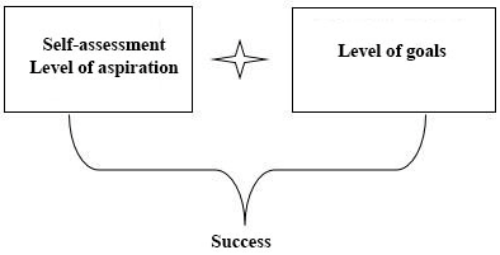


Fig. 3. Internal motivation for successful performance

The combination of a high level of self-esteem when the employee of the Generation Z sees himself as capable of achieving significant success, taking a leading position and displaying perseverance and tenacity in achieving difficult tasks, active, able, entrepreneurial, and high-level goals, when the employee of the Generation Z has a large goal in life formed for several years and constantly achieves it or the main goal for life, a number of intermediate goals that facilitate the achievement of the main, then he becomes a good specialist, active, entrepreneurial, may be a leader, harmonious and productive in work, and all these combined "condemns" the employees of the Generation Z to success.

$$\text{Self} - \text{esteem} = \frac{\text{Success}}{\text{Aspirations}}$$

Self-esteem is a positive part of the self-concept, i.e. the system of views and ideas of an employee of the Generation Z about himself. How to increase self-esteem? Reducing aspirations is an unconstructive path. The development of self-justifying trends (external causal attribution) is absolutely inappropriate and not characteristic of the employees of the Generation Z. Psychological barriers lead the individual to

deconstructive behavior (aggressiveness, social apathy, "red eye syndrome").

The orientation of the employees of the Generation Z to the success associated with the development of the personality, i.e. the way to realize himself, self-actualization, makes them effective and competent, which in turn increases the efficiency and creates the key and leading competencies of the company, thus making it successful in conditions of fierce competition.

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Summary: The article discusses the unique characteristics of this generation, which include being highly tech-savvy, multitasking, and valuing personal freedom, flexibility, and work-life balance. The article identifies specific adjustments made by companies, such as improving workplace atmosphere, incorporating the latest technology, offering ambassador programs, internships, and benefit packages, and supporting employees through onboarding programs like assigning a "company buddy." It also highlights the importance of corporate social responsibility (CSR) as a significant value for Generation Z. The study emphasizes that while companies are adapting to the generational shift, they don't overly promote these changes. The authors suggest that firms could gain a competitive advantage by better communicating their efforts to adjust to the needs of younger employees.

Relevance: The article is relevant to the topic the trend of Generation Z in the selection of companies based on how company meets Generation Z expectation.



Martyna Bieleń



Jakub Kubiczek

Response of the labor market to the needs and expectations of Generation Z

Abstract

We are witnessing a generational change in the labor market. The baby boomer generation is being replaced by the representatives of Generation Z. The different environment both generations grew up in, as well as technological advancement over these several decades, are reasons these generations have completely different characteristics. The conditions a given generation grew up in influences the needs and expectations in private and professional life. This becomes a challenge for employers who have to adjust workplaces to their requirements. Moreover, a workplace atmosphere can be the important determinant of an employer's competitiveness in the labor market. Literature studies have shown that, although there are many studies on Generation Y (preceding), there are few studies describing Generation Z (succeeding) in the labor market, thus creating a research gap. The purpose of this study was to explore how companies adapt to generational change in the labor market, i.e. to characterize both the ways and the extent to which enterprises adjust workplaces to the specificity of employees representing Generation Z. The main focus of the study were issues related to a friendly office atmosphere, the latest technology, ambassador programs, internships and apprenticeships, benefit packages, onboarding and CSR. According to the research results, enterprises make changes in order to adapt to Generation Z, however, they do not promote these changes excessively. Firms and organizations should consider developing reports on their efforts to adjust to generational change in the labor market.

Keywords: Generation Z, labor market, workplace, managing generational diversity, competitiveness, human capital, organization management

Introduction

The progress of society as a result of both economic and technological development causes constantly changing conditions of all market segments, including the labor market where entrepreneurs compete for a specific resource. As the result of economic growth, new jobs are created and the demographic decline in Poland (together with the negative migration balance), results in difficulty in finding a person willing to take up employment. Willingness to hire better employees requires competitiveness in the market. Employers are competitive about the components of remuneration (base, bonuses, allowances, anniversary awards) and other material aspects of employment, such as a business cell phone or car (Serafin, 2014, pp. 43–44). However, when the number of these material incentives is similar, intangible assets grow in significance.

Firstly, these assets concern the working conditions and atmosphere in the workplace. Although employee preferences vary greatly, they are similar among a given generation. The word "generation" is understood as "an identifiable group that shares birth years, age, location and significant life events at critical developmental stages" (Kupperschmidt, 2000, p. 66). These features shape common expectations and needs of a given generation's representatives. Likewise, it is important that the representatives of Generation Z (born after 1995) enter the labor market that respects their habits, preferences and expectations (Kirchmayer & Fratrièová, 2020).

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There are still few studies concerning this subject when it comes to Generation Z (Dolot, 2018). Studies in the field of social sciences distinguish common features of Generation Z (the youngest generation in the labor market today). However, as far as is known, there is no scientific study on the initiatives implemented by entrepreneurs in order to encourage representatives of Generation Z to work for them. The reason behind it is the small amount of time since the generation entered the labor market and therefore, an inability to analyze the issue in detail. This study somewhat fills this research gap – its theoretical and cognitive goal is to present selected practices of entrepreneurs competing in the non-material dimension. The practical goal, on the other hand, is to evaluate these practices and prepare recommendations to optimize these activities. Achieving these goals is to answer the following research questions: what common features do the representatives of Generation Z share? What are their expectations regarding the workplace and the atmosphere in it? How do employers meet these expectations? In what processes do changes all result?

The article is structured as follows: the first part consists of the definition of Generation Z and discusses its characteristics. The second, empirical part is based on the analysis of secondary data and involves a description of the implementation of workplace adjustments that will measure up to the expectations of Generation Z in Poland. This is followed by a discussion of the issue and summary.

Literature review

Today, on the labor market there are people representing various generations (Hysa, 2016). They create the market and determine the current situation in it (Hysa, 2016; Luscombe et al., 2013). Among the aforementioned generations, the following should be distinguished: Boomers (Baby Boomers, 1946–1964), Generation X (1965–1979), Generation Y (1980–1994) and Generation Z (1995–…) (Berkup, 2014).

Literature studies have shown that various authors have different approaches to the definition of Generation Z, particularly, determining the years of birth of its representatives. The age range defined in individual scientific studies is presented in Table 1 (see also Dolot, 2018). Although the most common name of this generation is Generation Z, the authors have also been using different names. Table 2 shows alternative names for Generation Z.

Table 1
Different estimations of years Generation Z was born in

Authors	Years
Biernacki, 2016; Domagalska-Grędys, 2017; Kroenke, 2015; Kuczerska & Smoląg, 2018; Żarczyńska-Dobiesz & Chomątowska, 2014	born after 1990
Gajda, 2017	born after 1994
Berkup, 2014; Fratrièová & Krichmayer, 2018	born after 1995
Bejtkovský, 2016	1995–2001
McCrindle, 2014	1995–2009
Bencsik et al., 2016; Koulopoulos & Keldsen, 2014; Seemiller & Grace, 2016	1995–2010
Dimock, 2019; Knight, 2014	born 1996 and after
Bresman & Rao, 2017	born after 1997

Source: authors' own work.

Table 2
Alternative names for Generation Z

Author	Names
Gajda, 2017	Generation M (Multitasking), Generation C (Connected Generation), net generation (constantly connected).
Levickaite, 2010	Children of Internet, Digital Generation, Digital Natives 87F ****, Media Generation, .com Generation, iGen 8F *****, Instant Online.
Żarczyńska-Dobiesz. & Chomątowska, 2014	Generation "C" (from the words connected, communicating, content-centric, computerized, community-oriented, always clicking), as well as iGeneration, Gen Tech, Gen Wii, Net Gen, Digital Natives, Gen Next, Post Gen.
Dolot, 2018	C Generation, R Generation, iGeneration, Gen Tech, Online Generation, Post-Millennials, Facebook Generation, Switchers, "always clicking".

Source: authors' own work.

Characteristics of Generation Z

The approach of scientists towards determining the age range result from various adopted sociological characteristics that allow it. In his research, while defining common features of people who make up the Generation Z, Dimock (2019) takes into account political, economic and social factors. Generation Z has very similar personality traits to Generation Y (the previous generation) (Kuczerska & Smoląg, 2018; Żarczyńska-Dobiesz & Chomątowska 2014). The list of features of Generations Y and Z is presented in Table 3.

The conditions in which Generation Z grew up determine their features. Generation Z consists of people who grew up in the internet world and remained online (Biernacki, 2016). The time of technological development in which Generation Z grew up made them feel at ease when using new technologies (Gajda, 2017). It can even be said that they are used to technology (Żarczyńska-Dobiesz & Chomątowska, 2014). Generation Z is technically fluent, connected to the web, incorporating technology into all aspects of their lives (Kirchmayer & Fratrièová, 2020). What is more, the fact of being surrounded by technology all the time made it a part of them (Gaidhani et al., 2019). Representatives of this generation live simultaneously in two worlds – real and virtual (Lazányi & Bilan, 2017, p. 79; Żarczyńska-Dobiesz & Chomątowska, 2014). Some researchers go further and claim that for Generation Z, the virtual and real worlds are the same reality (Hysa, 2016). The representatives of Generation Z treat cyberspace the same way they do reality. This results in a lack of hesitation when introducing information about themselves to the internet (Pandit, 2015, pp. 17–18).

Some researchers perceive the adolescence of Generation Z as a unique historical context that provided them with many opportunities to enter the virtual world (Fratrièová & Krichmayer, 2018). The internet breaks the barriers of communication, and network guarantees contacting people around the world. This gives the opportunity to work at any time and on any day of the week, regardless of the time zone (Berkup, 2014; Żarczyńska-Dobiesz & Chomątowska, 2014).

On the other hand, communicating with the other representatives of Generation Z only virtually, causes interpersonal skills deficiencies, particularly in the area of establishing contacts and relationships with others. In addition, it makes them bad listeners (Bejtkovský, 2016). Moreover, some of their friends have never seen them in the flesh because they met online and using instant messaging may make it more

Table 3

Comparison of Generation Y and Generation Z

Generation Y	Generation Z
Familiar with new technology.	The most tech-savvy generation, born in a digital world. They keep up with the new technology and are really close to it.
Optimistic about life.	More realistic and cautious, materialistic when it comes to life. They are afraid of the future.
Confident.	Confident.
Variety is normal for them.	Even more tolerant and accepting when it comes to diversity, they are themselves as a generation, internally very diverse.
The "me, for me" generation, looking for fame and fortune. They recognize the problems of corporate social responsibility.	Generation "we", more socially oriented, strongly interested in the problems of corporate social responsibility. Even more involved in the issues of global warming, hunger, wars, etc. Honesty and non-discrimination are more important to them than money status.
Learning process, development planned in advance, long-term building of a professional career.	Learning, development according to the principle of just-in-time learning, they want to achieve everything and know everything immediately, at one's command and preferably online. They don't like the vision of building a long-term career and have a specific approach to gaining knowledge. It is important for them to find information quickly.
They strive for balance between professional and private life.	Professional and private life is to exist as a whole. They want to be themselves and be guided by the same values in both.
Educated, intelligent.	Even more educated. Growing up in "online mode" and social games, they have developed a variety of competences valued on the labor market very early and are not afraid of taking risks and making decisions quickly.

Source: „Pokolenie Z na rynku pracy – wyzwania dla zarządzania zasobami ludzkimi", A. Żarczyńska-Dobiesz and B. Chomątowska, 2014, *Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego we Wrocławiu, 350*, p. 408 (https://doi.org/10.15611/pn.2014.350.36).

difficult for them to maintain a long-term relationship (Cook, 2015; Gouws & Tarp, 2017; Harber, 2011; Singh, 2014). Żarczyńska-Dobiesz and Chomątowska (2014) called it the impairment of verbal communication skills and establishing interpersonal contacts in the real world.

Generation Z representatives are self-confident, open-minded and creative (Kuczerska & Smoląg, 2018). They prefer to work in a group rather than individually (Hysa, 2016). Moreover, they want to achieve success at work quickly and build their position in a short time (Hysa, 2016). The constant connection to technology and performing several actions simultaneously shaped the multitasking skill in Generation Z (Fratrièová & Krichmayer, 2018; Hysa, 2016). The representatives of this generation are characterized by mobility and knowledge of foreign languages. Unlike the older generations, they do not consider these things a barrier (Hysa, 2016). They are eager to communicate with representatives of other cultures, they like to participate in international internships and strive to constantly improve the processes that surround them (Hysa, 2016).

Generation Z representatives value respect and keenly express their opinion on any subject. They are also energetic and they willingly use their creativity at work (Sidorcuka & Chesnovicka, 2017). Employers can benefit from Generation Z's commitment to work (Half, 2015), however, if any problems arise, they do not like to be given advice and prefer to solve the problems themselves or seek solutions on various platforms. They search for information on interesting topics on the Internet and use do-it-yourself guides (Gaidhani et al., 2019).

Generation Z dislikes the hierarchical structure of organizations (Kuczerska & Smoląg, 2018) and their routine. To them, the willingness to seek diversity is more important than stability at work (Hysa, 2016). Due to their generation characteristics, they expect a change in the attitude of employers (Gajda, 2017). From the point of view of the study, the fact that they can easily change jobs if an employer is unable to provide them with rapid development, is important (Paszkiewicz, 2017).

The diversity of generations in the labor market translates into challenges in managing teams in organizations. Employers face challenges in terms of both recruiting new staff and managing the current one (Iorgulescu, 2016). The biggest challenge for employers is attracting employees who most closely match the policy of a given company (Sidorcuka & Chesnovicka, 2017). The desire to develop a company creates new workplaces. The generational change forces contemporary employers to change their approach to new employments, and above all, to be more flexible (Kroenke, 2015).

"A corporation's success and competitiveness depend on its ability to embrace diversity and realize the competitive advantages and benefits" (Bejtkovsky, 2016; Osoian & Zaharie, 2014). It is necessary to get to know the generation's values, needs, motivations and apply adequate human resource management methods (Żarczyńska-Dobiesz & Chomątowska, 2016). Adapting workplaces to the generation's individual needs and career opportunities are the most important non-material factors influencing the decision-making process (Fratrièová & Krichmayer, 2018; Gajda, 2017). Gaidhani et al. (2019) reviewed the literature and presented the following Generation Z expectations towards employers and the place of employment. The representatives of Generation Z:

- prefer to work for a leader with qualities such as honesty and integrity;
- expect that the channel of communication is recognized and comfortable environment is present;
- prefer transparency, and treat self-reliance, flexibility and personal freedom as non-negotiable aspects;
- have to be given adequate freedom to ascertain themselves and get immediate acknowledgment;
- favor face to face communication and want to be taken seriously;
- wish managers listened to their ideas and valued their feelings;
- prefer work environment that nurture mentoring, learning and professional development opportunities;
- consider technology a crucial part of their private lives and work.

Research methodology

Literature review proves that there are many publications concerning Generation Y and their specific situation on the labor market. However, to the best of our knowledge, there are no studies regarding specificity of Generation Z with particular reference to Poland. Therefore, the research consisted of two stages, of secondary and primary character, respectively. The first was aimed at exploring the processes of adapting enterprises to the specificity of Generation Z. Rich and diversified sources of secondary data, such as 11 company reports, 4 industry analyses and information available on the websites of 21 companies were used. After conducting a critical analysis of the collected data, it was possible to identify the most common techniques used by enterprises to meet the needs and expectations of Generation Z. The second stage supplemented and extended the results of the first, and its aim was to recognize motives behind the processes of workplace adjustments to the needs of Generation Z. In four companies that were earlier identified as those implementing adaptation processes, an in-depth interview (IDI) was carried out with representatives of HR departments. Such a choice of enterprises was explained by the results of the first stage indicating which companies conduct the most intensive activities. The interviews with companies consisted of the following questions: does the company notice the need to adapt to Generation Z? Are

there any changes made in the company in view of Generation Z entering the market? If so, what are these changes? Are the applied solutions innovative or are the existing solutions modified?

Results

Entry of any new generation to the labor market forces employers to adapt to new, specific attitudes, expectations, and a particular style of work and cooperation. It is worth noting that currently, despite the coexistence of several generations on the labor market, enterprises focus primarily on the needs of Generations Y and Z. Generation Z, although similar to Generation Y, pays attention to other things when it comes to the work environment than their older colleagues do. What is more, Generation Z is perceived as being the most demanding. On the basis of the mentioned requirements of Generation Z and interviews with HR departments of large employers in Poland, the following enterprise changes, resulting from the entry of Generation Z into the labor market, are listed:

- creating a friendly atmosphere at work;
- making the latest technologies and equipment available in the company;
- creating ambassador programs;
- offering internships and apprenticeships for students and graduates;
- offering benefit packages;
- enabling supervisory support during the first days of work;
- involving employees in CSR activities, e.g. corporate volunteering.

An example of a competition that selects the best employers in the country is "Top Employers Poland". Top Employers Institute examines employers in terms of their personnel policy. The priorities for companies in 2020 were primarily organizational and cultural changes, employee involvement and talent strategy. In 2020, as many as 61 Polish employers became laureates of this study. These included Accenture Polska, Bank Pekao, Coca-Cola Poland Services, DHL Polska, Kaufland Polska Markety, Orange and Polski Koncern Naftowy ORLEN S.A. (Top Employers Institute, n.d.). Employers want to be perceived as offering a friendly workplace atmosphere, respect for the employee and understanding. Based on the interview with several companies, it appears that the atmosphere at work for the youngest generation is extremely crucial, as hierarchy is uncomfortable for them.

Employers today, wishing to meet the requirements of Generation Z, must also adapt their technologies and equipment in their enterprise. Generation Z, having extensive experience with the latest technologies, require from the employers, the newest technological solutions at a workplace. An example of how companies adjust to these requirements is the leader of Polish banking – PKO Bank Polski. Thanks to the cooperation with the Emplocity start-up, the bank implemented a tool that uses artificial intelligence in the recruitment processes. Emplobot is an intelligent recruitment chatbot which, during an interview with a candidate, asks about professional experience, skills, availability and financial expectations, and based on the questions asked, it creates a candidate's profile and adjusts it to recruitment conducted by the bank (PKO BP, 2019). Generation Z prefers online training. An employer that offers such a solution is, among others, Tauron Group. Most of the training provided by this employer takes place on a special e-learning platform. E-learning is a solution that is used nowadays in many companies in Poland.

Ambassador programs are one of the popularity-gaining forms of cooperation between students and employers. The ambassadorial program is designed to promote a given enterprise at universities or job fairs. The work of a brand ambassador includes: organizing events promoting an organization on university campuses and informing students about job offers or internships via social media. In return, the ambassador usually receives a given company's gadgets, electronic equipment, trainer support, free training or the possibility of an internship after the completion of the ambassador program (Albrychiewicz-Słocińska & Robak, 2017). The most popular ambassadorial programs visible at Polish universities include programs of companies and organizations such as: PZU, ING Bank, Pekao Bank, Santander Bank Polska, BGŻ, BNP Paribas Bank, Skanska, Capgemini, NIVEA Polska, Tiger, RedBull, KPMG, PwC, Delloite, EY, Maspex and Grupa Azoty. One of the most attractive ambassadorial programs is the program of PZU. This program offers ambassadors not only training, integration, networking, consultations with recruiters and the possibility of further cooperation, but also an academic scholarship (PZU, n.d.).

Young people entering the labor market do not often have professional experience. Therefore, entrepreneurs organize internships and apprenticeships for students and graduates to help them gain their first experience. Today, most Polish companies offer internship programs. They provide flexibility that is valued by the Z generation. Internships are often implemented according to a student's schedule or by mutual agreement considering working hours between the employer and the trainee or apprentice. This form of employment may be paid or unpaid. Payment, however, is not the most important thing for the representatives of Generation Z, as they want to gain valuable experience. National Bank of Poland is one of the institutions where it is impossible for a person without experience and appropriate knowledge to get employed. NBP offers young people both paid and free student internships. The student internship lasts 2 or 3 weeks and is aimed at obtaining materials for diploma theses in the field of economics, banking and finance. On the other hand, "Internships of the NBP President" is an annual program aimed at preparing the most talented graduates of domestic and foreign universities to take up employment on the Polish and European labor market (NBP, 2019).

Another form of employer adaptation is in the offering of benefit packages. The information obtained from the companies interviewed proved that benefits are one of the most crucial things for Generation Z. Currently, employers offer an extensive range of benefits: from medical insurance, through prepaid cards to even tuition fees. When competing for an employee, the employer wants to provide the best non-wage benefits. According to research, as many as 90% of employers in Poland offered some of these benefits (Staszic Institute, 2019). The bank that has a wide "Well beiING" package in its employment offer is ING Bank. The additional benefits that the bank offers its employees include a dozen or so additional days off from work, the possibility of using sabbatical, the possibility of working from home, medical care, employee pension plan and group insurance, cancer prevention program, cafeteria program or multisport packages and the co-financing of language courses or training as a part of employee development (ING, n.d.).

Onboarding, defined as the process of an employee being supported by their employer in adapting to the new workplace and it is extremely important from the perspective of a newly hired person. One of the types of adaptation to a new workplace is assigning a "company buddy". This person's task is to, among other things, familiarize the employee with a company, its policy, structure, rules and organizational culture, as well as answering all questions, explaining tasks and conducting integration processes with this company's team (Kaźmierczak, 2017). The presence of a "company buddy" is one of the ways for employers to adapt to the Z generation. PwC is an example of an enterprise where the employee is accompanied by a buddy during the first days of work. As part of the WEX summer internship program for 1st and 2nd year students, the offer gives them the opportunity to gain their first professional experience (PwC, n.d.).

The last type of adaptation of employers to the Z generation is the commitment to corporate social responsibility (CSR). CSR in relation to sustainable development means maintaining the balance point between caring for a company to achieve its goals in terms of ecological, social and economic aspects. Corporate social responsibility develops its idea by focusing primarily on the natural environment, external shareholders and general social welfare (Kazojć, 2014). Generation Z consists of people who spend a lot of time on the Internet and are filled with information about the need to care for nature and their community. In Poland, BNP Paribas Bank became the leader of the Responsible Companies Ranking in 2019. The bank's Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development Strategy consists of 12 commitments under four pillars of responsibility – economic, workplace, social and environmental. All the activities undertaken by the bank are carried out in accordance with the principles of corporate governance and include, among others, openness to customer needs and initiatives for local communities, limiting the negative impact of operating activities or long-term financing of the economy (BNP Paribas, n.d.).

Discussion and conclusion

Every two generations that are successive share some common features. It is no different in the case of generations Y and Z. Managing generational diversity becomes significantly more visible among employers, especially within the area of adaptation to Generation Z. The analysis of the information available on portals of different companies, as well as conclusions drawn from the reports of the companies being interviewed, allow one to conclude that the adaptations for Generation Z are becoming more and more prevalent. As companies emphasize, these adaptive changes have existed for years, but they are constantly improved and modified in connection with the new generation in the labor market.

Generation Z includes people born after 1995 who are characterized primarily by multitasking, openness, creativity, mobility, entrepreneurship and what is more, they willingly use the latest technologies. It should be noted that features that distinguish them from other generations the most are: self-reliance, freedom, individualism and addiction to technology and speed. It is believed that they spend little time in the real world because they are always online.

Generation Z primarily demands a work-life balance, a friendly atmosphere at work, support of development and the opportunity to prove themselves. The analysis showed that new employees, who start their adventure in a new workplace, can count on the support of a "buddy". It has also been noticed that in companies, employees do not categorize themselves by position and everyone calls each other by their first name. As a result, the atmosphere in a company is more relaxed and friendly.

More and more companies focus on developing the best possible atmosphere in their workplaces and invest in the latest equipment and technologies that are provided for employee use. Thus, enterprises more and more often use remote work solutions or offer flexible working hours. Enterprises are more willing to create internships and ambassador programs. It is an interesting offer among Generation Z due to their frequent lack of professional experience. What employers also offer is a benefit package perceived positively by the representatives of Generation Z. A noticeable adaptation of employers to the changing generations is their social responsibility. Z's also pay attention to whether a given company is involved in CSR. It is noticed that the number of employers who care about CSR and are involved in social initiatives is increasing.

All of these are only part of all the changes and adjustments that can be observed in enterprises operating in Poland. The reason for these adjustments is employers' competition for employees based on intangible assets, as they create jobs adapted to the Generation Z. It should be noted that not every em-

ployer changes the environment of their company due to generational changes in the labor market, but there is a noticeable growing tendency of such behavior. Any activities of enterprises that result in opening up to Generation Z will affect the reduction of unemployment among young people and the possibility of dynamic development in line with their expectations.

Further research could be aimed at finding the importance of an implementation adjustment process concerning generational change, especially focusing on small and medium-sized enterprises. An analysis of large company reports showed that although some of them try to adapt to Generation Z in the labor market, they do not promote them excessively. Firms and organizations should consider developing reports on their efforts to adjust to generational change in the labor market. Information concerning this subject could become a strong advantage in the area of competing for an employee. These reports should be publicly available so that all interested parties have access to them.

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We recommend

The voice of Generation Z



Link to the report: **https://rainmakerthinking.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/THE-VOICE-OF-GENERATION-Z_Final.pdf**

Source 15 (Scholarly)

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Summary: The article starts with providing the general conception of Generation Z, which is a generation known to be global citizens due to the advancement of the internet and technology. That means the Internet enables Generation Z to be connected to all the trends and happenings all around the world. However, the focal point of this research is determining the most effective leadership style with Generation Z. From the survey conducted during research, transformational leadership, and servant leadership are the two of most leadership styles that match Generation Z, but servant leadership seems to be more effective and affiliated after carefully evaluating Generation Z perspective. The study made a statement that Generation Z needs a leader who gives direct direction and always be there once they need, who can accept and forgive their mistake, and who empowers them will gain their respect.

Relevance: The article is relevant to the topic by researching effective leadership with Generation Z employees and drawing a role model of management leaders in the organization to follow the practice of servant leadership to raise the confidence of Generation Z in the working environment.

Place in the paper: Literature review

Effective Leadership style for Generation Z

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Abstract

Generation Z (Gen Z) is expected to reach 2.56 billion individuals globally by 2020 and estimated to occupy 20% of work- place. Each generation has its unique ability and competency. Leveraging them is a key to the success of an organization. Gen Z is known to be more risk-averse, have lower expectations, confident but cautious, demanding. This generation is known as digitally naïve and hyper-connected junkies. Their attention span is short and need extensive feedback, but not micromanagement. Gen Z prefers face-to-face interactions. With those characteristics, this study aims to see what leadership style is effective for Gen Z. A qualitative study was conducted to 92 Gen Z see the frequent keyword to identify the effective leadership style. Voyant analytical tools was used to analyze the keywords. The most frequent keywords mentioned were friendly, good, humble, wise, polite, honest, providing, supportive, understanding, caring, giving and appreciate. However, words such as encouraging, challenging were not mentioned at all. Therefore, according to the keyword finding, the effective leadership style is servant leadership.

Keywords
Generation Z, leadership, servant leadership, transformational

1. Introduction
Regarding leadership styles, literature brings several types, such as authoritarian, charismatic, situational, visionary, contingency, behavioral, transactional among others (Northouse 2019). Among the 66 leadership styles indicated by Dinh et al. (2014) in (Girardi and Rubim Sarate 2021), transformational leadership is the most emphasized, which have been growing rapidly since the 1990s, especially in studies that investigate how these studies promote better performance in organizations (Girardi and Rubim Sarate 2021). However, difference situation requires different type of leadership.

With different traits, way of thinking, lifestyle, belief, Gen Z might need a certain type of leadership that make the work effectively. Gen Z are known to be the first global citizen due to the advancement of internet and technology. Therefore, they communicate mostly with the support of the technology. They depend on technology for almost every aspect of their life (Dwidienawati & Gandasari, 2018). However, because they were born and raised during economic downturn, Gen Z more realistic compared to Gen Y. They are also more risk-averse than earlier generation. They have lower expectation, cautious and less entitled (Tulgan 2013). They are easily bored, therefore, they expect to have different job role and flexibility (Dwidienawati and Gandasari 2018). They want instant success. They are self-reliant but still need guidance and frequent feedback and tap in the back (Stillman & Stillman, 2017), however, they do not like micromanagement. They also need superior that they respect in order to work effectively (Dwidienawati and Gandasari 2018). It seemed that Gen Z require different style of leadership. Currently in Scopus database in beginning of May 2022, there were only 34 literatures on "Generation Z" and "leadership"

1.1 Objectives
This study aims to identify which leadership style is the most effective according to Gen Z. This study will contribute for the literature of leadership and generation cohort.

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2. Literature Review

Generation Cohort

Hung & Gu &Yim, 2008 in(Berkup, 2014) definea generation as "the generational cohorts or groups, who belong to the same age group, experience, or will experience accordingly the similar life experience in the years they may shape their lives". Generations represent distinct and separate groups of people with a common set of beliefs, experiences, and values about the way the world works (Culpin et al. 2015). Generation is referred by both its years of birth and a particular set of shared social and economic conditions during their formative years. A generation is basically defined as "a series of birthdays of a group of people" Jopling, 2004 in (Berkup 2014).It is also referred as "a set of historical events and related phenomena that creates a distinct generational gap" according to Parry &Urwin, 2011 in (Turner 2015).

The definition is based on two factors. First, by the period of the lifetime based on historical time. The second one based on the common even or experiences. To identify generation, there should be some social proximity that they shared in term of events of cultural phenomena (Turner 2015). Turner, 2015). Both of those factors have shaped distinctive characteristics for each generation (Rani & Samuel, 2016). Generations share a common characteristic which make people from similar generations show common traits, way of thinking, value, and beliefs (Rani & Samuel, 2016). The era in which a person is born and growing up will affect one's behaviours, attitudes, and values. These values and subsequent behaviours will remain relatively stable throughout a generation's lifetime and set them apart from the preceding and following generations (Fountain and Lamb 2011).

At present, legal adults consist of four generations. The first one is the Silent Generation or also known as Traditionalists or the Greatest Generation. They are those who were born between 1922 and 1945. The second one is the Baby Boomers who were born from 1946 to 1964. The third one is Generation X. This generation are people who were born from 1965 to 1977). The next is Generation Y or Millennials who were born from about 1977 to 1993. The youngest one is Generation Z who were born from 1993 to 2005 (Turner 2015).

Generation Z

Gen Z is the generation born between 1995 and 2015 (Bassiouni & Hackley, 2014; Koulopoulos & Keldsen, 2014; Tulgan, 2013). This generation has distinct characteristics compared to Millennials because they were born and are growing up in different social and economic conditions. Growing up, they were facing economic difficulty with recession and uncertainty (Annis, 2017; Berkup, 2014; Stillman & Stillman, 2017; Tulgan 2013). Therefore, they are more realistic compared to Gen Y. They are also more risk-averse than earlier generation. They have lower expectation, cautious and less entitled (Tulgan 2013). They value stability (Annis 2017).

(Dwidienawati & Gandasari, 2018) stated that this generation put importance in competitive salary. They get bored easily, therefore, they expect to have different job role and flexibility. They want instant success and require company to provide them with personal development. They are self-reliant but still need guidance and frequent feedback and tap in the back (Stillman and Stillman 2017), however, they do not like micromanagement. They also need superior that they respect in order to work effectively (Dwidienawati and Gandasari 2018).

Gen Z are generous and concern on sustainability. They are willing to donate money and time for a cause. They are also willing to participate in Cause-Related Marketing program run by credible company (Dwidienawati & pGandasari, 2018). Interestingly, they think it is important to work in company which concern in sustainability (Dwidienawati et al. 2021).

Gen Z is known as the first global citizen. It means they share similar trend with the similar generation all over the world. They are also aware and concern with the event all over the world. The internet enables them to be connected to all the trend and cause all over the world.

Gen Z is known as digitally naïve and hyper-connected junkies (Koulopoulos Keldsen 2014). They are the first generation to have access to a wide scale of digital communication technology in the form of the mobile phone, Wi-Fi, and interaction computer games (Bassiouni and Hackley 2014). Gen Z can never imagine a world without internet. Gen Z spends on average 6.5 hours daily in front of an electronic screen (Messara 2016). They write and receive 109.5

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texts per day junkies (Koulopoulos & Keldsen, 2014). They considered a smart phone as an important part of their life (Ozkan & Solmaz, 2015). Their attention span is short (Berkup 2014).

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership, together with transactional leadership, was conceptualized by Bass 1995 (Bass 1998). Just as the term used, transformational, Transformational leaders do not settle for status quo, however, they are continuously pursuing an appealing and challenging future vision. Transformational leaders show creative behavior, display unconventional approach, and serve as a good role model for innovation (Chen et al. 2014). Jansen et al. (2009) in (Tung 2016) found that transformational leadership is associated with exploratory approach, on the contrary transactional leadership associates with exploiter approach.

Literature suggests that transformational leaders is an ideal role model to their follower. They are charismatic and able to inspire their follower to reach the highest level of achievement. Transformational leaders are also able to convince each member of the follower to take ownership of the group goals. They promote incremental contributions of the follower and inspire them to contribute exceeding the call of duty (Hoang-Tung et al. 2017). They eye on the long term vision, rather than short-term goals.

Refer to the concept from (Bass 1998), (Girardi and Rubim Sarate 2021), (Tung 2016), , and (Chen et al. 2014) state about the 4 I's of transformational leadership. There are four characteristics inherent in the behavior of transformational leaders. The first addresses Idealized Influence. Transformational leaders serve as role model and source of pride to the team. The provide vision and sense of mission. They exert trust and respect from their subordinate. The second character is Inspirational Motivation. Transformational leaders can provide spirit and motivation. they can express the importance of innovation in a way that enhances subordinates' intrinsic motivation to achieve this, resulting in them making more effort to perform well and thus enhance the prospects of success. Inspirational motivation is a way of transformational leaders to express their high expectation. The third I of transformational leadership is Intellectual Stimulation. Transformational leaders encourage and challenge their followers to improve their performance and transform way from their comfort zone. leaders encourage followers to challenge existing assumptions, to reframe problems, and to approach old situations in new ways. Individualized consideration relates to coaching and mentoring behavior of transformational leaders. Through coaching and mentoring, transformational leaders put consideration to individual needs and help them to become more efficient and capable in performing their work. With this, followers can learn more from their leaders so that they can increase their contribution to organization.

Servant Leadership

Servant leadership was introduced by Robert Greenleaf (1904-1990) in his seminal work "The Servant as Leader," first published in 1970 (van Dierendonck, 2011). He stated that:
The Servant-Leader is servant first. . . . It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. . The best test, and difficult to administer is this: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, and more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society? Will they benefit, or at least not further be harmed? (1977: 7)
Patterson (2003) in (Waddell, 2006) states that the theory of servant leadership as an extension of transformational leadership theory. She refers a servant leader as "*those leaders who lead an organization by focusing on their followers, such that the followers are the primary concern, and the organizational concerns are peripheral*". With the changes and challenges now,the demand for more ethical, people-centered management, leadership inspired by the ideas from servant leadership theory may very well be what organizations need now. What is the main differentiation of servant leadership compared to other leadership style? If other leadership styles put focus on the well-being of the organization, a servant leader more concern with serving the follower. They are putting their follower first. A servant leadership directs its focus first on the ability of the individuals to succeed and then subsequently on the success of the mission (Gandolfi & Stone 2018; van Dierendonck 2011).

(Van Dierendonck 2011) explain the 6 main characteristics of servant leaders. First is empowering and developing people is a motivational concept focused on enabling people. It aims to give a sense of personal power. It includes encouraging self-directed decision making, information sharing and coaching. It is about recognition, acknowledgement and personal development. Humility is the second key characteristic. It refers to the ability to put one's own accomplishments and talents in a proper perspective. Servant leaders realize that they can benefit from

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others'expertise. Humility shows in the extent to which a leader puts the interest of others first, facilitates their performance, and provides them with essential support. Humility is also about modesty. Servant leaders stay in the background when a task has been successfully accomplished. Next is true to self or authenticity. It is about expressing themselves consistently with inner though or feeling. It includes integrity. Authenticity is about being true to oneself, accurately representing—privately and publicly—internal states, intentions, and commitments. Theforth characteristic of servant leaders is interpersonal acceptance. It is the ability to understand others' feeling and the ability to forgive and let go. It includes empathy and sees things from others perspective. It is compassion, warmth, and forgiveness even when being confronted. It puts trust to others and makes people feel accepted. The fifth characteristic is providing direction. A servant-leader's take on providing direction is to make work dynamic and "tailor made". It can also mean creating new approaches to old problems, with a strong reliance on values and convictions. The last characteristic is stewardship. It is the willingness to take responsibility for the larger institution and to go for service instead of control and self-interest. Servant leaders have to act as role model. By setting the right example, leaders can lead others to reach common goals. Stewardship includes social responsibility, loyalty, and teamwork.

3. Methods

Design

This study was designed as a qualitative study. Structured questionnaires were used as the instruments for an online survey, which was conducted in October – November 2021. Disclosure about the nature of the study, informed consent, and the participants' willingness to join the survey were also included at the beginning of the questionnaires. Questionnaires without informed consent from participants were omitted from the analysis. Open Questions regarding the participants opinion on the characteristic of leaders that they respect and make them work effectively were asked including the reasons. Additional demographic information, such as participants' position, gender, and location, was also requested for descriptive analysis

Analysis

Collected data were analyzed using Voyant analytics tool. Word occurrence frequency was calculated with Voyant. Afterword, categorization is conducted based on the match keywords with leadership characteristic.

4. Data Collection

Target participants were Genaration Z who were born between 1995 to 2005. The target sample was to get 100 participants. There is no sample requirement for qualitative study (Wahyuni, 2019). Selection of the participants was done using the convenience sampling method

5. Results and Discussion

5.1 Numerical Results

There were 111 questionnaires back. However, only 92 questionnaires met Gen Z criteria. Therefore, only 92 questionnaires were eligible for further analysis. From 92 respondent 54% was male, 44% female, and 2% prefer not to answer (Figure 1). Most of respondents are students (82%), 17% were fresh graduate, and 1% were entry level employee.

The most frequent words in the corpus analysis are: friendly (30); subordinates (29); employees (25); good (25); work (24); able (17); attitude (16); fair (14); firm (14); humble (14); responsible (14); wise (14); appreciate (12); polite (12); superiors (12); provide (11); honest (9); leadership (9); respect (9); boss (8); help (8); opinions (8); accept (7); spirit (7); supportive (7); understand (7); willing (7); caring (6); employee (6); high (6); kind (6); mistakes (6); support (6); appreciation (5); giving (5); hard (5); motivate (5); open (5); time (5); trust (5); understanding (5); workers (5); authoritative (4); communicate (4); disciplined (4). This result is depicted in Figure 2. From the keywords with at least 4 occurrence, the words "challenges" and "encourage" are not in the list.

Figure 3 shows the trend of keywords from 92 respondents. It is shown that the words able, which refer to the ability or competence of the boss, and humble show up from many of respondents. The words attitude and friendly were emphasized few times by some respondents.
From the analysis result the top 10 topics where reviewed (Table 1). From 10 topics, it seems that the theme of servant leadership is very strong. Topics 1,8 and 9 cover all characteristics of Servant Leaderships. The other topics

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cover at least 2 of characteristic. However, for transformational leadership, only topic 9 cover 3 characteristic. The other topics only cover 1 or 2 characteristics.

From the words analysis, it seems that the type of leadership that is effective according to Gen Z is servant leadership. Gen Z are known even though they are quite confident, but they are to cautious and risk averse. Therefore, leaders who give directly frequently (Direction) and always be there when they needed (Stewardship) are more suitable for them. The needs to gain instant success will require guidance and direction. They need leaders who are "able" so that they can respect them, because from these competence leaders, Gen Z will be able to learn to help them move up in the career ladder. They need leader who really can put their subordinate interest as priority. They are risk averse, therefore, they need to have a leader who can accept and forgive their mistakes. They do not like micromanagement, therefore, leaders who empower them will gain their respect.

5.2Graphical Results

Add graphical results here. Make sure to describe all figures and add inferences. If needed, add statistical analysis here. (10 font)

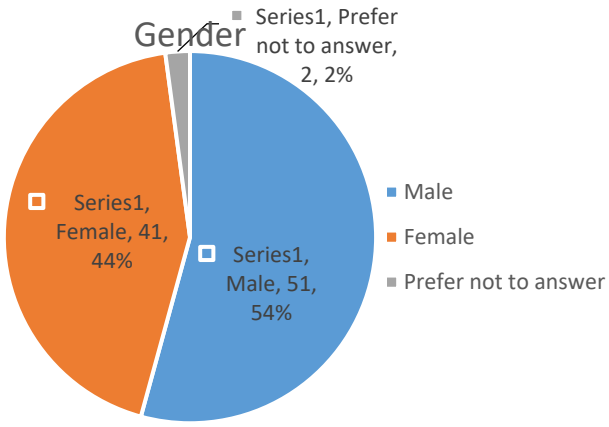


Figure 1. Gender of Respondents



Figure 2. Word Cloud of Effective Leader Characteristics

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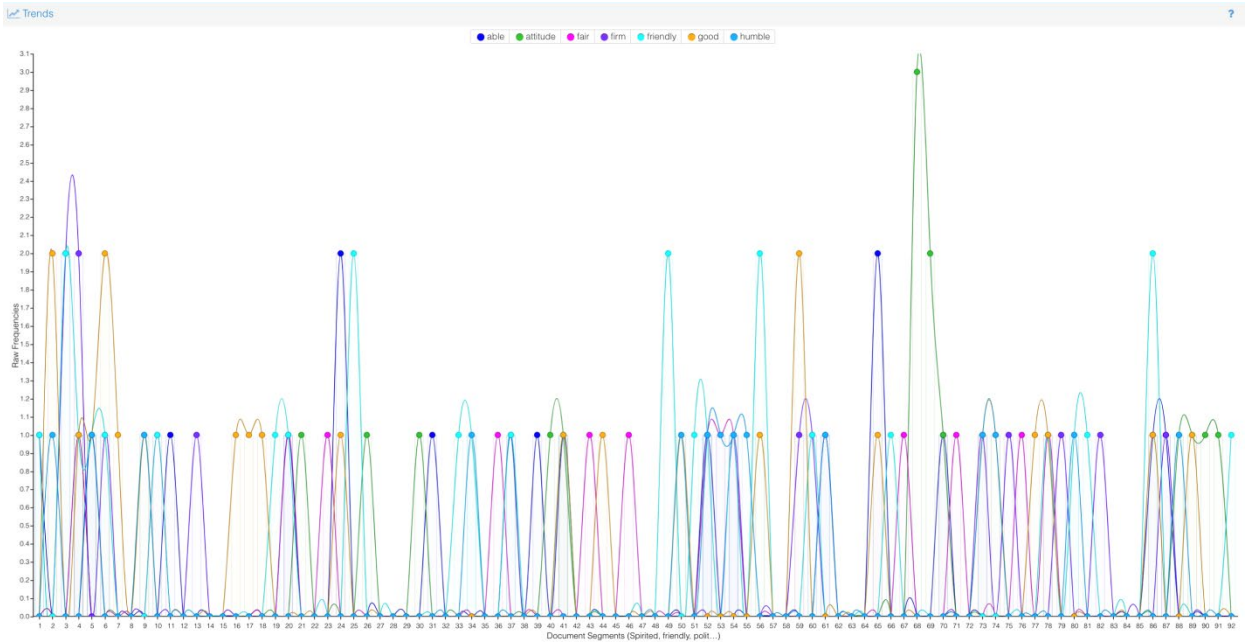


Figure 3. Trend of keywords

Table 1. Topics of keywords group

No	Topic	EP W	HU M	AU T	AC C	DI R	ST W	II	IM	I S	IC
1	good work responsible wise fair supportive hard communicate teach easy	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x
2	respect kind workers caring input unyielding way treat polite fair		x				x	x			x
3	protecting feedback invite joke fellow listening difficulties mentor pressure solution		x			x	x				x
4	able opinions boss employees	x		x	x	x	x				x

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	accept giving polite care having things										
5	friendly subordinates employees humble firm appreciate provide help support understanding		x			x	x				x
6	understand willing example like attention social position guidance communication assertive		x		x	x	x				x
7	superiors able subordinates open time disciplined make right friendly competent		x	x				x			x
8	honest polite high leadership working consistent reliable mistake providing respectful	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x
9	employee spirit motivate willing leadership gives persistent embrace clear wants	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x
10	attitude mistakes members encourage strictly	x	x		x			x			x

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experience
discuss
unselfish
minded
seriousness

6. Conclusion

The qualitative study conducted to generation Z showed that based on the keywords analysis the effective leadership style for them is servant leadership style. The words analysis showed that words which represent empowering (such as giving chance, opportunity, able), humility (such as humble, friendly, kind, good, nice, polite), authentic (such as responsible, fair), acceptance (such as accept, mistakes, forgive), direction (such as guidance, communication, discuss, feedback), and stewardship (such as giving, providing, support) are occurred frequently. Therefore, it can be concluded that the effective leadership for Gen Z is a servant leader.

This study, however, did not see the relationship between servant leadership and work effectiveness. Therefore, further quantitative study is recommended to confirm the relationship. This study also only used questionnaire, therefore the deep understanding why Gen Z mentioned certain characteristic cannot be explored. Further study with deep interview method should be conducted to understand the reasoning further.

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Source 16 (Scholarly)

Citation:

Pradhana, I. P. D., Kusnadhy, D. B., Saputra, I. K. A. W., Wijaya, I. P. Y. P., & Sihaloho, A. P. (2024). A Phenomenological Study of Gen Z Workers in Facing Conflict Generation Gap in the World of Work. *JKBM (JURNAL KONSEP BISNIS DAN MANAJEMEN)*, *10*(2), 223-236.

Summary: The article has taken the setting where organizations today figure out a big challenge in managing and understanding workers from various generations. The introduction of the research provides a first sight of various generations' workplaces by including the growth of each generation and their performance in the workplace, common stereotypes, and the generation gap. The research goal is to examine the generational gaps occurring in the workplace by the data that comes from observations, interviews, and documentation. The research explains that a "gap" happening when perceived differently by different generations, leads to conflict and makes communication difficult. However, the data reflect that Generation Z workers are likely to have a proactive attitude in overcoming problems by focusing on work, speaking openly, understanding the manager's character, and trying to adapt to the environment.

Relevance: The study has described the generational difficulties that Generation Z may face in the workplace. This relevance to the topic in indicating the barriers of Generation Z that need organization put more attention and efforts to balance the distance in thinking between generations to foster a more dynamic and innovative workplace.

Place in the paper: Literature review

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A Phenomenological Study of Gen Z Workers in Facing Conflict Generation Gap in the World of Work

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Abstract

This research aims to determine the practical efforts that Generation Z can take to resolve or overcome the generation gap. The main challenge that an organization must face is how to manage and understand workers who come from various generations. Currently, there are several generations of work groups in an organization based on their age, such as that Gen Z workers often experience in Bali is the generation gap conflict. In this research, using qualitative methods with observation, interviews and documentation techniques, data was collected from 6 Generation Z people, 1 Generation Y person who works in the tourism sector, and one communications expert. Data analysis was conducted qualitatively with an interactive model and Nvivo 14 plus software. The validity of the data is checked through triangulation of sources and techniques. The research showed a mismatch in communication with their superiors and coworkers. However, they overcame it by implementing good communication patterns and adapting to their work environment. Thus, this research provides in-depth insight into the practical efforts made by Generation Z to resolve or overcome the generation gap.

Keywords: Generation Z; Generation GAP; Conflict

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INTRODUCTION

Managing and understanding workers from various generations is a big challenge for organizations today, where each generation has diverse and unique characteristics, expectations and work patterns. Various generations in the workplace consist of baby boomers and generations that generation (Karnaukh & Brozyna, 2023; Samanatha et al., 2022). Each generation grows and develops in different situations and conditions, influencing their attitudes towards work and principles of collaboration (Lepeyko et al., 2022).

The earlier generation is likely to view technological advances with scepticism. In comparison, the younger generation, which is often referred to as "digital natives", is more adaptable and open to the use of new technology, which can result in friction and gaps in adaptation and understanding between generations. change itself (Afsha et al, 2022). The right strategy to bridge the generation gap can be done by creating mutual respect, creating work flexibility and adjusting each other's communication styles (Sruk, 2020;-Ratajczak, 2020).

Organizations should also avoid stereotyping employees based on age, leading to oversimplification and hindering genuine understanding and collaboration (Steve, 2020). Integrating the perspectives of diverse generations will indeed increase innovation and problem-solving in organizations by leveraging the unique strengths of each generation (Dunne, 2023). The modern workplace is characterized by a diversity of ages and values, which, in addition to fostering creativity, can also give rise to intergenerational conflict due to differences in values, views and work styles (Agustin et al., 2023). If managed effectively, This mix of generations can significantly contribute to organizational success despite challenges in understanding and managing these differences to create a harmonious and productive work environment. (Beham et al., 2012).

Research shows that younger generations tend to be more engaged in their work, while previous generations have the advantage of high levels of organizational commitment (Palo & Dokadia, 2022). This shows that each generation has different attitudes towards work, which can be leveraged to improve workplace dynamics (Annosi et al., 2023). For example, older employees often provide experience and stability, while younger workers offer adaptability and technology savvy (Kosowski, 2020). However, the perception that older employees are less agile and resistant to new technology can create barriers

(Macovei & Martinescu, 2022), underscoring the importance of overcoming stereotypes and fostering a culture of inclusivity.

As introduced by Neil Howe and William Strauss in 1991, the concept of generational differences states that individuals within a generational group have similar values, beliefs, and behaviours because they grew up under the same historical conditions and were influenced by the same events (Appelbaum et al., 2022). This theory has been integrated into the term "folk sociology", where individuals seek to identify themselves with certain generational groups and create specific patterns of behaviour in their communities, especially in communication patterns (Karsli, 2022). However, the generation category for implementing human resource management must still be considered inadequate (Parry & Urwin, 2021). The differences in characteristics in each region show that generational grouping cannot be applied universally in various countries, thus indicating the need for different approaches that take into account specific regional and cultural contexts. (Ahmed et al., 2019). The concept of generation also intersects with broader socio-cultural dynamics, where generations are seen as influencing the socio-cultural environment and can be identified with various approaches (Dan, 2018). Regardless of the pros and cons of defining and studying generational characteristics, it is instrumental in understanding social and cultural change with its various limitations and the complex nature of human behaviour (Pishchik, 2018).

The generation gap between the Baby Boomer Generation and younger generations, such as the Millennial Generation, presents both challenges and opportunities for organizations. Research has shown that stereotypes associated with the Millennial generation often reflect professional conditions and lead to differences, disparities and different positions (Arras et al., 2023). This differentiation is not limited to identity but extends to perceptions of fraud prevention measures, indicating a real impact on organizational practices and beliefs (Tri et al., 2023). Additionally, generational differences have been linked to increased emotional exhaustion due to conflict and poor communication, directly impacting employee burnout (Kim & Hur, 2023). However, these challenges are manageable. Generation Y's approach to work-life balance is creating a shift towards a more inclusive and flexible workplace culture (Schmidt, 2024). Overcoming generational conflict through mentoring and embracing generational diversity can reduce conflict and increase organizational cohesion (Appelbaum et al., 2022).

Empirical studies have identified significant differences in values and mindsets between generations, suggesting that tailored HR strategies can leverage these differences to foster a more dynamic and innovative workplace (Kwiecińska et al., 2023). This is supported by the finding that values such as living wages and personal growth are consistent across generations, highlighting the importance of tailored approaches to motivation and engagement (Kwiecińska et al., 2023). The integration of technology in the workplace, although beneficial, also presents challenges, but they are perceived to have lower loyalty and a higher propensity to change jobs (Oeij et al., 2023). This turnover intention is influenced by several factors, including psychological situation, work-life balance, and the quality of relationships with coworkers (He & Janney, 2022).

Additionally, job burnout has been identified as a significant contributor to millennials' turnover intentions, highlighting the need for adaptive capabilities to mitigate this issue (María & Pérez, 2020). To overcome these challenges and retain millennial talent, organizations must adopt strategies that align with the values and work preferences of the millennial generation. This includes offering flexibility in work arrangements and encouraging work-life balance, which has positively impacted loyalty and job satisfaction among the millennial generation (Hudiono & Sari, 2022). This research examines how intergenerational gaps in the workplace occur, especially in areas with very high ethical values, such as Bali. The clash between the applicable norms of work professionalism values creates a gap pattern that tends to be unique and exciting to study in more depth.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a phenomenological study to explore the subjects' most profound awareness of experiences and their meaning. This research focuses on conscious experience from the first person's perspective (those who experience it directly). This method tries to understand how humans construct meaning and essential concepts within intersubjectivity.

Data collection techniques used in this research were observation, interviews and documentation. The data validity checking technique determines the truth of data obtained from field sources through source and technical triangulation. Testing the data's credibility is done by checking the data from the same source using different techniques through interviews, observation, and documentation. This research uses a qualitative

approach where the author pays attention to procedures for measuring the consistency or accuracy of qualitative research.

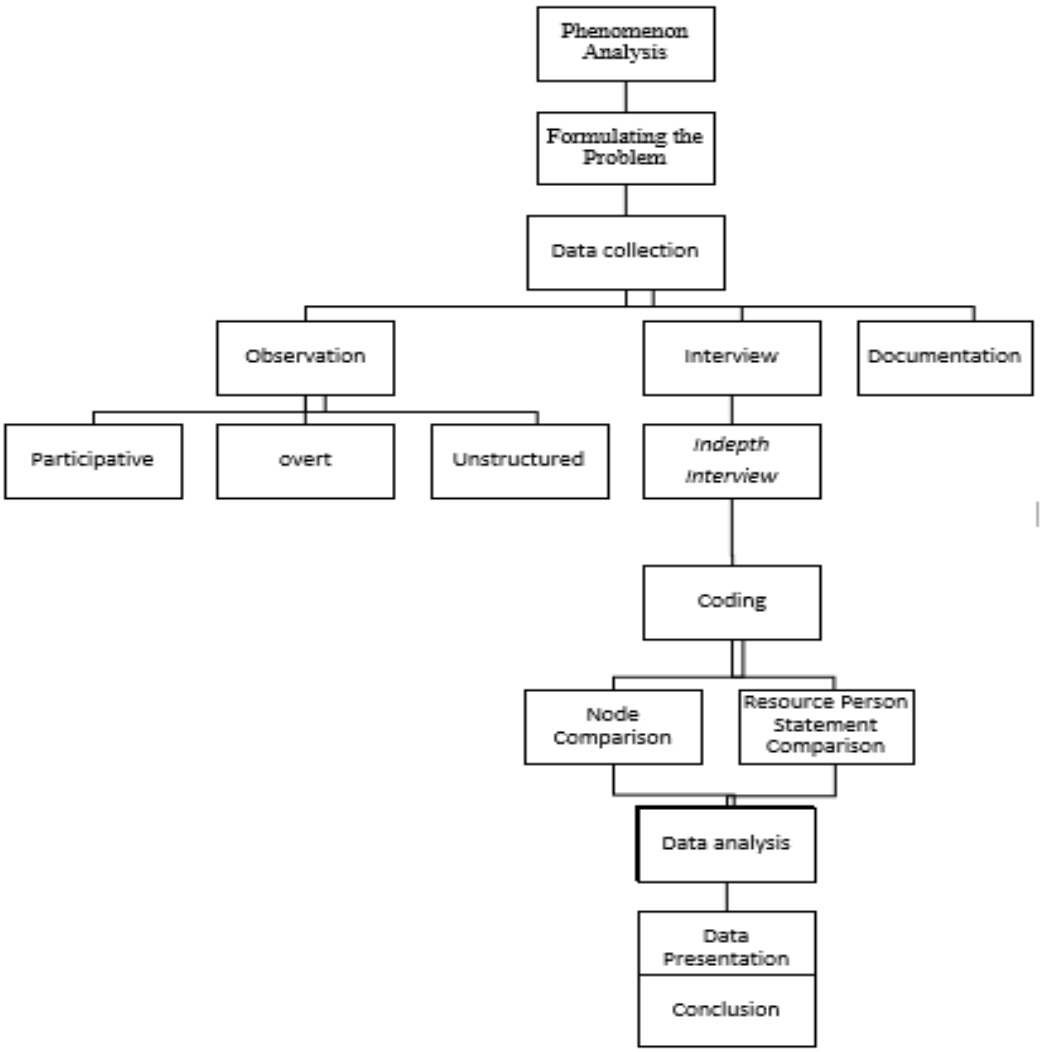


Figure 1. Research Framework

The author carried out data analysis using NVivo 14 plus software. To obtain effectiveness and efficiency to achieve goals. Authors are advised to use the NCapture feature to make downloading articles easier and transfer them to the NVivo 14 Plus software.

The data analysis process used in this research is data analysis while in the field using the Miles and Huberman Model. Data analysis is carried out during data collection and after completing data collection within a certain period. At the time of the interview, the researcher carried out an analysis of the interviewee's answers. The researcher tries to ask more questions until the researcher gets an answer to what is being asked if the answer from the interview needs to be revised. Miles and Huberman stated that activities

in qualitative data analysis are carried out interactively and continue continuously until completion, so the data is saturated.

Activities in data analysis, namely data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Miles and Huberman's explanation of data analysis includes data collection, reduction, presentation, conclusion drawing, and verification.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Researchers conducted in-depth interviews (dept interviews) with several informants consisting of 5 Generation Z people who work in the tourism sector, 3 Generation X or Y people who work in the tourism sector and one superior of a Generation Z worker. This interview was conducted from the beginning of November until early December to determine how effective Generation Z is in resolving or overcoming the generation gap.

The majority of Gen Z interviewees often experience conflict when they work because, in the world of work, they meet different generations with different characteristics and behaviours, which will cause a generation gap. The generation gap usually refers to the perceived differences between generations, which cause conflict and make communication difficult, thus creating a "Gap". Based on the results of the analysis, it was found that Gen Z generally has a high enthusiasm for work but often faces problems in the world of work because in the world of work, there is a gap between generations, and this is usually the beginning of a problem; this is what often makes Gen Z discouraged from working, Often the situation faced by Gen Z is that there is a mismatch in their communication process with their superiors and coworkers. However, they have managed to overcome this by implementing good communication patterns and adapting themselves to their work environment. This is in accordance with research from Pelin (2023) which states that Generation Z faces a communication gap between generations, so it requires the ability to adapt to form effective communication patterns.

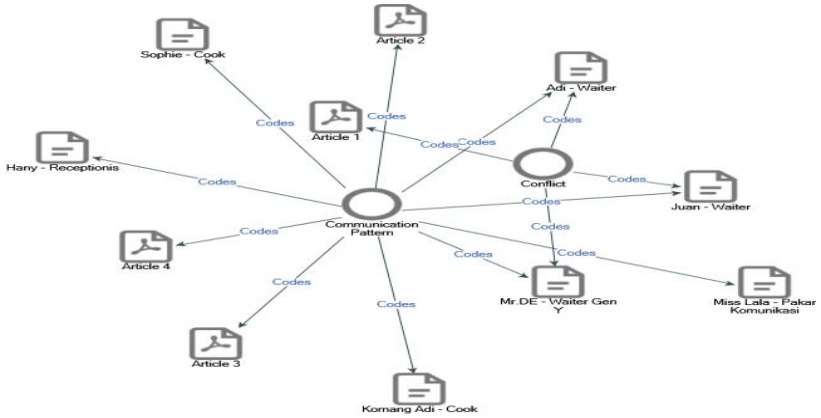


Figure 2. Person's Statement Comparative Analysis
(Source: data processed)

They are adjusting to their work environment, such as remaining focused on positive things, practising emotional intelligence, and not being embarrassed to ask questions. Thus, this research provides in-depth insight into the practical efforts made by Generation Z to resolve or overcome the generation gap.

It can be seen in the comparison files above the efforts made by one of the Gen Z workers in Bali, named Kadek Adi Indrawan (Adi), in overcoming the generation gap conflict in the world of work that he experienced, including paying attention to communication patterns, understanding individual characteristics and doing compromise. Adi stated that he had colleagues with a significant age difference. He felt a difference in the work speed between himself and his colleagues, who were much older than him. Sometimes, he thinks how his seniors communicate with him could be more ethical. Adi stated in an in-depth interview quote as follows;

"…….. if there is a problem related to work, I try to solve it myself without immediately asking for help. Sometimes, they yell at me, but I always take it as a lesson. …sometimes I have disagreements with them. Sometimes, how they talk to us creates conflict over trivial issues."

Almost the same thing was also expressed by Sophie, a cook at a restaurant. He felt that the difference in work speed with his senior employees often caused problems for him. In an in-depth interview excerpt, he revealed that;

"…..perhaps because they feel they are older, so they are bolder in blaming me and speaking in an unpleasant tone…"

Juan, an employee at a hotel around Badung, stated that his disappointment with his seniors was mainly caused by work instructions that did not match his job description. Juan revealed that;

"….he arbitrarily delegated his work to me. Even though I also have work that I have to finish."

Juan makes in-depth interpersonal communication a solution to the conflict he experiences with his seniors. He tried to express his dislike for every treatment he received.

Hani Primardani, an employee of a recreation club in the Badung area, Bali, said that the leadership of her workplace puts various pressures on employees regardless of the various conflicts experienced by employees across generations. Hani revealed that

"…the character of my boss is like that. He could not control his words. Maybe because he feels he has a position, is more senior and older than us."

Hani expressed his luck in having colleagues who help and encourage each other.

Adi Pratama, a worker in the kitchen of a restaurant in Badung Regency, Bali, also revealed the conflict he faced with his senior, who was much older than him. However, Adi feels more sincere when facing every problem that arises. The researcher conducted in-depth interviews. In one of the conversation excerpts, Adi stated that;

"…..disputes will always exist, but we try to follow his orders. We realized that we were juniors, and they were more experienced than us."

DE, a senior employee who serves as a waiter coordinator at a restaurant, revealed that younger employees often work less than optimally. He said in an interview that.

"The younger generation must be willing to learn. Moreover, dares to practice his skills at work. Don't play a little social media while working. If you do not need help understanding, please ask your superior. Do not hesitate."

Miss Lala confirmed this as a communications expert, and Kadek Adi as a Gen Z worker. Miss Lala said that in the world of work, we will encounter various ways of communicating, which can change the discomfort or things in an environment. The job is to have to make more compromises, so apart from adapting, we also have to be able to compromise; the compromise is that we understand what he means or understand the nature of our seniors, so do not swallow it raw when given the ABC words out loud or ABC with a bad word then what we absorb is the command, not other words. This statement also confirms Byrd & Zhang (2023) view that good communication has a big impact on workplace comfort. It can be seen in the in-depth interview that the efforts made by one of the Gen Z workers in Bali named Hany to overcome the generation gap conflict he experienced in the world of work, one of which was by compromising. The job is that we have to make more compromises, so apart from adapting, we also have to be able to compromise; the compromise is that we understand what he means or understand the nature of our seniors, so do not swallow it raw when given the ABC words out loud or ABC with bad words then what we absorb are only the orders, not other words. Hany also did this when experiencing the Generation Gap conflict and preferred to confirm what his superiors told him. Hany continues to do what is his responsibility while working.

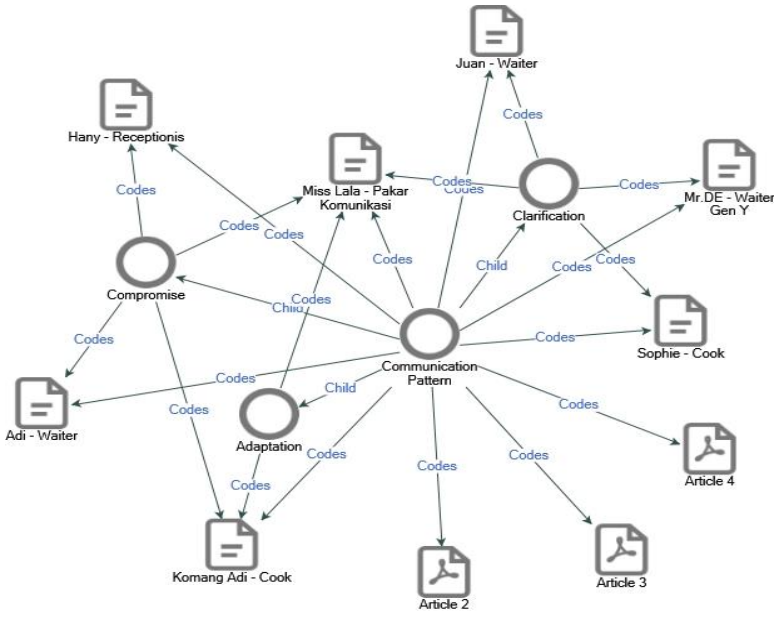


Figure 3. Image of the Analysis Project Map
(Source: data processed)

It can be seen from the diagram above that Gen Z's efforts to resolve the Generation Gap conflict in the world of work are by implementing communication patterns. This is supported by Miss Lala's statement as a communication expert who states that in communication, there are several ways to resolve conflict, including clarification, negotiation and accommodation, these are three of the many ways to resolve communication conflicts in the workplace because in this research there is a discrepancy in the communication process that occurs between superiors and subordinates, where the correct interpersonal communication process should be the delivery of messages that reach their destination or reach the communicant by getting appropriate feedback. The research results of Szamburski & Bodarski (2023) are confirmed in the diagram above, where excellent and effective communication can ensure the delivery of appropriate messages and feedback in the workplace using clarification, negotiation and accommodation methods. When the message is delivered inappropriately, the communicant or person receiving it will interpret it differently, so it is a wrong interpretation from communicator to communicator. When the message is conveyed inappropriately, the recipient or communicant will misinterpret it. Interpersonal communication conflict at work is an increasingly important social phenomenon in workplaces that rely on cooperation, collaboration, and coordination to complete work tasks, especially in work teams. From the diagram above, it is also proven that the interviewees Sophie and Juan made clarification efforts when experiencing conflict in the world of work; besides that, other things were done by the interviewees Hany, Kadek Adi and Komang Adi. They made a compromise when a problem occurred in their workplace; Hany, Komang Adi, and Kadek Adi prefer to confirm a problem and do not want to prolong the problem; as Miss Lala said, it is difficult for Gen Z as subordinates to provide information to seniors. When we are at work, we will encounter various types of ways of communicating, which can change the discomfort or things in a work environment, and there must be more compromise.

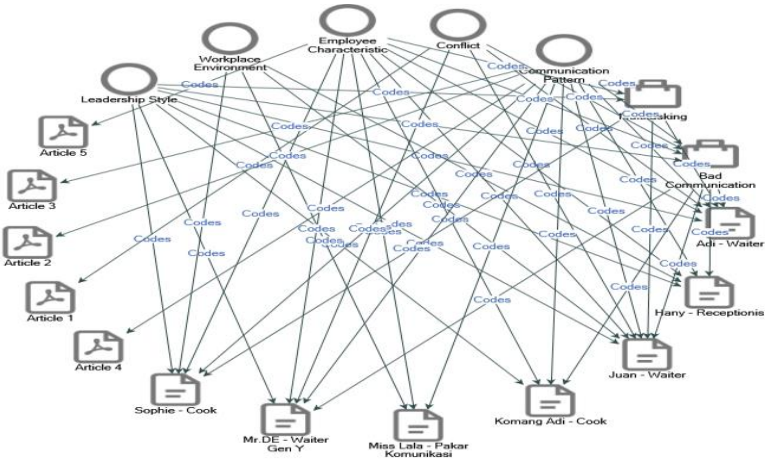


Figure 4. Image of the Analysis Project Map
(Source: Data Processed)

As seen from the project map above, this research examines how effective Generation Z is in resolving or overcoming the generation gap. Data was collected through interviews with five Gen Z informants with work experience in various fields. Based on the results of the analysis, it was found that Gen Z generally has a high enthusiasm for work but often faces problems in the world of work because in the world of work there is a gap between generations, and this is usually the beginning of a problem; this is what often makes Gen Z discouraged at work, Miss Lala also said that what frequently happens to Gen Z is that when they receive a little pressure, they will always feel hurt, or they immediately feel small, or they immediately feel that they cannot work with people like them. This confirms the opinion of Stumpf & Fielding (2023) that Gen Z faces challenges related to the generation gap in the workplace and the pressure that accompanies it. This is what is happening in the world of work today.

Based on the results of interviews with five Generation Z workers in the tourism sector, it can be concluded that they face various problems related to the environment and interactions with colleagues and superiors. Kadek Adi shows his resilience to pressure by focusing on his work, even though his superiors often blame him. Sophie Arista Putri faces challenges by voicing her opinion against colleagues who make light of problems, showing a proactive attitude to create a better work environment. Juaniver Timmothy, faced with work demands beyond his responsibilities, chose to talk to his colleagues and find a solution together. Komang Hany Prima Wardani faced problems with his superiors who used unpleasant language, but he decided to understand his superiors' character and remain focused on his work. Meanwhile, Komang Adi, pressured by colleagues and superiors, maintained positive thoughts, saw their every action as an effort for his good, and tried to adapt to his work environment.

In general, the conclusions from this interview show that Generation Z workers tend to have a proactive attitude in overcoming problems, either by focusing on work, speaking openly, understanding the character of their superiors, or trying to adapt to the work environment. Their understanding of the importance of creating a comfortable and collaborative work environment is reflected in their actions to resolve their conflicts and challenges.

This research identified specific findings, namely the importance of the workplace environment that Gen Z workers must pay attention to to overcome generation gap conflicts.

The diagram above also confirms research by Luka et al (2023) (article 1), which states that ineffective communication creates conflict between generations. Companies are expected to improve communication between generations McElfresh & Stark (2019) (article 2). Effective communication can reduce various problems faced by employees of

different generations (Olsson et al., 2024) (article 3). Ability and knowledge have great potential in developing communication patterns and emotional bonds between workers with various backgrounds (Lane et al., 2024) (artikel 4). article 4). Work motivation looks different on multiple generations according to their characteristics, but support from the work environment creates conducive situations and conditions in the workplace(Pak et al., 2023)(article 5).

Special Findings

In research on how effective Generation Z workers make efforts to overcome the generation gap in the tourism industry in Bali, researchers found notable findings.

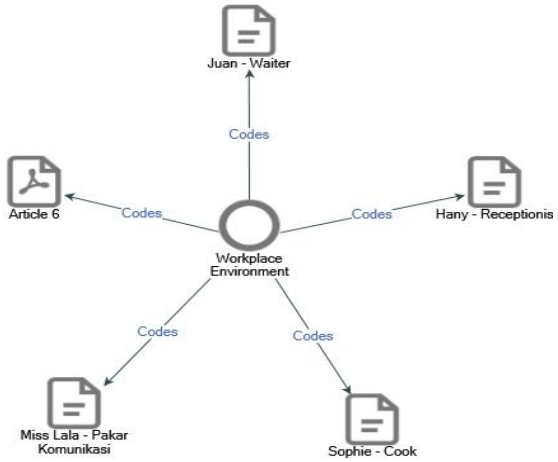


Figure 5. Workplace Environment custom discovery image
(Source: data processed)

In the diagram above, a remarkable finding from this research is the existence of a Workplace Environment. Juan, as one of the informants, stated that when you experience a conflict in the world of work, it must be resolved immediately because it will impact the work environment and increasingly spread to other things. He sees this as something that must be resolved immediately; creating and maintaining a good work environment makes Juan feel comfortable doing his work. Another thing was also conveyed by one of the speakers, named Sophie; he stated that work would be happier if the environment our work is excellent and comfortable.

Meanwhile, a company's other aspirations, such as an excellent managerial system, transparent communication, and management that treats its workers well, are basic or natural. Regarding Gen Z being nicknamed 'fleas', these young workers are also not bothered by this nickname; being a psyllid is okay. Why not if there is a choice to work in a better place? Gen Z as 'fleas' is not a negative stigma but a reality many young workers face today. Therefore, the ideal working environment and Health should not be a generational issue but a universal problem affecting all generations of workers. These findings confirm research from Egerová & Roten-

bornová (2021) (article 6), which states that conflict handling will negatively impact the work environment if it is not optimized.

CONCLUSION

This research aims to determine how effective Generation Z is in resolving or overcoming the generation gap. Data was collected through interviews with five Gen Z informants with work experience in various fields. Based on the results of the analysis, it was found that Gen Z generally has a high enthusiasm for work but often faces problems in the world of work because in the world of work, there is a gap between generations, and this is usually the beginning of a problem; this is what usually makes Gen Z discouraged at work.

Gen Z workers in Bali often face generation gap conflicts when they work. Usually, the problem faced by Gen Z is that there needs to be a better communication process with their superiors and colleagues. However, they have managed to overcome this by implementing good communication patterns and adapting themselves to their work environment. They are Adapting to their work environment, such as remaining focused on positive things, practising emotional intelligence, and not being embarrassed to ask questions. Thus, this research provides in-depth insight into the practical efforts made by Generation Z to resolve or overcome the generation gap.

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Source 17 (Scholarly)

Citation:

Appelbaum, S. H., Bhardwaj, A., Goodyear, M., Gong, T., Sudha, A. B., & Wei, P. (2022). A Study of Generational Conflicts in the Workplace. *European Journal of Business and Management Research*, *7*(2), 7–15. https://doi.org/10.24018/ejbmr.2022.7.2.1311

Summary: The article provides the theme of generational conflict arising in the organization since multiple generations have entered the labor market. It emphasizes generational differences and the reason for causing those differences and conflicts occurring in the workplace. Each generation is unique and shaped by specific events that make a set of core values, which strongly impact both the ones in conflict and the managers who resolve it. The research has identified three types of conflict which are value-based, behavior-based, and identity-based. The understanding of generation conflict in the organization will be studied by Deutsch's theory of cooperation and competition, and the examination evolution of conflict will be based on the Process Model. The study also mentions the factor of communication technology has strongly influenced work-from-home since the Covid-19 by the younger generation, however, it's against the millennial expectation to return to the office because of the untrust of technologies. In general, the authors believe the alternation of various components of HR activities will help organizations to adapt to generational differences as well as attract and retain talents.

Relevance: The article is relevant to the topic because it points out the generational conflict in the workplace between generations and proposes improvements and strategies that organization leaders should follow for better recruitment and retention of employees.

Place in the paper: Literature review

European Journal of Business and Management Research
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A Study of Generational Conflicts in the Workplace

Steven H. Appelbaum, Anuj Bhardwaj, Mitchell Goodyear, Ting Gong,
Aravindhan Balasubramanian Sudha, and Phil Wei

ABSTRACT

This article reviews research around generational differences and examines the causality between these differences and conflicts usually happening at the workplace. The conflicts can be defined as value-based, behaviour-based, or identity-based. These generational differences also affect managers' strategies when dealing with conflicts at work. Morton Deutsch's theory of cooperation and competition is often used for organisations to understand the nature of conflicts, and the Conflict Process Model can be used to examine how conflicts can evolve. Studies show that once a generational conflict is identified and understood, organizations can mitigate and resolve the conflict by developing mentorship between the parties involved to embrace generational diversity. Various components of the HR activities should also be altered to adapt generational differences for an organization to attract and retain talents. As events and developments that caused generational differences are chronological, conflicts that could arise from the reactions by different generations to the future of work leaping through the recent Covid-19 pandemic should be prepared.

However, some studies raised debate about the causality between generations and behavioural characteristics at work and argued the necessity of managing conflicts caused by generational differences, raising concerns that attributing conflicts to generational differences potentially oversimplifies the problems.

Keywords: conflict management, generational conflicts, intergenerational diversity, workplace challenges.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Generational conflict has grown within organizations as more generations than ever have entered the workforce and are working together. In a paper from 2015 Harris defined generation conflict as: "Differences in communication preferences (the use of technology vs. face-to-face meeting), work values/attitudes (a work-centric perspective vs. a balanced perspective), career aspirations (opportunities for advancement vs. the desire to make a difference), and power/influence among generations." (Harris, 2015). Each generation has unique characteristics that define them. It is from these characteristics that friction is created thus, leading to conflict in the workplace. Researchers have investigated the idea that each generation is in fact unique and shaped by defining events that create a set of core values (Lewis, 2013). These core values impact both the ones in conflict and the managers who look to resolve these conflicts. Research has shown that each generation of managers approaches conflicts in a different way that is impacted by their set of core values (Jennings, 2016). These core values impact the perceptions the managers have on the conflicts but, they have no impact on what strategy is used to resolve said conflicts. A wide array of conflict resolution strategies can be used by both managers and the organisations. The approach could include Morton Deutsch (1994)'s ideas on conflict, mentoring programs or even intervention from human resources (Sherman, 2015). The strategy used is not as important as recognizing the core values instilled in each generation and using that to guide the conflict to a successful resolution. That being said, there is research that indicates generational conflict is overstated. With generational conflict having such a wide scope, there are multiple reasons why an individual may react in a certain way. It is also possible that reasons behind certain behaviors and actions might be confused with one another (Rudolph *et al*., 2020). Even with contrasting opinions it is still important to investigate the impact and prevalence of generational conflict. What researchers learn today will not only be beneficial for current generations in the work force

but, new generations as well. As Gen Z is just entering the work force what changes will they bring and will the current research still apply. With this literature review, we explore the research and studies both for and against the level of the impact generational conflict has on organizations.

II. Generational Differences

To understand how and why generational conflict happens we must first understand what characteristics define each generation. It is from these characteristics that friction is created thus leading to conflict in the workplace.

A. Baby Boomers

Were born between the years 1946-1964. They are the largest generation in the United States (Facts and Statistics, 2011, as cited in Harris, 2015). Baby Boomers have the most leadership positions giving them most of the power in companies. According to Clark (2017), Baby Boomers represent about 29% or 44.6 million of today's U.S. workforces" (Xiong, 2019). Baby Boomers are considered optimistic, hard workers and having a competitive spirit (Lewis 2013). "They are characterized as workaholics, strong-willed, value promotions, titles, corner offices and reserved parking spaces, and they spend rather than save" (Kupperschmidt, 2000, p. 68 as cited in Lewis, 2013). Smola and Sutton (2002) claimed that Baby Boomers believe they can do as they want. Due to this perception, they want everything and are willing to make sacrifices to get what they want. They believe strongly in their abilities and are resistant to change (Harris,2015). Baby Boomers learn better in tactile environments. They learn more when given hands-on opportunities so that knowledge and skills can be acquired. However, they struggle to grasp new technologies and prefer using proven methods that they are familiar with (Cogin, 2012 as cited in Harris, 2015). Baby Boomers respond well to authority figures and prefer to be given direction. They thrive when there is a set chain of command in the organization. Even though they like to be given direction they do not like to receive constant feedback while they are trying to achieve these provided goals (Tolbize, 2008 as cited in Harris, 2015).

B. Gen X

Were born between the years 1965-1980. They represent a smaller segment of the workforce population than the Baby Boomers (Harber, 2011 as cited in Harris 2015). Gen X are one of the smallest generations, "accounting for 17% of the U.S. population" (Carver & Candela, 2008, p. 988 as cited in Lewis, 2013). Gen X can be described by the following characteristics: they have critical and creative thinking skills, look for independence in the workforce, and want balance between their work and lives. Unlike the Baby Boomers, Gen X understand technology and lack a strong sense of company loyalty (Graves, 2013; Harber, 2011 as cited in Harris, 2015). The lack of company loyalty comes from watching and experiencing the impact on their parents from downsizing and layoffs. This created a general distrust of organizations and thus a lack of organizational loyalty (Lewis, 2015). "Over 40% of Gen X come from broken families, with 12% of elementary and 30% middle school children returning to empty homes after school due to their parents working long hours. The term latchkey kids were coined to describe these children" (O'Bannon, 2001 as cited in Xiong, 2019). Gen X were forced to become adults at a young age this is due to the insecurity and instability they faced in their households (Taylor, 2018 as cited in Xiong, 2019).

C. Gen Y/Millennials

Were born between 1981-1995. They are the children of Baby Boomers and early Gen X (Xiong, 2019). There are currently 76 million Gen Ys living in the United States. This makes them the second-largest generation after Baby Boomers (Kroth & Young, 2014 as cited in Xiong, 2019). Gen Y has been called the "Entitled Generation". They were raised by supportive parents and have strong social ties with friends and family. Gen Ys value a good work-life balance and look for companies to earn their loyalty. Growing up with technology built them with a strong technological understanding. As a result, they are able to multitask when needed (Johnson & Johnson, 2010 as cited in Lewis, 2013). Gen Y have the following characteristics: they are sheltered, confident, optimistic, team-oriented, look for achievement, have a sense of accountability, feel pressured to excel and they are conventional rather than rebellious (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014, pp. 65-66 as cited in Xiong, 2019). Gen Ys need specific and clear descriptions for tasks or projects. They need structure and constant feedback/reassurance unlike Baby Boomers (Chi *et al*., 2013 as cited in Xiong, 2019). They question authority and are not afraid to voice their opinions. They will not conform to traditional ways just because "That's how it's always been". They do believe in authority and fairness. In their mind rules should be followed, and not be broken when needed (Lyon *et al*., 2005/2006 as cited in Lewis, 2013).

D. Generation Z

Gen Z is used to categorize people who are born between 1995 and 2012, the demographic cohort after the millennial (Janssen & Carradini, 2021). In the U.S., they are the most racially diverse generation up to date, with non-White making up 49% of the cohort (Seemiller & Grace, 2019). Gen Zs are believed to be the most openminded and non-conforming. Their openness also appears in areas like gender fluidity (Seemiller & Grace, 2019). Gen Zs grew up with a technology driven lifestyle. Living in an era of speedy high-tech communication, an expectation of always-on and always-available information is a norm for Gen Z (Janssen & Carradini, 2021). Native from the internet era, Gen Zs are mostly managing multiple identities, with one "real life" identity and several online ones (Seemiller & Grace, 2019). In addition, surveys show that financial stability is the most important value among members of Gen Z (Seemiller & Grace, 2019).

Now that each generation has been defined and their characteristics have been laid out, we may continue to explore generational conflict. In the next section we will look at key areas in the workplace that can lead to conflict due to the defining characteristics of each generation.

III. Generational Conflicts Defined

With each generation having defining characteristics conflict can arise when they are forced to work together. Due to this fact each generation will have a different outlook/expectation of how work should be done. Urick *et al*. (2016) examined intergenerational conflicts driven by three major differences among generations within organizations. We will explore each of the conflicts in more detail below.

A. Behaviour-based Conflict

"Behaviour-based conflict arises when the other's behaviour due to generational differences conflicts with one's own" (Urick *et al*., 2016).

One of the most prominent behaviour-based conflicts comes from how each generation communicates. Research has shown that different generations do not communicate with each other. "A survey of nearly 3,500 adults reveals that 51 percent of Baby Boomers and 66 percent of older workers reported little to no interaction with younger colleagues" (Casison, 2008, p. 46 as cited in Lewis, 2013). Baby Boomers prefer face-to-face communication where Gen X prefer using what they believe is most efficient. Gen Ys use instant messaging, social media or emails and are considered poor communicators (Lewis, 2013). Like Millennials, Gen Z prefer text messaging and instant messaging as their primary platforms. A study reported that nearly two out of three members of the Gen Z "do not like or only somewhat like talking on the phone"; FaceTime or Snapchat are often used instead of a phone call (Seemiller & Grace, 2019). In addition, Gen Zs are willing to use email professionally at the workplace to meet performance expectations, albeit not preferred (Mărginean, 2021).

These differences in communication styles lead to both lack of communication/collaboration and conflicts between the generations. This lack of communication can make employees work individually rather collaboratively, resulting in poor teamwork. The success of the organization is dependent on managing these differences in communication styles (Gravett & Throckmorton, 2007 as cited in Harris, 2015). Kapoor and Solomon (2011) thought that having open communication between employees could reduce conflict. However, they also thought communication itself can cause conflict between the generations. These communication conflicts can lead to work-value conflicts, work-life balance issues, technology-use differences, and other issues (Hillman, 2014 as cited in Xiong, 2019).

Another area of potential behaviour-based conflict is the differences in the expectation of feedback that each generation has. The management style should consider how much feedback is wanted by each generation. For example, Baby Boomers do like feedback but not constantly, whereas Gen Y require constant feedback on their work (Lewis, 2015). As a generation that grew up with instant access to information, Gen Z developed a habit of expecting information to be always-on and always-available, which lead to similar expectations for feedback as Gen Y (Mărginean, 2021). Members of the young workforce are always in "learning mode" and as a result need regular feedback (Aggarwal *et al*., 2020). Another example of behaviour conflict would be if an employee from Gen Y is the manager of a Baby Boomer. This could cause conflict due to the nature of how Gen Y gives feedback. The Baby Boomer would not like having constant feedback and would become frustrated and therefore less productive (Glass, 2007 as cited in Lewis, 2015). These important differences must be addressed when organizations are creating feedback structures and performance evaluations. What works for one generation will not work for all generations (Sedrak & Cahill, 2011 as cited in Lewis, 2015).

B. Value-based Conflict

"Value-based conflict arises when the perception of each generation engenders different values" (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Smola & Sutton, 2002; Twenge *et al*., 2010 as cited in Urick *et al*., 2016). Also, research has shown that people are motivated by their values. "If they value outcomes and activities in the workplace, they will be motivated by them" (Lewis, 2013).

Work values can either be extrinsic or intrinsic. Each generation has different views and work values that motivate them (Twenge *et al*., 2010 as cited in Lewis, 2013). As seen in earlier sections Baby Boomers believe that a hard work ethic is necessary, and employees need to pay their dues. They are motivated through extrinsic means like promotions, titles, corner offices and reserved parking spaces (Kupperschmidt, 2000, p. 68 as cited by Lewis, 2013). In contrast, Gen X are distrustful of organizations and intrinsically motivated by work independence and achieving a good work-life balance (Graves, 2013; Harber, 2011 as cited in Harris, 2015). Gen Y are similar to Gen X in the fact that they value personal achievement and work-life balance. They also place high importance on the use of technology to find new efficiencies to make work faster and easier. Gen Y find motivation through both extrinsic and intrinsic means (Johnson & Johnson, 2010 as cited in Lewis, 2013). Gen Zs are not only more intrinsically motivated at the workplace than other generations, but they also value financial stability. They understand the importance of performing well at work but are reluctant to sacrifice their lives for success at work (Mahmoud *et al*., 2020).

Due to these differences in values, the younger generations often view the older generations as holding the status quo, but older generations see the younger ones as being reluctant to accept things the way they are (Urick *et al.*, 2016). Organizations will have to understand how each generation's work values may be different. The methods that managers used in the past to motivate employees may not work on the younger generations. What motivates one generation may demotivate another thus, causing conflict as to what rewards and motivation tactics are used.

C. Identity-based Conflict

"Identity-based conflict arises when differences exist between the ways one generation sees their own identities and the identities of other generations" (Urick *et al*., 2016).

Identity-based conflict originates from the general sense of wanting to belong to a group or by comparing themselves to other groups. Individuals will see themselves belonging to a particular generation even if they were not born during that generation's time (Urick, 2014). As groups form there can be conflicts that arise when they interact or make direct comparisons to one another (Dencker *et al*., 2007). There are

some common characteristics that are shared between certain generations as well. Looking at Baby Boomers and Gen X for example, they both want freedom from supervisors (Appelbaum *et al*., 2004 as cited in Lewis, 2013). Additionally, by their nature generational characteristics are a generalization of a group of individuals. This can lead to negative generalizations and stereotypes that create a stigma against a group. This effect can be amplified because not all individuals born in a certain generation will have the characteristics that are applied to that generation. It is also true that an individual can change their work values given the right incentives. "According to Bright (2010), any employee who is fully socialized into the organization's culture regardless of generational differences will have similar work preferences" (Lewis, 2013). Organizations need to understand that groups will form regardless of what they do. They must do their best to integrate the groups and create interactions between them. This prevents stereotypes from being used as justification for resentment. With a better understanding of generational conflict and the forms it takes we move on to how generations shape conflict management styles.

IV. Impact of Generational Differences on Conflict Management

We now have seen the different characteristics of generations; we will now look at the impact of generational differences on conflict management. As previously seen, different generations have drastically different characteristics due to the environment they were exposed to while growing up. We can identify managers and supervisors by their appropriate generational cohorts. However, the question must be asked; "Do managers' and supervisors' generational differences affect the conflict resolution strategies they employ?" It is important to answer this question since current research suggests that managers spend on average 30-42% per day dealing with conflicts (Richey & Korman, 2013). Looking at conflicts caused by generational differences is important, but it is only part of the whole picture. We need to explore how generations can impact the conflict resolution process. This applies to both the ones in conflict and a third party trying to resolve the conflicts (A manager resolving conflict between employees). Several studies conducted by various researchers have attempted to answer this question.

Research by D. Jennings (2016) found that managers from each generation have drastic differences in their methods of approaching conflicts. Additionally, they are perceived differently by colleagues. Baby boomers are viewed by others as commanding, authoritative, and resistant to changes (Colson, 2005). However, they can be very patient, willing to listen and relatable when approaching conflict. Managers from Gen X prefer taking a dialogical approach towards solving conflicts (Marshall, 2004). They prefer to talk with individuals to gain their perspective. Managers from Gen X are more active, hands-on, and directly involved in resolving conflicts. They also attempt to allow individuals to solve their own issues by dialoguing and practicing active listening. Gen X managers were found to develop solutions that are acceptable to all individuals involved in the conflict. Gen Y managers are the youngest; they were found to engage in dialogue when resolving conflicts similar to Gen X managers (Mukundan *et al*., 2013, as cited in D. Jennings, 2016). However, due to lack of experience and the need for constant feedback, Gen Y managers will often seek out the guidance of their supervisor for either suggestions or approval of their decisions. This generation of managers is viewed by older generations as being impulsive and prone to make rash decisions. The differences in approach can be attributed to four major themes mentioned by Jennings (2016). These themes influence how managers select the direction of approaching conflict. The first theme is current with previous supervisors. Whether positive or negative experiences from supervisors play a big part in the perception of how managers perceive conflict. The second theme is past life experiences. It is easier for managers who have past experiences dealing with conflict to properly diffuse conflicts. It is much harder for managers who lack these past experiences to manage conflict. The third theme is home rearing. Parental guidance and how individuals were influenced during their formative years have a great impact on how individuals approach conflict. The fourth theme is the work environment. The culture of the organization plays an integral part in how individuals handle workplace conflicts. For individuals to respond to conflicts appropriately, they must change their thought process to a more positive outlook. This is not an easy task for a manager to do in the moment. From the findings of these articles, we can conclude that generational differences do not have any impact on the conflict solving strategies. However, they do impact the perceptions and approaches employed by managers from different generations.

A separate study by Harris (2015) found that there were little to no conflicts if performances are acceptable. The caveat to this is the leader must know how to manage effectively. When it came to conflicts attributed to generational differences, proper communication was often the best method to resolve the conflict. Collaboration was what most managers exercised as strategies when solving conflict via adequate communication. From these findings, we can see clearly that different managers have their own approaches on how to handle conflict. However, the main strategies employed by these different generations of managers are somewhat identical. They all choose to either collaborate/compromise or use a combination of both strategies to cope with conflict.

V. Managing Generational Conflict

Organizations look to utilize a wider array of skills and knowledge by focusing on diversity and Inclusion. This has paved the way to create a more heterogeneous workforce. However, this diversity also increases the variables for conflicts. An overarching cause of conflict in this new heterogeneous workforce is generational conflict. Various social, political, and economic developments have shaped how people from different eras are inclined to think, feel, and act. Thereby changing their working behaviour and values (Tortorella *et al*., 2019). An organisation with a

generationally diverse workforce must embrace and value each generation and look to capitalize on their strength. While also recognizing the generational diversities that help create a dynamic, rich, engaging and fulfilling work environment where everyone feels valued and supported by their peers (André, 2018). There are strengths in a generationally diverse workforce but, there can also be conflict caused by the same diversity. Organizations and managers must have strategies to resolve these inevitable conflicts.

Research shows that a generational conflict can be caused by many different variables. There is no one strategy or model that best resolves these conflicts. To solve generational conflicts, one should understand the root of conflict first and then look at the generational characteristics that lead to the conflict. Morton Deutsch (1994) developed a model to understand the root of conflict and that is the first step in managing generational conflict.

A. Morton Deutsch's Theory

The four common themes identified by Morton Deutsch (1994)'s theory of cooperation and competition can be used as a tool to study generational conflicts and construct the strategies to resolve them (Lewis, 2013). The first theme states that processes involved with conflicts can be either cooperative or competitive because parties involved within a conflict have different motivations. The second theme states that there are constructive conflicts and destructive conflicts. If conflicts are managed correctly and yielding positive results they can function as a positive conduit to the solution process. However, if the opposite stands true then the results are negative. Thirdly, distinct strategies can be formed according to the cooperative and competitive aspects of the conflicts. Since distinct strategies can aid the conflict resolution processes, the choice of which strategy to use is heavily influenced by the manager's past experiences. These include past supervisor, family rearing and work environment. The fourth theme of Deutsch's study shows that whether the results of the conflicts are constructive or destructive are determined by the strength of the competitive and cooperative interest (Deutsch, 1994, as cited in Lewis, 2013).

The theory from Morton Deutsch helps organizations understand the nature of a conflict and the Conflict Process Model (Fig. 1) depicts a roadmap for the evolution of a conflict.

B. Conflict Process Model

The Conflict Process Model is a framework that follows a generalized format for examining conflict. The model assists in explaining how and why conflict occurs and ultimately examines ways to minimize or resolve conflict with the least amount of negative aftermath (Appelbaum *et al*., 1999). Most intergenerational conflicts arise due to differences in values and beliefs stemming from their past experiences and the perspectives of their eras. A study by Sullivan and Decker supports the fact that correlation between antecedent conditions (as shown in Fig. 1) leads to increases in conflict (Sullivan & Decker, 1998, as cited in André, 2018).

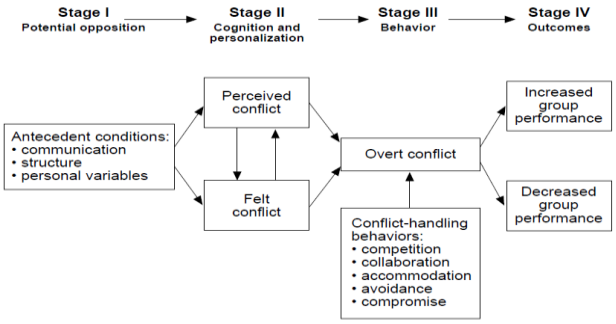


Fig. 1. The four stages of a conflict incident.
Note: The source of this model is "The self-directed team a conflict resolution analysis", Team Performance Management, 5(2), 60–60 by S. Appelbaum, C. Abdallah, B. Shapiro (1999).

In such a situation, conflict resolution can be achieved by making all individuals reach a mutually agreed-upon solution and commit themselves to executing the agreement. In addition to just resolving the conflict, a positive outcome can also be achieved. This makes both parties display new and improved attitudes and feelings toward each other and the situation. In this case both parties see themselves as winners (André, 2018). This model is not solely used to resolve generational conflict and can be applied to other types of conflict. What is crucial for generational conflict is for managers to keep the characteristics of each generation in mind to see where the conflict stems from (Lewis, 2013). As mutually agreed, solutions yield positive outcomes, strategies that can encourage a mutual agreement between parties with potential generational conflicts would be valuable for organizations. Strategies that promote mentorship among employees and employ leadership and HR interventions are plausible for this perspective.

VI. Mentorship to Embrace Intergenerational Diversity

A valuable strategy that cultivates and creates a healthy organizational culture is Mentorship. Mentorship in the perioperative setting helps foster strong team relationships. It does so by reinforcing the concept that different generations bring different strengths into the workplace. Therefore, reducing intolerance, stereotyping and stigma towards team members (Sherman, 2015, as cited in André, 2018). Mentorship builds an emotional and reciprocal relationship in which the mentors teach, guide, nurture, and serve as a positive role model for the less experienced employees. This reciprocal relationship strengthens the employee-to-employee bond by promoting a culture of acceptance. A mentoring culture encompasses both an emotional and transitional relationship in which the different generations of employees engage in genuine caring and creates mutual respect. Open communication facilitates the decline of intergenerational misunderstandings and misinterpretations by exposing employees to the other generation's perspective and strengths (Foley *et al*., 2012, as cited in André, 2018). Though some conflicts can be resolved with the help of a mutually agreed upon mentorship between the parties involved in the conflict, some situations require an intervention from a third party to steer the affected parties out of conflicts. These third parties are

usually the higher leadership from the organisation or the interdepartmental people, such as HR discussed in next section, who have direct influence over the parties involved.

VII. HR Intervention and Influence of Leadership

There are additional changes that leadership can make besides implementing mentorship programs. Leadership can implement operational changes starting with better strategies for recruitment and retention of employees. Since employees from different generations have different interests and expectations employers can start with varied strategies to attract talent. Starting with how job listings are posted to how orientations are provided, employers should enable employees to get the best experience out of the workplace. As with any other diversity issue, managers who give job evaluations and other feedback to employees should be specifically trained in addressing generational differences. Currently research shows that there is a lack of training and even recognition of generational conflict from managers (Harris, 2015). Training will give them the tools and understanding they need to work and solve conflicts with these different generations. Managers will be more sensitive to individual differences (Sedrak & Cahill, 2011). Recognizing this generational diversity, some Fortune 100 companies have created new positions for people whose job is to provide Millennials with the frequent feedback they demand (*Why millennials want frequent feedback* 2018). These are some strategies that managers and organizations can use to help solve generational conflict and increase team cohesion and integration between the generations.

The focus so far has been on the current generations in the workforce, but younger generations will continue to be entering the workforce. With a clear picture of generational conflicts and how organizations can study and manage generational conflicts at the workplace, the next section looks at how this landscape of continuously changing generations and other external factors will affect generational conflicts in the future of work.

VIII. Generational Conflict and the Future of Work

Research around generational conflicts at the workplace is done for the past, but events that shape the generational characteristics and circumstances that may cause potential intergenerational conflicts are chronological. Donkin's book, The Future of Work, placed Millennials as one of the most influential factors shaping the future of work, largely due to their significant size in the workplace and some unique attributes that typify their behaviours (Donkin, 2014). However, the oldest Millennials turned 39 years old in 2020, and many of this generation are now first-line supervisors or becoming mid-level managers (Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021). Gen Z, the generation after Millennials, is just entering the workforce. Although Gen Z and Millennials display similarities, Gen Zs bring their own unique behaviours into organizations (Iorgulescu, 2016, as cited in Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021). These behaviours, again just like those of the Millennials, will be shaping the future of work with even greater effectiveness, as this youngest workgroup is expected to make up 27% of the global workforce by 2025, outnumbering the Millennials (Stahl, 2021). Since Millennials may become the managers of those Gen Zs at the more entry level, their differences could potentially cause intergenerational conflicts in the area of management and leadership (Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021).

Communication technology was also depicted as one of the influential factors to the future of work (Donkin, 2014). What was not in his circle of influences, was the Covid-19 catalyst that stimulated the digital transformation of work. A broad consensus has been made regarding the "hybrid" work format, but organizations have not agreed on the details; for example, the proportions of remote work and the types of work that are allowed to be remote often engender issues about fairness (Standage, 2021). Work-from-home and Work-from-anywhere, are among the trends that companies are embracing (Choudhury, 2021). As the world cautiously envisaged returning to the office, resistance appeared in younger generations; the majority of the opponents are millennials. Nonetheless, Gen-Xers, which currently represent more than 50% of the leadership positions, believe that technologies like Zoom do not build trust and admiration which are among the key elements of networking (Dishman, 2021).

These factors must be kept in mind as new generations enter the workforce. The issue of generational conflict is not fixed and changes with time. As one generation retires another enters the workforce. Researchers must continue to investigate the changing landscape so managers and organizations can better resolve these conflicts.

IX. Debate about Generational Conflict

It is commonplace to talk about generations as entities that affect human behaviour, actions, and consequences in the modern workplace. However, empirical evidence suggests this may not be the case. It is important to explore the concept of generations in the light of counterevidence. In the workplace, generations and generational differences have been regularly seen as the possible reasons for declining levels of work ethic (Zabel *et al*., 2017 as cited in Rudolph *et al*., 2020) to higher rates of job-hopping (Costanza *et al.*, 2012 as cited in Rudolph *et al*., 2020). Despite the ubiquity of the concept of generations, there is a growing consensus among researchers that the whole idea of focusing on generations and generational differences might be overstated. As an example, a recent study published by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) concluded that; "categorizing workers with generational labels like 'Baby Boomer' or 'Millennial' to define their needs and behaviours is not supported by research and cannot adequately inform workforce management decisions…" (NASEM 2020a and NASEM 2020b as cited in Rudolph *et al*., 2020). Some of the common issues concerning the theory of attributing actions and behaviours in the workplace to generational differences are further discussed below.

A. Generational Explanations Might Not Be Obvious

One noticeable and probably overstated feature of generations is that the generational cohorts share unique characteristics. Also, it is assumed that different generations can be distinguished by drawing lines based on these characteristics (Rudolph *et al*., 2020). There are various examples showing how different possible reasons behind certain behaviours and actions might be confused with one another. One such example is that the popular press portrays millennials as dedicated urban dwellers who like ride-sharing services and deliberately avoid the concept of traditional families (Barroso *et al*., 2020; Godfrey, 2016 as cited in Rudolph *et al*., 2020). Contrary to this stereotypical portrayal, these days adults in this age range have more recently been observed moving to the suburbs, buying houses and cars, and starting families (Adamczyk, 2019 as cited in Rudolph *et al*., 2020). Instead of being a generational effect, it is rather a change attributable to the fact that most millennials are reaching a certain age where people get married, start families, and purchase houses. This is a product of age and context, not so much of generation or period (Rudolph *et al.*, 2020). The picture may look even more enigmatic if other not time-bound contextual factors are considered. For example, when considering that the average age of the first conception is higher in urban, compared to rural, areas (Bui & Miller, 2018 as cited in Rudolph *et al*., 2020).

X. Is It Necessary to Manage Generational Conflicts at Work?

Popular stereotypes suggest that generational differences among workers present challenges for workplace managers. However, existing empirical research provides mixed evidence for generational differences in important values and attitudes.

There is a common media stereotype suggesting that human resources management practices such as hiring, rewarding, and managing employees should focus on the generational aspect of the workforce. There exist differences in attitudes, values, and desires due to the age and generational cohort that they belong to. Many researchers (e.g., Adams, 2000 as cited in Becton *et al*., 2014) have suggested that "failure to recognize these differences can lead to negative organizational outcomes such as intergenerational workplace conflict, misunderstanding/ miscommunication, poor working relationships, reduced employee productivity, poor employee well-being, lower innovation, and fewer organizational citizenship behaviors". As a result of this, managers, HR specialists, and researchers have shown keen interest in decoding, understanding, and implementing ways to successfully manage people from different generations. However, it is surprising that empirical evidence in favour of generational stereotypes is relatively sparse (Twenge *et al*., 2010 as cited in Becton *et al*., 2014). As stated by Becton and others (Becton *et al*., 2014) "One stream of research supports the general stereotypes concerning generational differences in work values, personal values, leadership behaviours, psychological traits, turnover intention, and organizational commitment (Twenge, 2010 as cited in Becton *et al*., 2014). Another stream of research has found few if any, generational differences in a variety of employee characteristics such as personality and motivation (Hart *et al*., 2003 as cited in Becton *et al*., 2014)." Scholars have noted that some of these generational differences could be explained by age, life stage, or career stage effect in opposition to generational effect (Arnett, 2010 as cited in Becton *et al*., 2014).

The research by Becton and others (Becton *et al*., 2014) tries to examine if generational membership explains important workplace behaviour such as job mobility, disciplinary action, and willingness to work overtime. The results of the study (Becton *et al*., 2014) suggest that while generational differences exist in some workplace behaviours, the popular generational stereotypes are not always consistent with workplace behaviours. The study also cautions practitioners to avoid treating employees simply as members of generations, ignoring the fact that other individual differences likely play a more prominent role in workplace behaviours than generational differences (Twenge, 2010 as cited in Becton *et al*., 2014) In conclusion, HR strategies aligned with the needs and values of all individual employees regardless of their specific generational cohort group would be better suited in the modern workplace.

XI. Conclusion

To resolve the conflicts at workplaces and to manage the workforce in a more efficient way it is crucial to completely understand the backdrop of why the conflicts exist in the first place. While we try to decipher, segregate, and understand the plausible reasons for conflicts at the workplace, generational cohorts can be used as one of the keys. It is true that all three components on which the conflicts can be classified, namely, behaviour, values and identity are moulded by the generation to which an individual belongs. However, these components could also be affected by the upbringing, past experience and work environment as well. It is important to understand that the individual identity and behaviour are not crystallised or ratified at a certain age due to an individual being born in a particular time frame, they rather evolve throughout life as a result of intersections between age, life stage and social context. These intersections do produce both common and unique effects that translate into varying attitudes, values, and behaviours, but not as a passive and predetermined function of an individual's generation. Although generational research, to some extent, helps us understand the way to manage the diverse workforce, it also oversimplifies the complexities inherent to both individuals and the environments in which they live and work. Additional research is needed on the topic of generational conflict in order to accurately judge the impact it has on individuals and organizations.

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Aggarwal, A., Sadhna, P., Gupta, S., Mittal, A., & Rastogi, S. (2022). Gen Z entering the workforce: Restructuring HR policies and practices for fostering task performance and organizational commitment. *Journal of Public Affairs*, *22*(3), e2535.

Summary: The research concentrates on giving knowledge to the existing HR practices and policies based on the evaluation of factors influencing Generation Z employees' expectations at the workplace, which likes flexible work practices, compensation, and benefits, career development opportunities, reward and recognition, feedback-seeking behavior, volunteering work and availability of multiple technology, task performance. The study will go through the HR practices and policies attracting, motivating, and retaining Generation Z. Along with that is to look at the compensation of traditional and contemporary HR practices for developing work cultures which is effective for young people. The study also touches on the maximization of Generation Z skills by meeting their satisfaction, which brings success to the organization. In the end, the discussion of how HR practices can be seen as a model to enhance task performance and effective organizational commitment of Generation Z

Relevance: The article shows relevance to the topic by covering the theme of HR, providing specific restructuring policies and practices in organizational management for better task performance with the entering of Generation Z into the workforce.

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Gen Z entering the workforce: Restructuring HR policies and practices for fostering the task performance and organizational commitment

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Generation Z, the youngest generation is steadily entering the workforce with an entirely unique perspective on careers and workplace norms. Employers need to embrace this generation cohort and use their strengths while providing meaningful work. In this regard, the paper aims to examine the influence of HR policies and practices on Generation Z, toward job satisfaction using the attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) theory and self-determination theory (SDT). Incorporating structural equation modeling, on a sample of 493 Generation Z employees, this paper came up with findings that flexible work practices, reward and recognition, compensation and benefits, feedback-seeking behavior and volunteering work positively influence Gen Z. In addition, this paper also reveals that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between HR practices, task performance, and affective organizational commitment. The paper is a novel attempt to sensitize the employers to look beyond the surface by orchestrating a new model for meeting Gen Z expectations. The implications of these findings for theory and practice, as well as its limitations and future directions, conclude the paper.

1 | INTRODUCTION

The year 1995 marked the beginning of Generation Z and the internet. This young new generation cohort arrived in college in 2013 with an absolutely different set of aspirations, perceptions, and expectations, as each generation grows up with a different economic and cultural environment (Nargundkar, Nafees, & Kushal, 2020; Ahmad, 2020). Now organizations have to employ this so-called "location-aware" generation and positively influence their behavior toward organizational goals in the most effective and efficient manner. Managing the unique aspirations of this impromptu generation whose DNA is captured by technology is an unavoidable mammoth task to fuel the company's growth and success. Though extensive and interesting research is done on Millennials/Generation Y in the past, however, not enough study has been conducted on the factor affecting the work behavior of Gen Z employees.

Generation Z of the generation cohort refers to those who are born after 1995 (Bassiouni & Hackley, 2014; Bolser & Gosciej, 2015). Many other researchers consider Generation Z's year of birth as 1990 (Tulgan, 2013). Generation Z is also known as "Generation Me" (Bennett, Pitt, & Price, 2012); "Digital Natives" (Addor, 2011), "Internet Generation" (Lanier, 2017), and "Mobile Mavens" (Ozkan & Solmaz, 2015). It is the first generation who may live to see the 22nd century. All the generations namely Silent Generation (1928–1945), Baby Boomers (1946–1964), Generation X (1965–1980), Generation Y-Millennials (1981–1994), followed by Generation Z (1995+) are driven by varied set of values, goals, and working styles. However, till date, no other generation except Generation Z has been more accepting and open-minded. They are considered initiators who love to work with challenges around, have a practical outlook, who like to take the lead and are extremely ambitious (Bencsik, Horváth-Csikós, & Juhász, 2016). Generation Z believes that men, women, and

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transgender should be treated equally; same-sex couples should be given the freedom to get married and the right to nonviolent speech should be given under any circumstances. Their findings also highlighted that their overall happiness is determined by a good relationship with family and friends, recreational activities, and having enough financial resources to make life smooth and comfortable. Generation Z is also known for being extremely opposed to religious and racial discrimination. They have experienced a plethora of social, economic, political, and technological changes. In addition to this, they have witnessed constant rapid change, limitless opportunities, social networking, and global interdependence. They have a lot of expectations and are inclined more toward experience. To them, the concept of "working with" is more important than "working for." They are able to do multi-tasking while being productive at the same time (Ozkan & Solmaz, 2015). The people of this generation have grown up in an environment of abundant opportunities, virtual connectivity, and great diversity. Now the previous human resources (HR) policies and practices of hiring, motivating, and retaining need to take a new shape as the adults of Generation Z believes in meaningful work (Morgan, 2014).

In 2020, Generation Z is predicted to outnumber the Millennials and is most likely to reshape the workplace in years to come. Unlike previous generations at the workplace, Gen Z employees are not reluctant to leave their current organization in search of a company that aligns with their work values. As per the Gallup report 2019, 73% of American Gen Z employees quit their organization as their expectations with the workplace norms were not met. They do not prefer to work with companies that do not give them an accurate picture of the work profile, which later becomes a major reason for future turnover. The Deloitte 2018 Survey found that 61% of Gen Z employees are planning to leave their jobs in a couple of years. As they are willing to job hop, it becomes important to keep them committed to their jobs. By changing the current ways of handling a young workforce can add value to the organizations in years to come. As an employer, failing to assimilate the changes to the expectations of Gen Z with the same old one-size-fits-all theory, can harm the companies in the coming two decades.

The purpose of this research paper is to add knowledge to the existing literature of HR practices and policies, by examining how the factors namely flexible work practices, compensation and benefits, career development opportunities, reward and recognition, feedback-seeking behavior, volunteering work and availability of multiple technology solutions affects job satisfaction, task performance, and affective organizational commitment of Gen Z employees. The study proposes a conceptual framework to empirically provide a comprehensive explanation of the influence of HR policies and practices on Generation Z employees.

This study makes four contributions to the existing literature. First, this research is the first of its kind to explore the HR practices and policies for attracting, motivating, and retaining Generation Z. Second, the study is an attempt to know the interesting combination of traditional and contemporary HR practices for developing work culture, which is conducive for the youngest employees. Third, the study aims to explore how Generation Z skills can be utilized for the success of the organization by meeting their expectations connected to job satisfaction. Finally, the discussed HR practices can be considered a model to enhance task performance and affective organizational commitment of Generation Z, as this generation is more inclined toward the overall experience at workplace, while being pragmatic, practical, and realistic.

The paper begins with a comprehensive explanation of theoretical framework in terms of HR policies and practices for Gen Z, guiding theoretical lenses and the conceptual framework, followed by the methods to test the hypothesis propositions and the implication of the finding of the theory and practice while concluding its limitations and scope for future research.

2 | THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The nature of work in organizations is becoming more complex, dynamic, much more flexible, and virtual. There is an increasing trend to know the impact of HR policies and practices on job satisfaction to attract, motivate, and retain the employees in the long run. Therefore, current organizational environment is not only about profit generation, but now it is also about employer branding and workplace relationships. Now managers apart from work also focus on employees' well-being (Daft, 2015). HR managers are now redrafting the company's HR practices and policies to build a more engaging and motivated culture for the benefit of the organization and its employees. The benefits of empowering employees by enhancing job satisfaction and work engagement are crucial elements to consider in any organization (Aggarwal, Chand, Jhamb, & Mittal, 2020; Argyris, 1957; McGregor, 1960).

Attraction, selection, and attrition theory (ASA) explains why individuals join and quit the organization (Schneider, 2001). It also refers to "person-organization fit theory" which leads to lower turnover, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. The success of the organization is dependent on attracting potential candidates who want to remain and contribute in the long run. Employees choose to work with an organization that sounds attractive to them in terms of workplace culture, values, and personal unique characteristics. After joining the organization, if employees find a good match with their goals and values, they tend to exhibit a higher degree of satisfaction and commitment (Aggarwal, Dhaliwal, & Nobi, 2018). While those who do not find themselves a good fit, eventually leave the organization. The ASA theory suggests that candidates seek organizations that are similar to their values and beliefs. In other words, ASA reflects a two-way process to provide an opportunity to the potential employees to know the workplace norms and culture, in order to mitigate the future attrition. Companies need to attract, select, and retain workers effectively especially when it comes to Gen Z, which is quite vocal about what they want and what they do not want. Now recruiters with this young generation are witnessing a shift from interviewing prospective employees to interviewing prospective employers.

Another paradigm is examining job satisfaction at the workplace, is the self-determination theory (SDT) stated by Deci and

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Ryan (1985) for building a culture of motivated work environment. It is now considered the contemporary model of motivation, as it explains the various drivers and a wide spectrum of autonomy, relatedness, and competence at the workplace for enhancing work effectiveness and also the financial performance of the organization (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Self-determination theory is a broad framework of organizational behavior, which focuses on employee motivation, management style, and work context support leading to employee retention and affective commitment (Olafsen, Niemiec, Halvari, Deci, & Williams, 2017). The theory mainly focuses on intrinsic motivation, based on competence, relatedness, and autonomy for achieving growth. Competence refers to the need of the employees to master and learn new skills, while relatedness refers to a sense of belonging at the workplace and finally autonomy refers to employees' need to feel in control of their behaviors and goals. Ryan and Deci (2017) have suggested that giving positive feedback can help employees feel more interested, satisfied, and committed. Meaningful feedback, recognition, and support can work as a catalyst to drive better performance while building competence and positive workplace relationships. Many researchers rely on self-determination theory for suggesting ways to improve employee motivation and engagement.

In nutshell, HR practices play a major role for driving results in terms of overall work productivity, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. Now contemporary workplaces need to redefine their way of doing work for being effective across a wide range of contexts. Thereby necessitating further research especially, when new generations emerge at workplaces, and in this study-Generation Z.

3 | HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

The conceptual framework (refer figure 1) is underpinned by an amalgam of HR policies and practices to explain the influence of various workplace factors on Generation Z employees for driving job satisfaction, task performance, and affective organizational commitment.

3.1 | Compensation and benefits

Compensation and benefits are considered a critical aspect of performance management strategy of Human Resource Management (Gomez-Mejia, Berrone, & Franco-Santos, 2014). Compensation is the amount paid by the employer for the efforts, skills, and time given by the employee for attaining the organizational goals. Salary is the key motivator as stated in findings of prior research (Blaskova, Blasko, Rosak-Szyrocka, & Ulewicz, 2017; Gunawan & Amalia, 2015). Financial incentives, including ex-post incentives and ex-ante incentives influence work productivity and employee performance. Compensation and benefits are positively associated with employees' involvement and employees' outcomes. In the survey conducted by "Built-In" in 2020, 60% of the respondents from Generation Z mentioned that "money is the determinant of success." In this way, they are very similar to Baby Boomers as both of these generations experienced an economic recession, so it is quite relatable that these two generations have a strong inclination toward monetary aspects. ASA theory suggests that to attract and retain employees in the long run, companies need to make a framework for driving organizational goals. By offering lucrative compensation and benefits along with increments, employers can ensure desired task performance and organizational commitment from this young generation. Various prior studies show that compensation and benefits are one of the key determinants for job satisfaction at the workplace (Abadi & Renwarin, 2017). Based on the literature, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1 *Compensation and benefits offered to Generation Z have a positive and significant impact on job satisfaction.*

3.2 | Flexible work practices

Flexible work practices refer to the work conducted outside the firm's premises in several different ways. They are defined as the set of policies that enable employees to decide questions like when (flexitime), where (work from home or remote work), and for how long (sabbaticals), as per Hill et al. (2008). Many organizations are now taking a plunge in creating and implementing flexible work practices (Leslie, Manchester, Park, & Mehng, 2012), as these policies are perceived as organizational attractiveness. Technological advancements hitting the business landscape such as cloud computing, smartphones, tablets are enabling flexible work conduction at great ease. In addition, flexible work arrangements and flexiplace enhances organizational attractiveness (Thompson, Payne, & Taylor, 2015). By offering autonomy, employees perform to the best of their abilities (Deci & Ryan, 1985), thereby leading to higher profitability and reduced costs. In addition, autonomy reduces the attrition rate by keeping employees motivated and engaged. In a research, it was found that work from home increases performance by 13% (Bloom, Liang, Roberts, & Ying, 2015) leading to work effectiveness. Potential young employees are attracted to the organization that offers flexible workplace norms, in order to engage themselves in meaningful work (Morgan, 2014). Many researchers have also related flexible work practices positively with psychological health and job satisfaction. Given these underpinnings, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2 *Flexible work practices (FWP) offered to Generation Z has a positive and significant impact on job satisfaction.*

3.3 | Rewards and recognition

Rewards are the set of benefits provided to the employees to attract, motivate, and retain them. Ample research has contemplated the impact of rewards and recognition schemes on work performance and

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job satisfaction. Extrinsic awards refer to the tangible records such as promotions, bonus, and pay rise whereas intrinsic rewards, on the other hand, are associated with praise, positive feedback, recognition, challenging work, learning opportunities, and employment security (Newman, Gerhart, & Milkovich, 2016). SDT theory defines different types of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation in the context of job satisfaction and work performance optimization. An unfair reward system leads to a decline in performance (Eijkenaar, 2013). For retaining top talent in organizations, many companies promote a supportive atmosphere where employees feel appreciated. The major reason for dissatisfaction at work by the young workforce is the dearth of appreciation and recognition at their workplace. In addition, as per the survey of Slaven (2019) and Horsley (2018) 50% of Generation Z feel that their best of work performance is not recognized, which in turn demotivates them. Generation Z is eager to engulf their career with rewarding experiences, as they are strongly motivated by rewards and career advancement opportunities (Hope, 2016). Rewards and recognition, including financial and non- financial benefits have a significant effect on job satisfaction (Bari, Fanchen, & Baloch, 2016). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3 *Rewards and recognition offered to Generation Z have a positive and significant impact on job satisfaction.*

3.4 | Career development

One of the major goals of human resource development is to facilitate continuous learning and help employees to face constant challenges in their work (Watkins & Marsick, 2016). Career development from the organization's point of view refers to planning and organizing a framework for its employees to strike a fine balance between organizational requirements and individuals' career needs (Siahaan, Gultom, & Lumbanraja, 2016). SDT theory suggests that boosting employees' competence can lead to job satisfaction. For instance, coaching by leaders, peer to peer mentoring, and knowledge sharing opportunities can create a pool of empowered employees. Organizations, therefore, now acknowledge its crucial role in the personal and professional growth of its employees. Employees exhibit great commitment at the workplace when they are assisted to develop marketable skills and experiences. Now companies need to pay attention to this young Generation Z, who has got a completely different view of career aspirations. Generation Z is entrepreneurial and want to make their own identity. HR managers, therefore, should address career planning and career management of its employees (Santos, 2016), in order to attract and retain this workforce. Career development has a positive and significant impact on job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Rahayu, Rasid, & Tannady, 2018). Based on the literature, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4 *Career development opportunities offered to Generation Z has a positive and significant impact on job satisfaction.*

3.5 | Feedback seeking behavior

Organizations are actively involved in giving feedback to their employees to improve work performance. Feedback seeking is a step toward gathering information about one's own development at the workplace. Now various organizations regularly conduct feedback giving exercises for their employees unlike the traditional pattern of sharing the same once a year. Ashford and Cummings (1983) proposed feedback-seeking behavior for maximizing employees' work performance and social behaviors. The research of Dimotakis, Mitchell, and Maurer (2017) related feedback-seeking with promotional aspects for career advancements. Many researchers linked feedback-seeking behavior with goal attainment and work performance (Dahling, Taylor, Chau, & Dwight, 2016). The technology-savvy Generation Z living in a wired environment, are habitual to get immediate feedback on a constant basis. Moreover, obtaining feedback from leaders contributes to the organizational commitment (Arnoux-Nicolas, Sovet, Lhotellier, Di Fabio, & Bernaud, 2016). To enhance their relatedness as reflected in SDT theory, among this young workforce, HR practices should allow a cohesive team environment, where employees socialize, forge meaningful relationships, and create a culture of trust for sharing feedback in a comfortable manner. The young workforce wants to know regularly about their work performance as they are always in a learning mode. Constructive feedback can help employees of Generation Z for being better in their designated work for the enhancement of job satisfaction and work effectiveness. Some companies are now getting into the business of developing smartphones applications for employees to seek feedback on demand such as “Fast Feedback” by GE. These findings and assertions are summarized in the following hypothesis:

H5 *Feedback seeking behavior of Generation Z has a positive and significant impact on job satisfaction.*

3.6 | Volunteering work

Employee volunteering can be defined as planned activities by the employees at the workplace for investing time and skills outside the organization (Saratun, 2016). Volunteering and citizenship behavior are quite similar to each other as both are positive and volitional in nature (Clary & Snyder, 1999; Organ, 1988). Volunteering refers to the efforts directed outside the organization such as working for non-governmental organizations, whereas citizenship behavior is associated with workplace environment such as helping co-workers (Aggarwal & Singh, 2016). In other words, volunteering is off-task activity and citizenship in the on-task activity. With the advent of corporate social responsibility practices, volunteering at the workplace is becoming extremely popular, especially among young working professionals (Rodell, 2013). Both the theories namely ASA theory and SDT theory refer to the psychological connection between the organizations and the employees, such as availability of autonomy by instilling trust. Generation Z expects that their employers will provide freedom to spend some of their time in their own personal

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projects. As per Horsley (2018), Generation Z is the generation of volunteers and donors and is eager to contribute to different causes. The Global Trend 2017 report also mentions that Generation Z, unlike their previous cohorts, is too much interested in attending fundraising events. Prior literature associates volunteering meaningfulness with better collaboration within teams. However, there are handful studies that associate volunteering with organizational identity, task performance, turnover intentions, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Glavas, 2016; Hu, Jiang, Mo, Chen, & Shi, 2016; Rodell, Booth, Lynch, & Zipay, 2017). Hence the following hypothesis is proposed:

H6 *Volunteering work offered to Generation Z has a positive and significant impact on job satisfaction.*

3.7 | Multiple technology solutions

Work digitalization is the new wave in the business landscape, which has become a key topic of discussion at the workplace over the past few years. The young workforce is habitual to the social media in the form of Instagram, Google, Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, and YouTube, which is now transforming the entire way of doing work (Sinaga, 2015). Today the employees are attracted to the organizations that equip them with gadgets and IT tools. Considering digital innovation, after the advent of new technology platforms such as virtual teams, artificial intelligence, and cloud computing, the prospective candidates are looking forward to working with companies that can help them to enhance their technological competence. They are habitual to learn new technology platforms and often display a low tolerance for those who are unable to grasp the technology infrastructure (Fister-Gale, 2015). Digital competency is the new term derived for this digital workforce by Briggs and Makice (2012). There is an inevitable need for organizations to redesign the jobs for Generation Z and provide the freedom to work on different digital platforms. With the mindful digital orientation at the workplace, the work and managerial processes become better and organized, leading to job satisfaction. Technological advancements and gadgets have a significant influence on Generation Z (Priporas, Stylos, & Fotiadis, 2017), which attracts them toward organizations. On the basis of the literature review, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H7 *Multiple technology solutions offered to Generation Z has a positive and significant impact on job satisfaction.*

H7a *Digital innovation offered to Generation Z has a positive and significant impact on job satisfaction.*

H7b *Digital orientation offered to Generation Z has a positive and significant impact on job satisfaction.*

3.8 | Task performance

Task performance refers to the behavior of the employees to carry out roles and responsibilities to achieve the specified task, in accordance with the guidelines shared by the employer. The SDT theory explains the theoretical relationship between job satisfaction and task performance. With a wide array of options available, HR must review the policies that work best for increasing task performance and improved productivity. As stated in ASA theory, distinct strategies should be devised by the organizations to influence this youngest workforce to join their workforce with great dedication and commitment. The focus should be the retention of Generation Z employees, along with enhancing their task performance for impacting overall business results. Task performance also defines the career path of an employee in the organization. The findings by Krishnan, Loon, and Tan (2018) associated job satisfaction as a contributor to task performance. These findings and assertions are summarized in the following hypothesis:

H8 *Job satisfaction has a positive and significant impact on task performance.*

3.9 | Affective organizational commitment

Organizational commitment is defined as the set of feelings of the employees at their workplace about all the aspects related to the organization (Bailey, Albassami, & Al-Meshal, 2016). It refers to the psychological state of the employees to continue working with the same organization and remain there. Organizational commitment is defined as the inclination of employees to get involved in the organizational work based on their emotional connection with the organization (Mowday, 1979). It is reflected in the ASA theory, which states that companies need to devise a strategy that helps in attracting and retaining the employees in the long run. Three main dimensions of organizational commitment are affective commitment, commitment continuance, and normative commitment (Harwiki, 2016). This study focuses on the affective dimension of the organizational commitment, relating to the employees' belief, identification, and involvement in the organization. Affective commitment, in other words, is the willingness to continue with the organization based on emotional connection, which is interlined with the relatedness of SDT theory. Prior studies highlight the strong correlation between affective commitment and lower turnover, leading to an increase in organizational performance (Moldogaziev & Silvia, 2015). More importantly, job satisfaction is an important antecedent of affective commitment (Caillier, 2013). Job satisfaction and organizational commitment positively influence high-performance work practices. Given these underpinnings, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H9 *Job satisfaction has a positive and significant impact on affective commitment.*

3.10 | Job satisfaction as mediator

In contemporary business settings, job satisfaction has got an important role to play. It has become an unavoidable career objective for

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organizations across the globe as put forth by various researchers. Hoppock (1935) coined this terminology as a set of physiological, psychological, and environmental conditions that enable an employee to feel contented with his work in the organization. It is defined by Saleem (2015) as a psychological and environmental situation that stimulates an employee to express satisfaction with his occupation. Other studies relate job satisfaction with the feelings and attitude of the employees toward their job (Chen, Sparrow, & Cooper, 2016). By ensuring job satisfaction at workplace managers are able to harness the potential of all its employees for achieving the desired goals. It is a multidimensional phenomenon that is affected by various variables (Kabak, Şen, Göçer, Küçüksöylemez, & Tuncer, 2014) such as beliefs, values, personality, work environment, relationship with co-workers, organizational culture, intrinsic factors, and extrinsic factors. The negative indicators of job satisfaction are demotivation, high turnover, and absenteeism (Hülsheger, Maier, & Anderson, 2013). This factor is of immense relevance for HR managers and researchers, as it ultimately leads to organizational commitment and performance (Jehanzeb, Hamid, & Rasheed, 2015). Employees having high job satisfaction play a major role in pursuing organizational interests. As per findings of Kim and Ryu (2017), the overall job satisfaction of employees positively influences organizational commitment (Figure 1). This literature review is summarized in the following hypothesis:

H10a *Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between HR practices and workplace effectiveness.*

H10b *Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between HR practices and affective organizational commitment.*

4 | METHODS

4.1 | Instrumentation

The study employed a questionnaire to collect data from Generation Z employees to test the proposed hypotheses and validate the proposed model. The questionnaire contains two sections namely sociodemographic background of the participants and items measuring 11 constructs under study. The first section incorporates age, gender, marital status, education, designation, experience, income, and region. The second section contains 11 constructs, adapted from existing studies and measured on a five-point scale, whereby 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree. The questionnaire underwent a pre-test by three subject experts, thereby enhancing the content validity of

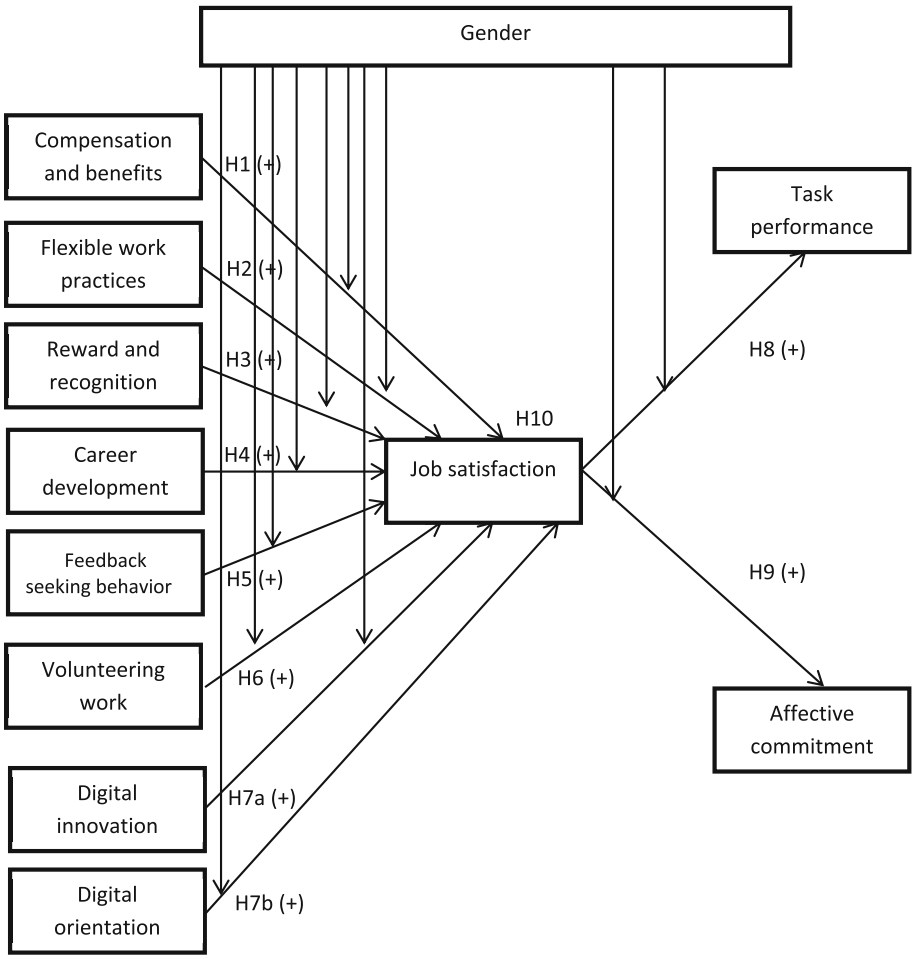


FIGURE 1 Hypothesized model

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the items in the questionnaire. Following that, the questionnaire undergone a pilot study consisting of sample of 50 Generation Z employees, thereby enhancing the validity of the items mentioned. Minor modifications were made to enhance the clarity of the items before the questionnaire was administered to the main sample. Following are the details of the scale used in the present research:

Compensation and benefit: This was measured with a four item scale. An example of one of the items is "My organization rewards adequately for realizing measurable goals." The Cronbach's alpha of this factor was 0.84, which validates the reliability of the scale.

Flexible workplace practices: These were measured with a four-item scale from the study of Kröll, Nüesch, and Foege (2018). The sample item consists of "I believe that my employer offers me the possibility to flexibly arrange my working schedule." The Cronbach's alpha of this factor was 0.84, which validates the reliability of the scale.

Reward and recognition: To assess reward and recognition, we adapted a six items scale developed by Saks (2006). The sample item comprises "Some form of public recognition (such as- employee of the month)." The Cronbach's alpha of this factor was 0.88, which validates the reliability of the scale.

Career development: This factor was measured with a two items scale (Wong, Rasdi, Samah, & Wahat, 2017). An example of one of the items is "My organization encourages employees to broaden their skills." The Cronbach's alpha of this factor was 0.83, which validates the reliability of the scale.

Feedback seeking behavior: To measure feedback seeking behavior, a three items scale was adapted (Sparr, Knipfer, & Willems, 2017). One of the measures was "I ask my supervisor for feedback." The Cronbach's alpha of this factor was 0.86, which validates the reliability of the scale.

Volunteering work: This factor included a three items scale, developed by Carlson, Kacmar, and Williams (2000). One of the measures includes "My volunteering activities are personally meaningful to me." The Cronbach's alpha of this factor was 0.81, which validates the reliability of the scale.

Multiple technology solutions: Its first component "digital innovation" was measured using a six items scale, employed by Paladino (2007). One of the sample items consists of "The quality of our digital solutions is superior compared to our competitors." The Cronbach's alpha of this factor was 0.86, which validates the reliability of the scale. The second component "digital orientation" used a four items scale, developed by Zhou, Huang, and Schölkopf (2005). One of the measures was "We are committed to use digital technologies in developing our new solutions." The Cronbach's alpha of this factor was 0.92, which validates the reliability of the scale.

Job satisfaction: To measure job satisfaction a four items scale was taken from the research work of Morris and Venkatesh (2010). The sample item consists of "I would choose my current job again." The Cronbach's alpha of this factor was 0.88, which validates the reliability of the scale.

Task performance: To measure the factor "task performance" a five items scale developed by Methot, Lepine, Podsakoff, and Christian (2016) was considered. The Cronbach's alpha of this factor was 0.89, which validates the reliability of the scale.

Affective organizational commitment: Finally, to measure the factor "affective commitment" an eight items scale was adapted from Allen and Meyer (1996). The Cronbach's alpha of this factor was 0.91, which validates the reliability of the scale. However, in order to control "order bias" the language and the sequence of the items specified were modified (Jain, Khan, & Mishra, 2017).

4.2 | Sampling

The study employed simple random sampling to select five sample locations of IT companies operating in Delhi NCR, Chandigarh Tricity, Bengaluru, and Hyderabad- in India, a country having more than 450 million of Generation Z employees. The age range of Generation Z is this study is 17–25 years (born in 1995–2003). It took 6 months to complete the data collection process from the period of September 2019 to February 2020. The modified structured questionnaire was distributed to 954 respondents. After performing the initial screening, 461 respondents were dropped from the analysis either due to missing data or unengaged responses. However, only those participants who indicated "yes" to all the screening questions were admitted to the main sample. The three screening questions were- whether they are currently working with an organization, whether they grew up with technology such as computers and smart devices, and whether they were aware of basic HR policies and practices.

5 | DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis section was performed under four sub-sections. At the first instance, a preliminary analysis was performed to check the suitability of the data. In the second stage, an exploratory factor analysis was performed, followed by confirmatory factor analysis to validate the extracted factors. Finally, with the help of structural equation modeling technique, the proposed hypothesized relationships were tested.

5.1 | Participants' profile

A total of 493 respondents participated in this study. All the participants were within the age group of 19–24 years, wherein 31% were aged between 19 and 21 years and 69% were aged between 22 and 24 years. Most of the participants were females (51.5%) and not married (86.1%). The majority of the respondents received education up to the under-graduation level (70%), whereas some received post-graduation education (10.5%). Most of them were working in lower level management with designations such as Trainee (11.2%), Inside Sales Representatives (76.8%), and Assistant Manager (12%). Maximum number of participants was having income less than Rs. 3 Lakhs (45.2%), followed by Rs. 3 Lakhs–5 Lakhs (40.2%), and above

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TABLE 1 Respondents' profile

Categorical construct	Item	Frequency (n = 493)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	239	48.5
	Female	254	51.5
Age	19–21 years	153	31.0
	22–24 years	340	69.0
Marital status	Single	424	86.1
	Married	69	13.9
Education	Post graduates	52	10.5
	Graduates	345	70.0
	Others	96	19.5
Designation	Assistant manager	59	12.0
	Inside sales representative	379	76.8
	Trainee	55	11.2
Experience	Less than 2 years	191	38.7
	2–4 years	162	32.9
	Above 4 years	140	28.4
Income	Less than 3 lakhs	223	45.2
	3 lakhs to 5 lakhs	198	40.2
	Above 5 lakhs	72	14.6
Region	Delhi, NCR	128	26.0
	Chandigarh Tricity	117	23.7
	Bengaluru	132	26.8
	Hyderabad	116	23.5

Note: Source: Author's compilation.

Rs. 5 Lakhs (14.6%). Majority of the participants were having work experience of less than 2 years (38.7%), followed by 2–4 years (32.9%, and above 4 years (28.4%). Finally, the maximum number of employees was from Bengaluru (26.8%), followed by Delhi, NCR (26%), Chandigarh Tricity (23.7%), and Hyderabad (23.5%).

Table 1 shows the details analysis of socio-demographic profile of the respondents.

5.2 | Preliminary analysis

Initially the data were checked for missing responses with the help of Microsoft excel. The results of the missing data show that the missing responses were not an issue in the current research as they were less than 5% of the total responses (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996). Following the simple imputation procedure, the missing data were replaced by arithmetic mean (Byrne, 2010). Further, Mahalanobis Distance (D^2) was used to check the presence of multivariate outliers (Byrne, 2010). The results reflected that there was no issue of multivariate outliers in the present research. Finally, normality of the data was checked with the help of skewness and kurtosis. The result of the descriptive analysis reflected that the value for each statement was within the prescribed range of ±2 (Garson, 2012). Hence, there was no issue of normality in the data.

Further, in order to handle the issue of common method bias (CMB), the data were collected at two points of time. At the first level, we collected the data for independent variables and with a gap of a fortnight, followed by data collection for mediator (job satisfaction) and the dependent variables (task performance and affective organizational commitment). The objective behind the same was to potentially reduce the effect of CMB (Atwater & Carmeli, 2009). However, to test it statistically, Harman's single-factor analysis (Shkoler & Tziner, 2017) was also performed. All the manifested variables were constraint to unrotated one single factor using exploratory factor analysis (EFA), exhibiting a variance of 13.65%, which was lower than 50% total variance of the scale, thereby reflecting the absence of CMB.

5.3 | Exploratory factor analysis

For having scientifically justified model, suggested by Cautin and Lilienfeld (2015), EFA was applied employing Maximum Likelihood as extraction method based on eigenvalues greater than one (Fabrigar, Wegener, MacCallum, & Strahan, 1999). Maximum Likelihood helped to locate distinct discrepancies among items, while offering goodness of fit test for factor solution (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). Varimax method of orthogonal rotation was employed to extract the factors. Prior to the extraction of factors, the suitability of EFA was analyzed by assessing the values of "Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity." Results reveal the value of KMO (.850), which is more than the cut-off value of .6 (Kaiser & Rice, 1974), is significant at

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0.01 level of confidence interval. Further, the results of EFA showed that all the variables have standardized factor loading exceeding 0.5 (Guadagnoli & Velicer, 1988). The results of EFA rendered 11 distinct factors namely "compensation benefit," "flexible work practices," "reward and recognition," "career development," "feedback seeking behavior," "volunteering work," "digital innovation," "digital orientation," "job satisfaction," "task performance," and "affective organizational commitment." Moreover, these 11 factors explain 69.85% of variance, which happens to be more than the minimum acceptable critical value (Osborne, 2008).

5.4 | Confirmatory factor analysis

The two-step method given by Anderson and Gerbing (1988) was followed to test the proposed hypothesized relationships. The assessment of a measurement model for reliability and validity (convergent and discriminant) was done by using EFA and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). Model 1 (refer table 2) was retained as it denoted significantly higher values(CMIN = 1,616.911, DF = 1,072, minimum discrepancy per degree of freedom (CMIN/DF) = 1.508 ≤ 3 (Hair, Sarstedt, Ringle, & Mena, 2012); AGFI = .862 ≥ .8; (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 1998); GFI = .880 ≥ .8 (Baumgartner & Homburg, 1996); CFI = .957 ≥ 0.9 (Hair Jr, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2016); RMSEA = .032 ≤ .08; root mean square residual = .052 (Steiger, 1990), than its other competing models (model 2-model 10).

The reliability of the factors is estimated by Cronbach's alpha (Cronbach, 1951) and its validity is established using Gaskin's validity toolkit estimates. Results of the Table 3 indicate high internal consistency, as the coefficient of composite reliability (CR) is more than the critical value of 0.7, for each unobserved variable (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1967). The value of comparative fit index (CFI) is 0.957, which happens to be more than 0.90, thereby reflecting unidimensionality in the scale given by Byrne (2010). In addition, the value of AVE (Average Variance Extracted) for all the constructs is more than 0.5, and the standardized factor loading for all the items also exceeds 0.5. As per Fornell and Larcker (1981), for having convergent validity the value of CR should be more than 0.7; AVE should exceed 0.5 and CR should be more than AVE. Therefore, following the same lines, the proposed measurement model supports and confirms the presence of convergent validity (Aggarwal, Goyal, & Nobi, 2018; Singh, Chand, Mittal, & Aggarwal, 2020).

Thereafter, the discriminant validity was checked by two methods, based on cut-off value of 0.85 (Kline, 2015) and the square root of AVE (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The results of the measurement model meet both of these criteria, supporting the discriminant validity (Table 4).

TABLE 2 Model comparison

Model	Description	$\chi 2$	*df*	$\chi 2/df$	RMSEA	CFI	GFI	$\Delta\chi 2$ from model 1	Δdf
Model 1	Hypothesized	1,616.91	1,072	1.508	0.32	.957	.880	—	—
Model 2	Ten factor[a]	3,115.84	1,082	2.880	0.62	.839	.771	1,498.93**	10
Model 3	Nine Factor[b]	4,518.77	1,091	4.142	.080	.729	.670	2,901.86**	19
Model 4	Eight Factor[c]	5,554.59	1,099	5.054	.091	.648	.590	3,937.68**	27
Model 5	Seven Factor[d]	6,646.34	1,106	6.009	.101	.563	.539	5,029.43**	34
Model 6	Six Factor[e]	4,938.76	1,112	4.441	.084	.698	.675	3,321.85**	40
Model 7	Five Factor[f]	6,419.01	1,117	5.747	.098	.581	.606	4,802.10**	45
Model 8	Four Factor[g]	7,443.28	1,121	6.640	.107	.501	.546	5,826.37**	49
Model 9	Three Factor[h]	8,700.28	1,124	7.740	.117	.402	.505	7,083.37**	52
Model 10	Two Factor[i]	9,927.06	1,126	8.816	.126	.305	.451	8,310.15**	54

[a]Ten factor: digital innovation and digital orientation combined.
[b]Nine factor: digital innovation and digital orientation combined; task performance, and affective commitment combined.
[c]Eight factor: digital innovation and digital orientation combined; task performance, affective commitment, and job satisfaction combined.
[d]Seven factor: digital innovation, digital orientation, task performance, affective commitment, and job satisfaction combined.
[e]Six factor: compensation benefit, flexible workplace practices, reward and recognition, career development, feedback seeking behavior, volunteering work combined.
[f]Five factor: compensation benefit, flexible workplace practices, reward and recognition, career development, feedback seeking behavior, volunteering work combined; digital innovation and digital orientation combined.
[g]Four factor: compensation benefit, flexible workplace practices, reward and recognition, career development, feedback seeking behavior, volunteering work, digital innovation, and digital orientation combined.
[h]Three Factor: compensation benefit, flexible workplace practices, reward and recognition, career development, feedback seeking behavior, volunteering work, digital innovation, digital orientation, and job satisfaction combined.
[i]Two Factor: compensation benefit, flexible workplace practices, reward and recognition, career development, feedback seeking behavior, volunteering work, digital innovation, and digital orientation combined; job satisfaction, task performance, and affective commitment combined.
Note: ** $p < .01$.

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TABLE 3 Measurement model

Construct	Operationalization		$x\bar{c}$	σ	λ	CR	AVE	Source
Compensation and benefit	CB1	My organization rewards adequately for realizing measurable goals	4.05	1.04	.84	.84	.58	Berger and Berger (2011).
	CB2	My organization keeps group incentives that are clear and simple.	3.69	0.87	.75			
	CB3	My organization communicates clearly the compensation and benefits to me.	3.90	0.95	.73			
	CB4	My salary matches up with my job opportunities	4.01	1.00	.71			
Flexible work practices	FWP1	I believe that this employer offers me the possibility to flexibly arrange my working schedule	2.96	1.255	.78	.84	.58	Kröll et al. (2018)
	FWP2	I believe that this employer offers me the possibility to execute my work outside the office	3.12	1.21	.78			
	FWP3	I believe that this employer offers me the possibility to take a lengthy, paid break during my working life	3.16	1.26	.69			
	FWP4	I believe that this employer offers me to flexibly arrange my working schedules	3.24	1.27	.78			
Reward and recognition	RR1	A pay raise	3.28	1.10	.69	.88	.56	Saks (2006)
	RR2	A promotion	3.90	0.96	.82			
	RR3	Respect from the people you work with	3.87	0.91	.85			
	RR4	Praise from your supervisor	3.64	0.96	.72			
	RR5	Some form of public recognition (e.g., employee of the month).	3.72	1.02	.78			
	RR6	A reward or token of appreciation (e.g., lunch).	3.26	1.09	.63			
Career development	CD1	My organization encourages employees to broaden their skills.	3.57	1.24	.83	.83	.71	Wong et al. (2017)
	CD2	My organization gives employees the opportunity to perform very different activities.	3.48	1.24	.85			
Feedback seeking behavior	FSB1	Ask your direct supervisor for feedback	3.11	1.21	.79	.88	.72	Sparr et al. (2017)
	FSB2	Ask a colleague for feedback	3.30	1.18	.89			
	FSB3	Ask someone outside your firm for feedback	3.38	1.23	.86			
Volunteering work	VW1	My volunteer activities are personally meaningful to me.	3.75	1.26	.75	.81	.59	Carlson et al. (2000)
	VW2	The volunteer work I do is very important to me	3.57	1.09	.73			
	VW3	I enjoy the responsibility	3.71	1.08	.81			
Digital innovation	DI1	The quality of our digital solutions is superior compared to our competitors'	3.24	1.03	.71	.86	.51	Paladino (2007)
	DI2	The features of our digital solutions are superior compared to our competitors'	3.19	1.04	.61			
	DI3	The applications of our digital solutions are totally different from our competitors'	3.27	1.04	.67			
	DI4	Our digital solutions are different from our competitors' in terms of product platform	3.41	1.23	.73			
	DI5	Our new digital solutions are minor improvements of existing products	3.38	1.23	.82			
	DI6	Some of our digital solutions are new to the market at the time of launching	3.41	1.29	.75			

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TABLE 3 (Continued)

Construct	Operationalization		$x\bar{c}$	σ	λ	CR	AVE	Source
Digital orientation	DO1	We are committed to use digital technologies in developing our new solutions	4.09	1.03	.89	.92	.75	Zhou et al. (2005)
	DO2	Our solutions have superior digital technology	3.94	1.07	.85			
	DO3	New digital technology is readily accepted in our organization	4.05	1.06	.85			
	DO4	We always look out for opportunities to use digital technology in our innovation	3.94	1.05	.87			
Job satisfaction	JS1	I would choose my current job again.	3.64	1.05	.79	.88	.65	Morris and Venkatesh (2010)
	JS2	I would recommend my organization as a good place to work.	3.65	1.03	.88			
	JS3	I am satisfied about the modality through which I conduct my job.	3.72	1.06	.88			
	JS4	My current job modalities allow me to valorize my points of strength/weakness.	3.45	1.02	.66			
Task performance	TP1	Adequately completes assigned duties	3.20	1.09	.67	.89	.61	Methot et al. (2016))
	TP2	Fulfills responsibilities specified in his/her job description	3.24	1.09	.82			
	TP3	Performs tasks that are expected	3.18	1.07	.85			
	TP4	Meets formal performance requirements of the job	3.22	1.09	.84			
	TP5	Engages in activities that will directly affect his/her performance evaluations	3.08	1.08	.72			
Affective organizational commitment	AC1	I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization	3.16	1.22	.71	.91	.56	Allen and Meyer (1996)
	AC2	I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it	3.06	1.20	.74			
	AC3	I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own	2.87	1.22	.82			
	AC4	I think that I could easily become as attached to another organization as I am to this one	2.42	1.21	.77			
	AC5	I do not feel like "part of the family" at my organization	2.50	1.20	.79			
	AC6	I do not feel' emotionally attached' to this organization	3.17	1.12	.56			
	AC7	This organization has great deal of personal meaning for me	2.88	1.21	.76			
	AC8	I do not feel a strong sense of belong to my organization.	2.82	1.25	.80			

Note: $x\bar{c}$ = Mean; σ = standard Deviation; λ = standardized factor loadings; CR = composite reliability; AVE = average variance extracted.

5.5 | Structural model

The proposed hypothesized relationships were evaluated using structural equation modeling technique (SEM). Before, performing the SEM, we ran the proposed structural model in reverse order to handle the issue of endogeneity. The values of model fit for reverse order model showed poor fit (CMIN = 332.271, DF = 37, CMIN/DF = 8.980; adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) = .771; goodness of fit index (GFI) = .872; CFI = .608; root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .127) as compare to proposed hypothesized structural model (CMIN = 309.497, DF = 87, CMIN/DF = 3.557; AGFI = .880; GFI = .923; CFI = .908; RMSEA = .072). Considering model fit indices, the structural model had an acceptable fit.

Given the good model fit, study can further proceed to hypothesis testing. The implications mentioned in the next section depicts that 9 out of 11 hypotheses were supported. In particular, H1 (compensation and benefits have positive impact on job satisfaction), H2 (flexible work practices has positive impact on job satisfaction), H3 (rewards and recognition have positive impact on job satisfaction), H5 (feedback seeking behavior has positive impact on job satisfaction), H6 (multi-technology solutions has positive impact on job satisfaction), H7b (digital orientation has positive impact on job satisfaction), H8

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TABLE 4 Descriptive and discriminant validity

Factor	M	*SD*	TP	CB	FWP	RNR	CD	CF	VWS	DI	JS	DO	AC
TP	3.18	0.90	**0.78**										
CB	3.91	0.80	0.15	**0.76**									
FWP	3.12	1.03	0.00	0.15	**0.76**								
RNR	3.61	0.80	0.22	0.17	0.11	**0.75**							
CD	3.52	1.14	0.05	0.16	0.09	0.17	**0.84**						
CF	3.26	1.08	0.34	0.20	−0.10	0.12	0.23	**0.85**					
VWS	3.67	0.97	0.08	0.11	−0.04	0.01	0.11	0.21	**0.77**				
DI	3.32	0.88	−0.03	0.10	0.11	0.09	0.05	0.04	−0.01	**0.71**			
JS	3.61	0.89	0.60	0.22	0.17	0.19	0.13	0.24	0.19	0.07	**0.81**		
DO	4.01	0.95	0.05	0.22	0.18	0.13	0.14	0.04	0.15	0.12	0.21	**0.86**	
AC	2.86	0.94	0.24	0.10	0.16	0.08	0.15	0.15	0.09	−0.01	0.24	0.23	**0.75**

Abbreviations: AOC, affective organizational commitment; CB, compensation benefit; CD, career development; DI, digital innovation; DO, digital orientation; FSB, feedback seeking behavior; FWP, flexible work practices; JS, job satisfaction; M, mean; RR, reward and recognition; *SD*, standard deviation; TP, task performance; VW, volunteering work.
Note: Bold off-diagonal value represents the square root of AVE.

TABLE 5 Structural relationship

	Relationship	Estimate	S.E.	*t*-value	*p*-value	Decision
H1	JS ← CB	0.105	0.05	2.459	.014*	Accepted
H2	JS ← FWP	0.169	0.035	4.076	***	Accepted
H3	JS ← RNR	0.124	0.049	2.991	.003**	Accepted
H4	JS ← CD	−0.009	0.034	−0.207	.836	Not accepted
H5	JS ← CF	0.219	0.034	4.983	***	Accepted
H6	JS ← VWS	0.134	0.041	3.154	.002**	Accepted
H7a	JS ← DI	0.008	0.047	0.186	.852	Not accepted
H7b	JS ← DO	0.124	0.038	2.918	.004**	Accepted
H8	TP ← JS	0.605	0.029	18.682	***	Accepted
H9	AC ← JS	0.251	0.054	5.811	***	Accepted

Note: Source: Author's Compilation.
Note: *** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$; Standardize Regression Weight.

(job satisfaction has positive impact on task performance), and H9 (job satisfaction has positive impact on affective organizational commitment). However, H4 (career development has no significant impact on job satisfaction) and H7a (digital innovation has no significant impact on job satisfaction) (Table 5).

The implications mentioned in the next section evaluates the mediating role of job satisfaction on the proposed relationships, a bootstrapping technique with bias-corrected confidence interval at 95% confidence level with resampling at 2,000 was deployed (Table 6). The results of Table 6 show that job satisfaction does not mediate the relationship between career development and task performance. Similarly, job satisfaction does not mediate the relationship between career development and affective organizational commitment. Further, job satisfaction does not mediate the relationship between digital innovation and task performance. A similar type of result was observed for the relationship between digital innovation and affective organizational commitment. For rest of the proposed relationships, job satisfaction acts as a mediator.

Results of the multi-group moderation analysis (Table 7) shows that the effect of compensation benefits, flexible work practices, reward and recognition, career development, and volunteering work on job satisfaction is higher for females as compared to males. Contrary to this, the effect of feedback-seeking behavior, digital innovation, and digital orientation on job satisfaction is higher for males as compared to females. The effect of job satisfaction on task performance is higher for males as compared to females. Whereas, the effect of job satisfaction on affective commitment is higher for females as compared to males. However, the results of the moderation analysis revealed no significant difference in the effect score of males and females.

6 | DISCUSSION

The study is the first of its kind to examine the reflection of two theories namely attraction-selection-attrition, and self-determination

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TABLE 6 Moderation effect

Relationship	Male		Female		
	Estimate	*p*-value	Estimate	*p*-value	z-score
Job satisfaction ← Compensation benefit	0.053	.447	0.205	.002	1.586
Job satisfaction ← Flexible workplace	0.100	.054	0.185	.000	1.214
Job satisfaction ← Reward and recognition	0.124	.090	0.176	.006	0.530
Job satisfaction ← Career development	−0.023	.615	0.024	.604	0.723
Job satisfaction ← Constant feedback	0.177	.000	0.161	.000	−0.241
Job satisfaction ← Volunteer work satisfaction	0.089	.124	0.183	.000	1.177
Job satisfaction ← Digital innovation	−0.023	.736	0.022	.723	0.488
Job satisfaction ← Digital orientation	0.175	.001	0.038	.442	−1.903*
Task performance ← Job satisfaction	0.589	.000	0.556	.000	−0.530
Affective commitment ← Job satisfaction	0.290	.000	0.346	.000	0.511

Note: *** *p*-value <.01; ** *p*-value <.05; * *p*-value <.10.

TABLE 7 Mediation analysis

Relationship	Indirect effect	p-value	Decision
CB → JS → TP	.063	.019	Mediation
CB → JS → AC	.026	.014	Mediation
FWP → JS → TP	.102	.001	Mediation
FWP → JS → AC	.042	.001	Mediation
RNR → JS → TP	.075	.022	Mediation
RNR → JS → AC	.031	.015	Mediation
CD → JS → TP	−.005	.890	No mediation
CD → JS → AC	−.002	.882	No mediation
CF → JS → TP	.132	.001	Mediation
CF → JS → AC	.055	.001	Mediation
VWS → JS → TP	.081	.004	Mediation
VWS → JS → AC	.034	.003	Mediation
DI → JS → TP	.005	.847	No mediation
DI → JS → AC	.002	.841	No mediation
DO → JS → TP	.075	.024	Mediation
DO → JS → AC	.031	.021	Mediation

theory, as a new avenue for influencing employees of Generation Z toward job satisfaction. The goal was underpinned by the need to enhance the understanding of work perceptions of Generation Z, as they have just begun to enter the workforce in mass numbers. Indeed, Generation Z is an under-researched workforce that can leverage business performance, as evidenced by the scarcity of papers produced on online research platforms search on "Generation Z" and "HR Policies and Practices." The scarcity of the research is also a contention that is in line, stated by Iorgulescu (2016) for greater research on the perception of work and career expectations of Generation Z. Thus, this paper, answers her call and sheds new light on Generation Z and their relationship with HR policies and practices for enhancement of job satisfaction, task performance, and affective organizational commitment.

6.1 | Theoretical implications

In particular, the present study has contributed to advance previous research by offering three key takeaways for theory.

First, the paper offers pioneer insights into the HR practices and policies for Generation Z especially, to influence job satisfaction, task performance, and affective organizational commitment. The paper by MC Iorgulescu (2016) explored the set of expectations of students of Generation Z. However, the study was restricted to future expectations of Generation Z. Thus, the present paper extends this work, by accentuating the relationship from an employee perspective. This research, therefore, unfolds the reality, making it extremely relevant and useful for academicians and practitioners, who are keen to understand the factors that influence Generation Z at the workplace to attain the desired organizational goals. Second, the findings of the research provide a fresh perspective of perceptions and responses of Generation Z employees, based on HR policies and practices that can be replicated for future research. Moreover, the paper also revealed an interesting finding, theoretically and empirically that job satisfaction of Generation Z has a significant impact on both task performance and affective organizational commitment. This revelation is crucial as it guides future research to more accurately encapsulate the relationship between job satisfaction, performance, and commitment. The significant findings of the paper state that the flexible work practices, reward and recognition, compensation and benefits, feedback-seeking behavior, digital orientation, and volunteering work positively influence Generation Z employees toward job satisfaction. However, career development opportunities and digital innovation did not produce any significant direct effect on Generation Z toward job satisfaction. This finding reflects that probably Generation Z has limited years of experience, as they are in presently in the exploration stage of career development, which might gain momentum in the establishment phase (Low, Bordia, & Bordia, 2016).

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6.2 | Managerial implications

The paper encompasses an amalgam of HR practices and policies especially for Generation Z to achieve organizational goals and also the means to attract, motivate, and retain them. Most of the studies done in the past have used a handful of facets, while this paper takes a fulfilling approach to explore various facets of the workplace to enhance task performance, affective organizational commitment driven by job satisfaction of Generation Z employees.

Considering the feedback-seeking behavior, the findings indicates that HR managers must provide Generation Z employees, with a sufficient amount of feedback, related to adequacies and inadequacies in work behavior and the final outcome. More specifically, as the feedback can be both positive as well as negative. The level of trust between the employees and the supervisor that enables the employees to seek negative feedback about their work, in a comfortable manner. In addition, HR managers need to correlate the significance of feedback-seeking behavior, not only with work performance but also with cohesive team dynamics and the collective outcome.

In addition, the findings imply that flexible work practices must be provided at the workplace in order to garner favorable attitudes among Generation Z employees leading to task performance and affective organizational commitment. Flexible norms at the workplace have a positive impact on job satisfaction and work effectiveness. Individually negotiated employment arrangements are another form of flexible work practice that is adopted by various organizations. By providing the freedom to employees by offering flexibility and focusing on results rather than the time spent can instill trust and empower them, leading to an increase in retention rates, work efficiency, job satisfaction, and commitment. The findings also indicate that there is a lucid benefit of having a reward and recognition system for Gen Z employees, as they like to feel appreciated. Many Gen Z employees are feeling dissatisfied and unappreciated at work, which is a major reason for them to quit their current organization. Recognition programs, profit-sharing schemes, stock options, and many other ways should be employed especially for Gen Z employees, as they are Gen Z employees are attracted to the companies that recognize their efforts and skills. They do not just sign up for the paycheck, as they look forward to occasions where they are getting social recognition, which boosts their morale and provides them personal fulfillment.

In addition to this, the results show that HR managers must pay significant attention to the package offerings in terms of compensation and benefit to attract, motivate, and retain Generation Z employees. The salary package and benefits determine job satisfaction of the employee leading to organizational performance (Kabak et al., 2014). In doing so, organizations can attract prospective employees, as well as retain the current employees (Adeoye & Fields, 2014). While salary matters to Gen Z a lot, however, there are many other factors related to the workplace environment that matters even more than compensation and benefits. The result manifested that the HR policies and practices must provide freedom to Generation Z for volunteering work. The findings support the positive impact of volunteering work on job satisfaction for developing the psychological connections between the organizations and the employees. Moreover, volunteering has got a positive influence on behavioral outcomes (Breitsohl & Ehrig, 2017; Rodell, Breitsohl, Schröder, & Keating, 2016). By giving them a sense of freedom and a pool of opportunities to pursue their personal projects such as volunteering services can enhance their job satisfaction leading to better work productivity.

In addition, the results of the mediation analysis show that the effects of job satisfaction are salient with task performance and affective organizational commitment. By enhancing job satisfaction employers can drive greater productivity and can retain this evolving workforce who seems to have the blend of "high tech" and "high touch." The moderation analysis reveals an interesting finding, that there is no much difference in the expectations of male and female Gen Z employees. However, for Gen Z female employees, enhanced job satisfaction leads to affective organizational commitment, whereas for Gen Z male employees, job satisfaction drives task performance.

Finally, this paper suggests that offering high salary only is now an old way to attract potential employees (Morgan, 2014). Considering Generation Z's work aspirations, it is important to look for other factors that influence the employees to perform and stay for a longer duration. The study took a multi-perspective approach to analyze how HR managers and employers re-imagine the future of work and can stay ahead of the game by providing Generation Z with a work culture that they are looking for. It is absolutely clear that now nine to five workplace practices are obsolete and it will not attract this digital Generation Z workforce.

7 | LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Though findings provide several implications based on the model derived, it has some limitations, which inevitably open doors to further research. First, the paper incorporates cross-sectional data to validate the integrated model having respondents from India. Longitudinal studies can be undertaken in the upcoming years to further explore the change patterns, reciprocal relationships, and also the casual direction (Williams & Podsakoff, 1989). Future research can build upon the findings revealed on a multi-sample, including intergenerational and intergenerational respondents, to distinguish the similarities and differences in the perceptions within Generation Z and other generation cohorts. The study on multiple contexts across various regions of Asia, Europe, America, and Oceania can also be conducted for cross-sample comparison, while considering other forms of regression-based analysis to more appropriately achieve this goal. Second, the study can employ association rule mining to find patterns within data and relevant association between different variables. This data mining technique can help to identify patterns more effectively related to workplace variables such as work productivity, and employees' workplace preferences (Gupta, Reznik Nadia, Sipahi, Teston, & Fantaw, 2020). Finally, the research used a quantitative

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method for analyzing the data; future research can incorporate both quantitative as well as qualitative research for getting better insights. Qualitative research can help HR managers to understand the relationship between workplace practices and organizational performances (de Haan, 2019).

8 | CONCLUSION

In summary, the paper delivers thought-provoking results in providing seminal insights into the HR policies and practices that influence Generation Z for driving job satisfaction, thereby leading to task performance and affective organizational commitment. The study is a first of its kind to empirically validate the integration of flexible work practices, reward and recognition, compensation and benefits, feedback-seeking behavior, and volunteering work at workplaces for meeting organizational objectives. To avoid high rates of turnover, it is extremely important for employers to meet expectations of Generation Z by redrafting HR policies, so that they resonate closely with Generation Z. In light of the above, the study has opened a window of discussion, which would lead to an academic debate on the role of HR practices and policies for driving work performance, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. Motivating and empowering Generation Z employees requires deconstruction of the traditional workplace model and making a tectonic shift to embrace the change for meeting the desired organizational goals.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Arun Aggarwal has done the formal analysis and written the interpretation and discussion section; Priyanka Sadhna has conceptualized the topic and written the introduction section; Sahil Gupta has written the Theoretical background section; Amit Mittal has written the implication section; Sanjay Rastogi has written the research methodology section.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Data can be provided to a qualified researcher on their formal request.

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Summary: With providing the context of employers' interest in Generation Z due to the shortage of workers in the labor market, the research was conducted to find out what are the expectations and requirements of Generation Z toward the level of remuneration. The author has pointed out that traditional practices used in recruiting do not bring out an expected result when applied to recruiting Generation Z. Along with researching Generation Z's expectations on salary, the study expects to find the answer to the hypothesis "education and place of residence significantly differentiate expectations and requirements s of Generation Z towards the level of salary". The result of implementing the survey questionnaire determines attractive remuneration to be the key expectation regarding employment of Generation Z. The education and place of residence factors significantly draw out different results in a level of remuneration by Generation Z's expectation.

Relevance: The article surrounded the study of Generation Z, which is relevant to the topic by knowing the attractive salary offered by the company is the expectation of Generation Z. This is helpful to understand the factor of salary characteristic of Generation Z in the context when more of this generation enter the workforce.

Place in the paper: Literature review

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Expectations and Requirements of Generation Z towards Salary

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Abstract:

Purpose: *The aim of the study was to identify, analyze and diagnose the expectations and requirements of generation Z towards the level of remuneration.*
Design/Methodology/Approach: *In order to verify the thesis and answer the research questions, the method of literature analysis and criticism, the method of diagnostic survey and statistical methods were used. The study was based on a survey questionnaire, based on the opinions of 2234 people from generation Z. Random sampling was used. Relationships between variables were examined using the chi-square test. Column proportion tests were used to determine significant differences in responses between individuals with different education and place of residence. A value of 0.05 was used as the level of significance.*
Findings: *Conducted empirical exploration indicates that the level of expectations and requirements regarding the level of remuneration of generation Z should be consered above average. More than one third of respondents from generation Z have expectations above the national average gross salary in Poland in the enterprise sector, despite the fact that they have just started their professional career.*
Practical Implications: *The practical business implications are primarily concerned with the use of research findings in the selection process for Generation Z organizations.*
Originality/value: *It turned out that education and place of residence significantly differentiate the expectations and requirements of generation Z towards the salary level.*

Keywords: *Generation Z, salary, expectations, requirements.*

JEL classification: *J24, M12.*

Paper Type: *Research study.*
Acknowledgement: *The authors would like to thank all the participants in this study.*

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1. Introduction

An analysis of the literature on Generation Z has shown that there has been some change in their expectations of work/service and employer, including remuneration. This is due to the fact that generational affiliation has a significant impact on the approach to work, the way of motivation, communication styles, the level of competence, work experience, the ability to use technology, as well as the formation of their own professional and life goals and ways to achieve them (Rogozinska-Pawełczyk, 2014). Generation Z, born after 1990 and before 2000 (Lain-Kennedy, 2007; Żarczyńska-Dobiesz and Chomątowska, 2014; Hardey, 2011; Zydel 2010; Reszko, 2015), is a digital generation and represents a great capital for modern organizations, especially in view of the ongoing fourth industrial revolution (Industry 4.0). It has many advantages that are at the center of characteristics desired in any organization, such as multitasking and creativity.

Employers' interest in generation Z is also due to the huge shortage of workers in the labor market (International Labour Organization, 2021; Manpower Group, 2018; Manpower Group, 2021). The struggle for a generation Z employee forces everyone, to act non-standard in the selection of personnel. Especially since, as research confirms, traditional practices used in the process of recruiting an employee to work, their evaluation or motivation, do not bring the expected results in the case of the youngest generation (Rynkiewicz, 2014). Often employers attempt to recruit Generation Z employees by offering them higher salaries. However, there is a lack of research indicating what are the expectations and requirements of generation Z in this regard.

The diagnosed knowledge gap in this area is due to the fact that generation Z is just entering the labor market. In response to this demand, the research described in this paper was undertaken. The conducted empirical exploration was aimed at finding an answer to the research problem, which took the form of the question, what are the expectations and requirements of generation Z towards the level of remuneration? A hypothesis was formulated based on the statement that "education and place of residence significantly differentiate expectations and requirements of generation Z towards the level of salary". Expectations and requirements were understood in this study, according to the definition contained in the PWN Dictionary of Polish Language. Expectations are assumptions, hopes and desires, while requirements are a set of conditions that someone or something must meet (Słownik języka polskiego, 2002).

2. Characteristics of Generation Z and their Expectations and Requirements Regarding Remuneration - A Literature Review

Conducted research on the expectations and requirements of generation Z towards the level of remuneration required a characterization of this generation. In light of the subject literature, it was found that:

- They are not afraid of constant changes, having a lot of information from the world of the Internet, which is often the main or even the only source of finding solutions to the problems that have arisen (Rusak, 2013).
- They treat Internet access as a window to the world, which provides unlimited access to information and contact with peers, especially through social media (Wziątek-Staśko, 2015).
- They acquire information about competitors, the company's environment, and other information about market behavior or hiring processes from the web much more easily and quickly (Kotarbinski, 2015).
- They have better knowledge of foreign languages and new technologies than other generations. They also seem to be more resistant to stress and better organized.
- They are not afraid of risk and do not think in a schematic way, they learn quickly and make new friends (there are no cultural and geographical borders for them). - -
- They are characterized by great directness and conviction that the world belongs to the brave. By the realities created in the labor market, they are wildly determined and have a realistic and materialistic attitude to life (Rosa, 2013).
- They are more demanding than representatives of previous generations. They have no problem looking for new employment, hiring across the country or taking advantage of the international labor market (Wawer, 2013).

The researchers selected the advantages and disadvantages of generation Z. These are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. *Advantages and disadvantages of Generation Z*

Advantages	**Disadvantages**
Knowledge of foreign languages, good aptitude for working in an international environment, openness to change, social-emotional intelligence.	Impatience and lack of ability to cooperate, immaturity, and entitlement.
Self-confidence, independence, self-reliance, and individualism.	The conviction of infallibility, selfishness, overestimation of one's own abilities, ill-tempered criticism.
The ability to search for and select the most valuable information, they feel comfortable in the world of new technologies and virtual contact.	Superficial analysis of information and problems with verbal communication.
The desire to learn and grow, unlimited access to education, ambition.	No professional experience.
Versatility and multitasking.	Cunning and Internet Addiction.

Source: *Own elaboration based on (Berkup, 2014; McCrindle, 2014; Wziątek-Staśko, 2015; Żarczyńska-Dobiesz, Chomątowska 2014).*

It turns out that representatives of Generation Z are a diverse and internally divided group. It is a generation in which many different characteristics, aspirations and attitudes intersect (Euromonitor International, 2011; Happen Group, 2014). It is not uncommon to see contradictory characteristics in their case. These are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. *Conflicting characteristics of Generation Z.*

Features	Description	Extreme contradictions
They are very adept at using technology to communicate.	Unlimited communication with the world (modern technology), creating an online area 24/7 on all possible communicators.	Prefer electronic communication more than traditional communication. Low quality communication that is based on acronyms and symbols.
The Internet is the primary and most important source of information in every area of life.	They want to know everything immediately. They get a lot of information from the Internet and trust it blindly. At the same time, they make a superficial assessment of the content of this information. They think they know everything.	Low competence in analyzing and evaluating the reliability of acquired content.
They live and thrive in a virtual world filled with new technology.	A generation born into a digital world without boundaries or limitations. They cannot accept that the world around them is not governed by the same laws.	Through modern technology, often isolated from the problems of the real world and people.
A generation of singletons, loners, and individualists.	The "we" generation. Open to problems in the real world provided they experience them on phone, computer or tablet screens. Raised socially by games and social media. They don't really know what they have to fight for and against whom.	They are sensitive to the problems of the modern world. They are characterized by openness and pro-sociality.
Able to multi-task at one time.	The computerized world has prepared them to accomplish several tasks in parallel. Unfortunately, the way they approach and complete the task is generally shallow. Shifting their attention from task to task hinders their thinking, causes trouble concentrating and impairs them cognitively.	Susceptible to all sorts of distractions, they have trouble concentrating and completing tasks on time.
They want to contribute and be important. They are success and promotion oriented. Challenges are important to them.	They see no reason to cling to the logic of previous generations (analog vs. digital world). They value good organization and speed over diligence and reliability. Cunning is more important than intelligence and education. There is no sowing, cultivating, or tending - they get straight down to harvesting.	They are not willing to sacrifice work at the expense of personal comfort. They are low-energy and often lazy. They are strangers to the traditional work ethic. They don't know the reasons to be courteous, punctual and tactful.
Convinced that respect is naturally due to them. Have a strong need for recognition from others.	They know what respect is and what power it has - they are sensitive to its lack towards themselves. Towards others - age, position or seniority is not the same as obligatory showing of respect.	Restrained in showing respect - they judge for themselves whether someone deserves it.

They are developed beyond their age because they have grown up too fast.	Overprotective, yet often absent parents (technological advances and career drives) meant that they had to grow up quickly. Unfortunately, biological development often did not go hand in hand with emotional development. They are poorly prepared to face real and serious problems.	In the full biological-emotional construct, they never really grew up.
They are characterized by courage, independence and self-confidence as well as claiming.	From an early age, parents watch over them and control every stage of their lives (overprotectiveness). They are told that they can have anything they want because they are one of a kind. Unfortunately, when confronted with reality, they often need people with more professional and life experience.	They have a need for support, protection and safety.

Source: *Own elaboration based on (Zydel, 2010, s. 65; Bruzzese, 2013; Carr, 2013; Rymszewicz, 2015; Żarczyńska-Dobiesz, Chomątowska, 2014).*

Salary is important to generation Z (Moczydlowska, 2016). Of course, it is also important to other generations (Employer Brand Research 2019). However, generation Z gives it great importance. This is indicated by numerous research results (Żarczyńska-Dobiesz and Chomątowska, 2014). Remuneration is a key factor of motivation for generation Z (Żarczyńska-Dobiesz and Chomątowska, 2014; Fazlagić, 2008). Besides, generation Z expects an equitable link between work performance and the level of remuneration received (Borges *et al.*, 2010). Wants to be paid a salary commensurate with their competence. They expect to be respected, given a chance to develop and to be taken seriously. They have courage as well as self-confidence. They want to have and achieve everything immediately (Żarczyńska-Dobiesz and Chomątowska, 2014).

According to an international study conducted on more than 20,000 representatives of generation Z (including more than 1,000 from Poland), the most expected aspects of their employment are attractive salary and benefits (66% of respondents) (Employer Brand Research, 2019). A review of the literature on expectations and requirements of generation Z with regard to remuneration leads to the conclusion that it is a key factor for them.

3. Materials and Methods

In order to verify the thesis and answer the research questions, the method of literature analysis and criticism, the method of diagnostic survey and statistical methods were used. A quantitative-qualitative study was conducted in Lower Silesia, based on a questionnaire survey, among 2234 people from generation Z. 81% of them were still students. 8% were students. The structure of the respondents in terms of education was as follows, 5% had basic education, 5% had secondary education, and 1% had higher education. 91% were not working. Some of them already had work experience, although 64% had never worked before. 60% of the

respondents lived in medium cities (20-100 thousand), 22% in rural areas, 11% in small cities (less than 20 thousand), and 6% in large cities (more than 200 thousand).

Random sampling of the research sample was used. Twenty-three of the 28 authorities (counties) were drawn using statistical software, and as part of the 2019 military qualification, questionnaires were distributed for completion through the Military Complementary Headquarters to representatives of Generation Z who showed up to fulfill their statutory obligation. The respondents were asked to specify their current expectations and requirements for remuneration (gross in PLN). The respondents answered by indicating the salary ranges they were interested in, i.e., 2500-3000 -3001-3500 -3501-4500 -4501-5500 -5501-6500 -above 6501 The statistically significant relationships between the respondents' expectations and requirements for salary (gross in PLN) and place of residence and education were examined using the chi-square test.

In order to conclude that the variable "salary expectations and requirements" and the variable "place of residence" are not independent it was checked which rows and columns cause such a relationship. In the column ratio test table, each category of variable in a column is assigned a letter key. In the case of the variable "salary expectations and requirements" the categories: 2500-3000 PLN, 3001-3500 PLN, 3501-4500 PLN, 4501-5500 PLN, 5501-6500 PLN above 6501 PLN were assigned consecutive letters A, B, C, D, E, F. For each pair of columns, column proportions were compared using the chi-square test. Six sets of column proportion tests were performed, one for each level of the variable. Since there were 6 levels of this variable in each set of tests, (6*4)/2 = 12 pairs of columns were compared, using Bonferroni corrections to adjust for significance values. For each significant pair, the key of the category with the smaller proportion was placed under the category with the larger proportion. This allowed us to conclude that e.g., the proportion of people residing in a medium city with salary expectations and requirements above PLN 6500 is significantly higher than the proportion of people with such salary expectations and requirements "residing in a small city". The significance level was assumed to be 0.05 (sign * $p<0.05$). Calculations were performed using the statistical program R ver. 3.6.0, and IBM SPSS Statistics version 21.

4. Expectations and Demands of Generation Z towards Salary - Results of Empirical Research

Attractive salary turned out to be the most important expectation towards work and employer of generation Z. 35% of respondents expect remuneration of more than PLN 6500 gross, 17% at the level of PLN 5501-6500 gross, 22% at the level of PLN 3501-4500 gross (Table 3). Conducted research indicates that generation Z has quite high expectations regarding remuneration, especially in relation to the national average salary in Poland as of July 19, 2021 in the enterprise sector, amounting to PLN 5775.25 gross . At the same time, it should be emphasized that generation Z is just starting its professional career, and more than one third of them have higher

salary expectations than the national average. It was decided to identify the expectations of respondents from generation Z, taking into account the criterion of education and place of residence.

Table 3. *Generation Z's expectations and requirements for salary (N=2234).*

Expected salary (PLN)	All	
	Numbers	% of N in column
2500–3000	20	1
3001–3500	176	8
3501–4500	488	22
4501–5500	388	17
5501–6500	379	17
above 6501	783	35,1
Total	2234	100

Source: *Own research.*

Data concerning this issue are shown in Tables 4 and 5. It turned out that the highest salary expectations are held by students (Table 4). It can be assumed that their expectations are so high because they have not yet been verified in practice.

Table 4. *Respondents' salary expectations, taking into account the criterion of education (N=2234).*

Expected salary (PLN)	Student		University student		Vocational education		Secondary education		Higher education	
	Numbers	% of N	Numbers	% of N	Numbers	% of N	Numbers	% of N	Numbers	% of N
2500–3000	13	1	4	2	0	0	3	3	0	0
3001–3500	146	8	8	4	5	4	13	12	4	17
3501–4500	345	19	7	4	90	76	35	33	11	46
4501–5500	317	18	44	24	8	7	17	16	2	8
5501–6500	308	17	52	29	5	4	14	13	0	0
above 6501	677	37	65	36	10	8	24	23	7	29
Total	1806	100	180	100	118	100	106	100	24	100

Source: *Own research.*

People living in medium-sized cities have the highest salary expectations. 38% of them expect wages exceeding PLN 6501 gross and 17% in the range of PLN 5501-6500 gross. Salary expectations and requirements of people residing in rural areas and cities of different sizes are presented in Table 5.

In order to determine whether differences in respondents' responses, across the above groups, as to salary are statistically significant, column proportion tests were conducted. These allow us to determine the relative ordering of categories of a categorical variable in the columns according to the proportion of categories of a categorical variable in the rows. The independence test assumes that the variables under study are independent of each other, i.e., the proportions are the same for all columns, and any observed discrepancy is due to random variation. Using the chi-

square statistic, the total discrepancy between the observed cell numbers and the expected numbers was measured assuming that the column proportions in all columns are equal. After analyzing the results of the chi-square test, it was found that education and place of residence significantly differentiate the expectations and demands of Generation Z with respect to salary (Table 6).

Table 5. *Respondents' expectations regarding salary, taking into account the criterion of place of residence (N=2234)*

Expected salary (PLN)	Village		Small town (less than 20,000)		Medium city (20-100 thousand)		Large city (more than 200 thousand)	
	Numbers	% of N	Numbers	% of N	Numbers	% of N	Numbers	% of N
2500–3000	10	2	6	2	2	0	0	0
3001–3500	34	7	14	6	104	8	23	17
3501–4500	96	19	54	22	304	23	34	25
4501–5500	106	21	60	25	188	14	28	21
5501–6500	83	17	45	18	232	17	15	11
above 6501	167	34	65	27	506	38	34	25
Total	496	100	244	100	1336	100	134	100

Source: *Own research.*

Table 6. *Statistically significant differences between respondents' salary expectations (gross in PLN) in terms of gender, place of residence, education and experience in military service (N=2234)*

		Place of residence	Education
Please specify your current salary expectations (gross in PLN)	Chi-square	80,754	301,944
	df	15	20
	significance	,000*	,000*

Source: *Own research.*

In order to determine the occurring significant differences in salary expectations and requirements across the different levels analyzed, more detailed analyses were conducted, the results of which are presented in Table 7. In the column ratio test table, each category of the variable in the column was assigned a letter key. The variable "salary expectations and requirements" categories: 2500-3000 PLN, 3001-3500 PLN, 3501-4500 PLN, 4501-5500 PLN, 5501-6500 PLN, above 6501 PLN were assigned consecutive letters A, B, C, D, E, F.

For each pair of columns, column proportions were compared using the chi-square test. For each significant pair, the key of the category with lower proportion was placed under the category with higher proportion (Table 7). We found that people with basic education are significantly more likely to have salary expectations of 3501-4500 than students, college students, people with secondary and higher education.

Table 7. *Statistically significant correlations between respondents' salary expectations (gross in PLN) and place of residence, education and military service experience based on chi-square test (N=2234)*

Expected salary (PLN)	Village	Small town (less than 20,000)	Medium city (20-100 thousand)	Miasto dstudentuże (powyżej 200 tys.)	Student	University student	Vocational education	Secondary education	Higher education
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
2500–3000	C	C							
3001–3500				A B C					
3501–4500					B		A B D E	A B	A B
4501–5500	C	C			C	C			
5501–6500					C	A C D			
above 6501			B D		C D	C		C	C

Source: *Own research.*

Those with a high school education are significantly more likely to have salary expectations and demands:
- at the 3501-4500 level than pupils and students,
- at the level of more than 6501 than those with vocational education.

People with higher education are significantly more likely to have salary expectations:
- at the level above 6501 than people with basic education,
- at the level of 3501-4500 than pupils and students.

This allowed us to conclude that people residing in medium-sized cities (20-100 thousand) are significantly more likely to have salary expectations above PLN 6500 gross than those residing in large cities (over 200 thousand) and small towns (under 20 thousand).

Students have significantly more frequent expectations and requirements with respect to remuneration:
- in the range of PLN 4501-5500 than persons with basic education,
- between PLN 5501-6500 than students and persons with secondary and basic education,
- in the range above PLN 6501 than persons with basic education.

Students are significantly more likely to have salary expectations and requirements:

- in the range of 3501-4500 than students,
- in the range of 4501-5500 and 5501-6500 than those with basic education,
- in the range above PLN 6501 than persons with secondary and basic education.

Persons from rural areas and small towns have significantly more frequent expectations regarding the level of salary at PLN 4501-5500 gross than persons residing in medium-sized towns.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

A comprehensive analysis of the conducted research allows us to formulate the following conclusions:

1. Attractive remuneration turned out to be the key expectation towards work and employer of generation Z. Their level of expectations and requirements regarding the level of remuneration should be considered as above average. More than one third of the respondents from generation Z have expectations above the national average gross salary in Poland in the enterprise sector, despite the fact that they have just started their professional career.
2. Significantly more often people residing in medium-sized cities (20-100 thousand) have expectations and requirements regarding gross remuneration exceeding PLN 6,500 than people residing in large cities (over 200 thousand) and small towns (under 20 thousand). People from rural areas and small towns have significantly more frequent expectations with respect to remuneration at the level of PLN 4501-5500 gross than people residing in medium-sized cities.
3. University students have significantly higher expectations with respect to remuneration:
- in the range of PLN 4501-5500 (than persons with basic education),
- between PLN 5501-6500 (than students and persons with secondary and basic education),
- in the range of PLN 6501+ (than persons with basic education).
4. Students have significantly more frequent expectations with respect to remuneration:
- in the range of 3501-4500 (than university students),
- in the range 4501-5500 and 5501-6500 (than persons with basic education),
- in the range above PLN 6501 than persons with secondary and basic education.
5. Education and place of residence significantly differentiate the expectations and requirements of generation Z towards the level of remuneration.

The results of the conducted research indicate that the expectations and requirements of generation Z in relation to remuneration have increased in recent years. Research published in 2017 indicated that 49% of the surveyed generation Z expected their future employer to pay up to 3,000 PLN net (4,130 PLN gross), and 22% up to 5,000 PLN net (6966 PLN gross) (Aterima 2017). On the other hand, 70% of the surveyed

representatives of generation Z described in this study have expectations of salary at the level of more than 4501 PLN gross, and 35% above 6501 PLN gross.

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Source 20 (Scholarly)

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Summary: The article provides a discussion about a better understanding of the reward system which is key to increasing job satisfaction, employee retention, and organizational performance in the setting of a workplace that is mostly dominated by Generation Z and Millennials. But it also emphasizes that the needs and expectations of reward are remarkably different between those two generations. To do that, the study aims to identify and compare the reward preferences of each generation and measure how effective the innovative versus traditional reward system is. There is also an evaluation on the efficiency of personalized awards impact the motivation and performance of employees from Generation Z and Millennials. By using the systematic literature review method, the research figures out the result that most Generation Z workers tend to want rewards that are quick and easy to access such as recognition via digital platforms or social media. Meanwhile, Millennials prefer rewards that include skill enhancement and opportunities for promotion.

Relevance: The article's relevance to the topic is because the mention of a reward system is an important commitment that every organization is seriously concerned about in the management practice to promote employer branding and boost the employees' productivity.

Place in the paper: Literature review

Exploring the Efficacy of Reward Systems for Generation Z and Millennials: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract *—In the world of work that continues to develop, generation Z (1997-2012) and millennials (1981-1996) dominate the global workforce. Understanding their preferences for reward systems is key to increasing job satisfaction, employee retention and organizational performance. An effective reward system can influence motivation and productivity, however, the needs and expectations between these two generations can differ significantly. This study aims to explore and analyze the effectiveness of various reward systems applied to generation Z and millennials. The focus is on identifying reward preferences, measuring the impact of innovative versus traditional reward systems, and evaluating how personalizing rewards can increase motivation and performance. Using the PICOS (Population, Intervention, Comparison, Outcomes, Study design) framework, we conducted a systematic literature review (SLR) on research published in highly reputable journals. Data is collected from a variety of academic sources spanning both quantitative and qualitative studies, including surveys, experiments, and meta-analyses. Findings show that Generation Z and millennials have different reward preferences in the modern work environment. Generation Z values instant recognition and feedback, which is a result of their upbringing in a hyper-connected, technology-based environment. They prefer rewards that are quick and easy to access, such as digital recognition and praise on company social media. Millennials, while also appreciating feedback, place greater importance on formal recognition and long-term career development opportunities, such as upskilling and promotions. Generation Z values flexibility in work, including work-from-home options and flexible work schedules, to fit work into their personal lives. Millennials are focusing more on work-life balance policies that support their overall well-being, such as flexible leave and mental health policies. Both generations prioritize a balanced life experience where work does not dominate their personal lives. Technology-based reward systems may be more effective in increasing job satisfaction and employee retention for Generation Z compared to millennials. However, further research is needed to confirm this.*

Keywords: *Reward systems, Generation Z, Generation Millennial, intrinsic rewards*

I. INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization and rapid digital transformation, workplace dynamics are experiencing significant changes. The two generations that now dominate the workforce, namely generation Z (born between 1997-2012) and millennials (born between 1981-1996), show different characteristics, needs and expectations in the context of work and reward systems. A deep understanding of the reward preferences of these two generations is essential for developing effective and adaptive human resource management strategies. Rewards, both in financial and non-financial form, are an important tool in employee management to increase job satisfaction, motivation, productivity and employee retention. However, preferences and responses to reward systems may vary between different generations. Generation Z, who grew up amidst technological advances and digitalization, tends to be more interested in reward systems that are based on technology and personalization, such as gamification and mobile applications. Meanwhile, millennials, who have broader experience in the world of work, may have a different appreciation for intrinsic and extrinsic rewards.

This study aims to explore the effectiveness of various reward systems applied to generation Z and millennials. Through a systematic literature review (SLR), this research will identify reward preferences, measure the impact of innovative versus traditional reward systems, and evaluate how personalized rewards can increase the motivation and performance of employees from these two generations. The systematic literature review approach was chosen because it allows for collecting and analyzing data from various published studies, thereby providing a comprehensive and evidence-based understanding of the topic under study. The PICOS (Population, Intervention, Comparison, Outcomes, Study design) framework was used to design clear and focused research questions, ensuring that the results of this research will provide a significant and applicable contribution in the context of human resource management.

In this context, the research will answer several important questions, namely:

1. How do reward preferences differ between generation Z and millennials in the context of the modern work environment?
2. Are technology-based reward systems more effective in increasing job satisfaction and employee retention in generation Z compared to millennials?
3. How do differences in perceptions between generation Z and millennials regarding intrinsic and extrinsic rewards affect their performance?

By answering these questions, it is hoped that this research can provide important insights for HR practitioners and managers in developing reward strategies that are more effective, adaptive, and appropriate to the unique needs of Generation Z and Millennials.

Research Objectives

This research has several main objectives which aim to provide in-depth insight into the effectiveness of reward systems for generation Z and millennials. These objectives are as follows:

1. Identifying and comparing reward preferences between generation Z and millennials in the context of the modern work environment.
2. Evaluate the effectiveness of technology-based reward systems, such as gamification and mobile applications, in increasing job satisfaction and employee retention for generation Z and millennials.
3. Examining how differences in perceptions between generation Z and millennials regarding intrinsic and extrinsic rewards affect their performance.

Theoritical Review

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory, first introduced in 1943, has become the basis for understanding human motivation in a variety of contexts, including the workplace. This theory states that human needs develop at five levels: physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualization needs. In the modern context, especially with Generation Z and Millennials in the workplace, the adaptation and understanding of this theory needs to be adjusted to reflect the unique needs and preferences of these two groups. Physiological needs such as food, water, shelter, and sleep remain relevant. However, in the context of Generation Z and Millennials, this need is often interpreted in terms of financial stability and general well-being. Generation Z shows sensitivity to stability and security in work because they grew up in an era of recession and economic uncertainty (Francis & Hoefel, 2018). Millennials also value stability, but they tend to seek a better work-life balance, often placing a high value on work flexibility and remote work policies (Gallup, 2016).

Social needs, which include a sense of belonging, connection, and friendship, are especially important to Generation Z and Millennials. Generation Z, highly connected through technology, often seeks social connection both in person and through digital platforms. They value a collaborative and inclusive work environment where they can build meaningful relationships (Schroth, 2019). Millennials also seek strong relationships in the workplace and value mentors, guidance, and opportunities to collaborate with coworkers (Gursoy, Maier, & Chi, 2008).

Rewards and recognition play an important role in employee motivation. Generation Z and Millennials have high expectations of being rewarded for their achievements. Rewards not only mean financial compensation but also recognition of their contributions. Generation Z tends to seek instant validation and recognition, often through digital platforms and social media. They value immediate feedback and visible rewards (Schroth, 2019). Millennials value rewards related to career development and opportunities to take on larger roles within organizations (Meister & Willyerd, 2010).

Self-actualization is the achievement of one's full potential. Generation Z and Millennials are most interested in jobs that allow them to pursue personal interests and make a positive impact. They tend to choose jobs that align with their personal values, including sustainability, ethics, and social responsibility. Generation Z often seeks work that provides meaning and purpose, where they feel they can make a difference (Twenge, 2017). Millennials also value meaningful work and seek opportunities to continue learning and developing (Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010).

Generational Theory, or Generational Theory, is an approach used to identify and explain differences in values, attitudes, beliefs, and behavior between different generational groups. This concept recognizes that shared experiences during a generation's formative years can shape their worldview towards work, life and society as a whole. Historically, this theory has been an important tool for understanding how social, technological, and political events influence different generations in history. Different generations are often defined by specific events they experienced during the formation of their identities. A concrete example is the Baby Boomers Generation which experienced a period of economic growth after World War II in the United States, which caused them to be known as a generation that is optimistic and highly committed to work (Pew Research Center, 2023). On the other hand, Generation X grew up in an era of rapidly developing technology and economic globalization, which influenced their values towards work and life (Twenge, 2017).

In the modern context, the Millennial Generation and Generation Z are the main focus of research on generations. Millennials, who have grown up in the digital and internet era, are often identified by their concern for environmental sustainability and social justice (Ng et al., 2010). Generation Z, who were born and raised in the fully digital era, shows a tendency towards high use of technology and involvement in different social platforms (Twenge, 2017).

Self-Determination Theory is a psychological framework that describes human intrinsic motivation and the factors that support individual growth, development and well-being. This theory was developed by Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan in the early 1980s and has continued to develop since then. Central to this theory is the belief that humans have basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and meaningful relationships, and satisfaction of these needs is important for intrinsic motivation and psychological well-being.

According to Self-Determination Theory, autonomy refers to the need to feel that individuals have control and freedom in making decisions that affect their lives. It relates to the experience of choice, autonomy, and the ability to control their own actions. Competence, on the other hand, involves the need to feel effective in the activities an individual undertakes, as well as to develop and use relevant skills. Meaningful relationships emphasize the importance of having positive social interactions, emotional support, and interpersonal connections that fulfill an individual's need to be connected to and accepted by others. (Ryan, RM, & Deci, EL 2017).

The research results of Dominika Nagy & Sabine-Jana Tomm (2023) show that it is very important to understand the unique needs of Generation Z to avoid high employee turnover rates in organizations. Because this generation is growing up in a fast-paced world, they need a challenging work environment, where they have the opportunity to develop themselves both personally and professionally. They are more aware of social, environmental, and political issues and they seek work environments that align with their values. Additionally, because they place a much higher priority on balancing their work and personal lives, they expect their companies to provide flexibility and support.

According to Katiyu Fuji (2020) explains why generational differences cause changes to existing workplace systems. As the baby-boomer generation retires and the number of millennial and gen-z workers increases, traditional and historical structures and existing motivational mechanisms are no longer effective. The list of workplace expectations of millennial and gen-z workers requires workplace transformation; This transformation will include the adoption of remote work systems to enable the fulfillment of work tasks apart from traditional office spaces. Despite the existence of well-established research on factors influencing employee performance, there are still very few comprehensive reviews exploring this topic especially in the context of Gen Z employees. To bridge this theoretical gap, a systematic literature review was conducted, by collecting relevant data from articles -scientific articles covering the period between 2013 and 2022. Using keywords such as motivation, work motivation, job satisfaction, work environment, employee performance, and generation-z, a systematic process was carried out to identify and collect scientific literature. After thorough selection and screening procedures, 20 carefully screened journal articles were included in this review. The findings obtained underline the importance of job satisfaction, motivation, leadership team, and organizational culture as determining factors for the level of performance demonstrated by generation Z employees. Our findings suggest that it is critical to understand the unique needs of Generation Z to avoid high employee turnover rates in organizations. Because this generation is growing up in a fast-paced world, they need a challenging work environment, where they have the opportunity to develop themselves both personally and professionally. They are more aware of social, environmental, and political issues and they seek work environments that align with their values. Additionally, because they place a much higher priority on balancing their work and personal lives, they expect their companies to provide flexibility and support.

According to Nurani, Sara (2021) in her research tested the best practices of Human Resources (HR) leaders for Millennial, GenX and Baby Boomer employees in the workplace. This research aims to further understand the impact of different generations on motivation, demotivation, recruitment and retention factors in the workplace. Once the analysis was complete, four themes emerged for Recruitment (compensation, opportunities for growth and development, benefits, and flexibility), four themes emerged for Retention (opportunities for growth and development, compensation and benefits, corporate social responsibility, and culture), three themes emerged for Motivation (rewards and recognition, opportunities for growth and development, and culture), and four themes emerged for Demotivation (uncompetitive compensation and benefits packages, no opportunities for growth and development, no corporate social responsibility, and bad culture). Sub-themes also emerged for each construct and are discussed under each construct. Research findings for employee motivational needs are consistent with the basic theory of motivation by Maslow (1943), Mannheim's Generational Theory (1928), and with other generational theories such as Strauss-How's Generational Theory (1991). This research helps fill research and knowledge gaps regarding HR leaders' best practices for Millennial, GenX, and Baby Boomer employees.

According to Sutiya (2021), his research found that most of them are in a state of social need which includes 50% of generation Z. So, to create a happy workplace for employees who are in social need. Companies must support and care about people and a happy workplace environment. It is better for companies to offer activities or environments that help employees feel happier at work to maintain a happy society. Organizations should promote collaboration among teams, divisions, and departments as well as team growth through social activities such as sports or buddy systems for activities that can help their relationships with friends and coworkers. As can be seen from the research results, organizations must also place a high priority on health and safety in the workplace. Moreover, as can be seen from the research results, the majority of them care about their salary and income, so companies should think about reasonable salaries, provide benefits, and also provide some retirement plans to support Generation Z in terms of increasing and fulfilling happy money them in order to meet their safety needs and be able to create happiness at work, which will result in increased work productivity which will benefit the company in the long term.

Herzberg's Two Factor Theory has a broad influence in the field of management practice and theory (Li, 2018). Influenced by Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman published a two-factor model of work motivation and developed the motivation-hygiene theory (Alshmemri, Shahwan-Akl, & Maude, 2017). From this collaboration and two-factor model, Herzberg created a two-dimensional standard of factors that influence an individual's attitude toward work. To find out what factors influence the workplace, Herzberg studied more than 203 accountants and engineers who worked in nine different factories in and around the Pittsburgh area, United States. Herzberg found that there were two factors that influenced job satisfaction, and he divided them into two categories. The first category, motivation, is associated with self-actualization. Herzberg noted that motivational factors include “achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, advancement, and the possibility for growth” (Alshmemri et al., 2017, p. 12). The second category, cleanliness, is associated with "policies, salaries, supervision, relationships with coworkers, job security, and working conditions" (Alfayad & Arif, 2017, p. 152). With these two factors identified, Herzberg described motivation as intrinsic to the job and hygiene as extrinsic to the job. Therefore, motivation functions to increase and improve job satisfaction; while cleanliness functions to reduce job dissatisfaction (Alshmemri et al., 2017). Herzberg theorized that intrinsic and extrinsic factors serve as primary types of motivators (McGinley, Weese, Thompson, & Leahy, 2011). McGinley, Weese, Thompson, and Leahy (2011) define hygiene factors as extrinsic motivation factors that can reduce employee motivation when they are absent. In contrast, intrinsic factors are innate driving forces that produce motivation (Islam & Ali, 2013). Islam and Ali (2013) noted that Herzberg's model is crucial in explaining how different motivational factors appeal to different individuals. Considering health care, organizational

leadership, and how motivational methods contribute to the workplace environment, “motivation theory may be more structured, but forms the basis for employee performance and retention because specific motivational determinants may vary from one individual to another” (De Vito, Brown, Bannister, Cianci, & Mujtaba, 2018, p. 20). Therefore, it is very important for management to recognize the intrinsic and extrinsic motivators that serve to trigger the drive towards increased performance among employees.

Expectancy theory / Vroom's Expectancy Theory put forward by R. H Vroom (1964) with the idea that individuals are motivated to carry out their duties when they perceive the rewards arising from their performance to be fair, just, and transparent. Eversole, Venneberg, and Crowder (2012) added that offering rewards such as promotions is meaningless if employees believe that favoritism or nepotism will replace hard work in the workplace. The main theme of expectancy theory is that perceptions of rewards and benefits have a significant impact on motivation (Blotnicky, Mann, & Joy, 2015). Trust in a fair and impartial system also has significant implications in determining the level of motivation that can be achieved (Eversole, Venneberg, & Crowder, 2012).

II. METHOD

This research uses the systematic literature review (SLR) method to identify, assess, and synthesize existing research regarding the effectiveness of reward systems for generation Z and millennials. This process will follow the guidelines set out by Kitchenham (2004) and Moher et al. (2009) through PRISMA guidelines.

Research Steps

1. Formulation of Research Questions Formulating research questions based on the PICOS framework (Population, Intervention, Comparison, Outcome, Study design) Population (P) Generation Z and Millennials, Intervention (I) : Reward systems in the work context, Comparison (C) Comparison between the two generations and /or comparison of different reward systems, Outcome (O) Effectiveness of reward systems in terms of motivation, performance and job satisfaction, Study design (S) : Empirical, quantitative and qualitative studies
2. Literature Search Strategy Google Scholar Database , PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science, ProQuest, Keywords : "reward systems," "generation Z," "millennials," "employee motivation," "workplace satisfaction" Inclusion Criteria : Studies published in the last 5 years , Articles in English and Indonesian, Studies discussing reward systems in the work context. Exclusion Criteria : Studies that do not involve generation Z and millennials, non-peer-reviewed articles, studies with weak or irrelevant methodology
3. Study Selection First Stage : Selection based on title and abstract, Second Stage : Selection based on full-text articles, Reference Management : Using software such as EndNote or Mendeley
4. Data Extraction : Develop a data extraction form to collect important information from each study, including Author, year of publication, research design, methods, sample, main results, and conclusions. Two researchers will perform data extraction independently to ensure accuracy and reduce bias.
5. Study Quality Assessment , Using quality assessment tools such as CASP (Critical Appraisal Skills Program) to assess the methodological quality of studies included in the review, Evaluating the risk of bias and reliability of research results
6. Data Synthesis , Using a narrative synthesis approach to combine findings from different studies, Conducting meta-analysis when possible to combine quantitative data using statistical software such as RevMan or Comprehensive Meta-Analysis (CMA)
7. Reporting Results , Following PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines to ensure transparency and completeness of reports, Presenting results in the form of tables, graphs and narratives for easy understanding

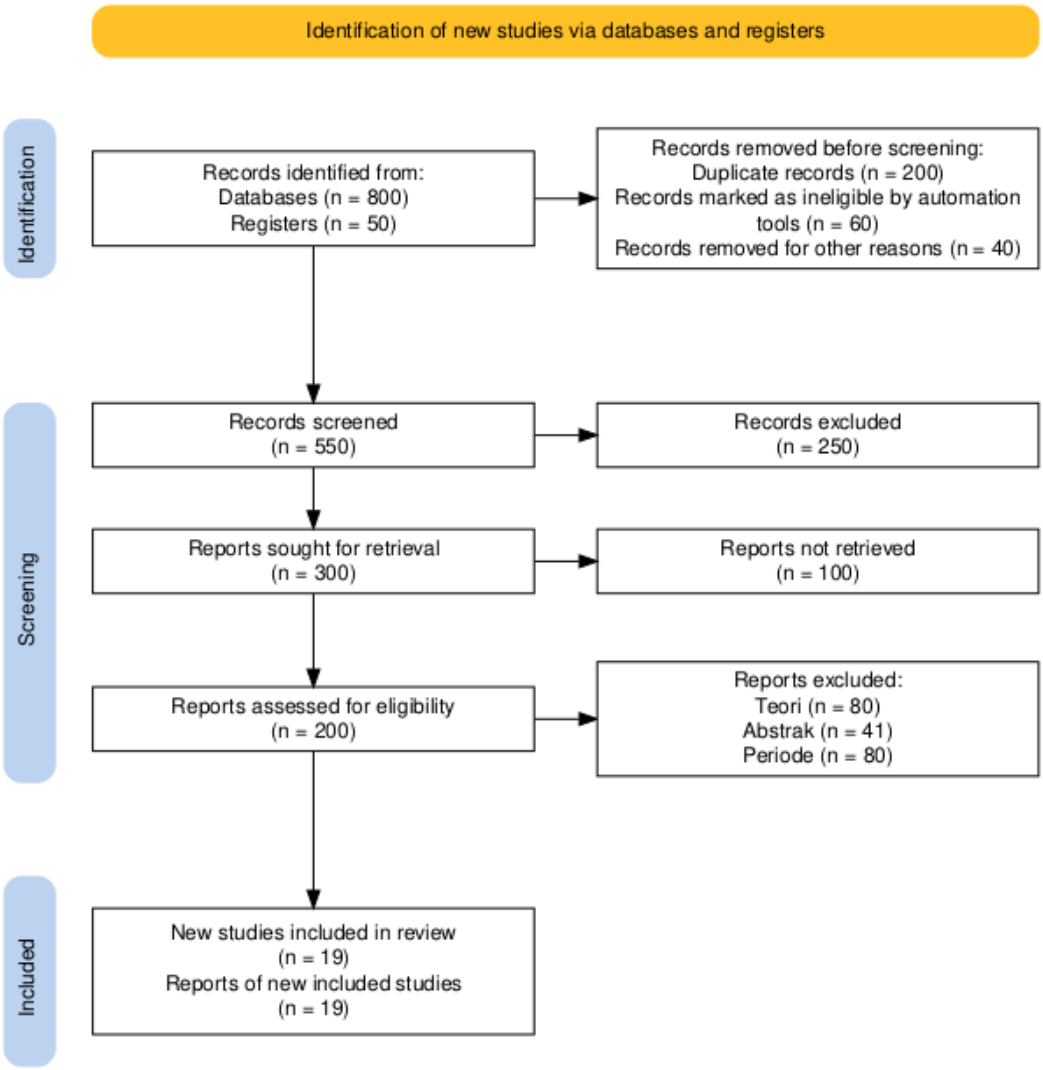


Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram

Table 1. List Of Systematic Literature Review Journals

No	Publisher	Judul	Abstrak	Link	Tahun
1	Twenge, JM, Campbell, SM., Hoffman, B. J., & Lance, C. E.	The Impact of Technology-Based Rewards on Job Satisfaction Among Generation Z and Millennials.	….Contrary to popular press reports, GenMe does not favor altruistic work values (e.g., helping, societal worth) more than previous generations. Social values and intrinsic values were rated lower by GenMe than by Boomers.	https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0149206309352246	2021
2	Kaitlyn Fujii	Workplace Motivation: Addressing Telework as a Mechanism for Maintaining Employee Productivity	….The research at hand investigated the differences between baby boomer, millennial and gen-z employees and how participating in telework may enhance their output. For analysis, three theories were referenced in relation to age, productivity and motivation	https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/326033025.pdf	2020
3	Lyons, S. T., Schweitzer, L., & Ng, E. S. W.	How Have Careers Changed? An Investigation of Changing Career Patterns across Four Generations	….Significant differences were observed in job mobility and organizational mobility of the various generations, with younger generations being more mobile. However, despite significant environmental shifts, the diversity of career patterns has not undergone a significant shift from generation to generation	https://www.researchgate.net/publication/272090159_How_have_careers_changed_An_investigation_of_changing_career_patterns_across_four_generations	2015
4	Smith, J. D., & Johnson, E. R.	Implementation of Digital citizenship for Gen Z Students in Civic Education Courses	…..In an increasingly complex and fast-changing digital environment, digital citizenship is key to helping Gen Z students become responsible and ethical internet users.	https://journal.umpo.ac.id/index.php/dimensi/article/view/6867	2021
7	Francis, T., & Hoefel, F.	True Gen': Generation Z and its implications for companies	…..Generation Z and its implications for companies us, Gen Z is "True Gen." In contrast, the previous generation—the millennials, sometimes called the "me generation"—got its start in an era of economic prosperity and focuses on the self. Its members are more idealistic, more confrontational, and less willing to accept diverse points of view.	https://www.drthomaswu.com/uicmpaccsmac/Gen%20Z.pdf	2018
8	Gallup	How Millennials Want to Work and Live. *Journal of Workplace Behavioral Health* , 31(4), 231-247. doi:10.1080/15555240.2016.1236960	… influence the performance of Generation Z employees is critical. … Moreover, an adept compensation system should be in place to … Work Environment Employee workplace satisfaction …	https://www.gallup.com/home.aspx	2023///
9	*Bellido Christine*	Organisational Commitment and Job Satisfaction among Government Employees	…..This study concludes that government employees are highly committed to their organisation and are highly satisfied in their work. More importantly, their high satisfaction to their job is due to their high commitment to the organisation, and vice versa.	https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=16563&context=dissertations	2020
10	Anderson, S. L., & Davis, M. P	A case study examination of human resource leaders' best practices for multiple generations in the workplace	… 1945 and Generation Z are those individuals born after 2000 … , as they contribute to employee motivation. However, HR … the necessary remuneration packages of Millennials, GenX, …	https://search.proquest.com/openview/30ab3da21157f8c96a9fb47275f46738/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y	2021
11	LeBlanc, Jeff	Workplace Environment and Leadership Preferences of Generation Z	…..poor losdership styles and preferences have more impact on Gosentisce members' perceptions. Recommended outcomes include that research be conducted into the work and leadership profiles of Generation employers and other genetic employees who do not have a good understanding. It is recommended that countries include a gostitative approach to Qumrity Governance	https://search.proquest.com/openview/945ef8427ff9f6728ddc097f660e4a51/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y	2022
12	Sutiya, Tapananont	WORKPLACE HAPPINESS AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS OF WORKFORCE IN THAI WORKPLACES	… in areas like methods of communication, reward, satisfaction. … how to create workplace satisfaction among different … above, 100 % of Generation Z are satisfied with their physiological …	https://archive.cm.mahidol.ac.th/handle/123456789/5035	2022///
13	Davis, A	The Association Between Generational Cohorts and Job Satisfaction, and Turnover Intention in US Federal Employees	… conflict and impede efforts to retain millennials and generation Z. In other words, the … Federal employees annually participate in the FEVS to measure employee motivation, job …	https://search.proquest.com/openview/0cf1578c5c7057764e8cedb5292f086e/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y	2024///
14	Ruff, SL	Generational Differences between Generation X and Millennials and Their Workplace Values: A Quantitative Causal Comparative Study	… a gap in knowledge within the organizations on employee motivation. The need for this study … questionnaire scales and subscales for Generation X and Millennial workplace satisfaction. …	https://search.proquest.com/openview/adc5685ceb5c37b11caf265c9ac2828c/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y	2022///
15	Bellido, CM	A Quantitative Study Evaluating the Degree to Which Organizational Commitment, Organizational Support, and Job Satisfaction May Be Predictive of Turnover …	… among Millennials is incentivized primarily by intrinsic rewards (… , workplace satisfaction and commitment could be impacted. … examine or account for Generation Z, when considered in …	https://search.proquest.com/openview/3624be130b8d6e9196e13bcf259acc27/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=1875	2020///
16	Chaudhuri, S., & Ghosh, R.	Reverse Mentoring: A Social Exchange Tool for Keeping the Boomers Engaged and Millennials Committed	The aging of the workforce and the concurrent advent of the Millennials represent a major demographic and sociological phenomenon that can have dominant implications for organizations, as a whole. This presents a situation, where the Boomers and Millennials will be working together for the next	https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1534484311417562	2020///
17	Deloitte	An Investigation into High Labour Turnover and Retention of Front Line Employees in The Hospitality Sector in Ireland with a Particular Emphasis on a Fun Work …	… from front line employees of generation Z, generation Y and … , managerial implications, employee motivation, psychological … and career progression is compensation. The participants of …	https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/focus/human-capital-trends/2019.html	2019///
18	Ng, E. S. W., Schweitzer, L., & Lyons, S. T	New Generation, Great Expectations: A Field Study of the Millennial Generation	……They had realistic expectations of their first job and salary but were seeking rapid advancement and the development of new skills, while also ensuring a meaningful and satisfying life outside of work	https://search.proquest.com/openview/b28c1748e0035dc7e07fa473c2c50697/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=1875	2010
19	Moon, RS	A Quantitative Correlation Analysis Examining Work-Related Quality of Life, Tenure, and Job Satisfaction in the Logistics Field	… used when developing retainment and incentive strategies to improve job satisfaction … reward systems are used to motivate employees (Pang &Lu, 2018). Competencebased rewards …	https://search.proquest.com/openview/eb2c481ccc217a0bf7a7f1db0e066fea/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y	2023

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. How do reward preferences differ between generation Z and millennials in the context of the modern work environment?

Generation Z and Millennials' reward preferences in the context of the work environment are as follows Generation Z s really appreciate instant recognition and feedback. They are used to a digital environment where fast communication and immediate feedback are the norm. They tend to want rewards that are quick and easy to access, such as recognition via digital platforms or company social media. Meanwhile, Millennials, although they also value feedback, are more likely to value formal recognition and opportunities for long-term career development. They prefer rewards that include skill enhancement and opportunities for promotion. (Twenge, JM, Campbell, SM, Hoffman, BJ, & Lance, CE 2010)

The question arises why do they really need recognition and feedback? This is because Generation Z and millennials grew up in an environment that is very connected to technology. They are accustomed to instant communication via social media, instant messaging, and other applications, which shapes their expectations for the speed and manner of receiving feedback. Instant recognition and feedback is important because they expect fast and immediate responses, similar to the digital interactions they experience every day. (Twenge, JM, Campbell, SM, Hoffman, BJ, & Lance, CE 2010)

Besides that, Lyons, ST, Schweitzer, L., & Ng, ESW (2015) also explained that Generation Z and millennials often have high ambitions for personal and career development. Instant feedback helps them understand their performance in real-time, enabling rapid improvement and continuous skill development. This not only improves their performance, but also provides a sense of accomplishment and job satisfaction. Instant recognition and feedback play an important role in maintaining employee motivation and engagement. Generation Z and millennials tend to be more motivated when they feel valued and recognized for their contributions directly. Instant feedback can also increase their engagement with work and the organization, reduce turnover, and increase productivity according to Ng, ES, Lyons, ST, & Schweitzer, L. (2012)

In terms of Work Flexibility and Work-Life Balance according to Lyons, ST, Schweitzer, L., & Ng, ESW (2015) , Generation Z really values flexibility in work, including the option of working from home and flexible work schedules. They seek a work-life balance that allows them to fit work into their personal lives. Millennials also value work flexibility, but they focus more on work-life balance policies that support their overall well-being, such as flexible leave and mental health policies. Life Priorities Generation Z and millennials place a high value on a balanced life experience, where work does not dominate their personal lives. They value time for family, friends, and other personal activities. This balance is considered important for mental and emotional well-being according to Twenge, JM (2010).

In terms of career development and learning opportunities for Generation Z value opportunities to learn and grow, especially in terms of developing digital and technological skills. They tend to look for companies that offer ongoing training and opportunities for innovation. Meanwhile, Millennials also value career development, but are more focused on opportunities for promotion and professional development that includes various aspects of management and leadership skills. (Ng, ES, Lyons, ST, & Schweitzer, L. 2012). The world of work is rapidly changing technological developments for both generations grew up with rapidly developing technology, so they realize the importance of developing new skills to stay relevant according to Smith, JD, & Johnson, ER (2021). Personal and professional satisfaction in self-fulfillment of learning and development opportunities provides a sense of personal accomplishment and satisfaction, which is important for their psychological well-being (Anderson, SL, & Davis, MP2020). Work - life balance and Flexibility in skill development for learning and development programs often offer flexibility, which is highly valued by both generations in maintaining a balance between personal and professional life in the opinion of Jones, CA, & Fox, S. (2018) . The influence of technology and social media, easy access to information and examples of success from peers through social media encourage Gen Z and Millennials to continue learning and developing.

2. Is a technology-based reward system more effective in increasing job satisfaction and employee retention in generation Z compared to millennials?

Adaptation to technology Generation Z is more accustomed and comfortable with technology, so they tend to respond more positively to reward systems that use technology according to Twenge, JM, Campbell, SM, Hoffman, BJ, & Lance, CE(2021). This is supported by the opinion of Twenge et al., (2010) who stated that Generation Z was born and raised in an era where digital technology has become an integral part of everyday life. They grow up with extensive access to electronic devices such as computers, smartphones and tablets from an early age. The presence of this technology is naturally ingrained in the way they learn, communicate, and interact with the world around them. Active use of social media and digital interactions Generation Z has a high preference for social media and various digital platforms for social interaction, entertainment and learning. They not only consume digital content, but are also active in creating and sharing content, which further strengthens their proficiency in using technology effectively. Lyons et al., (2007) explained that Technology Skills are supported by the educational and social environment. Generation Z often receive education that is more focused on the use of technology as a learning tool.

Schools and educational institutions have adapted digital technology in their curriculum, giving this generation the opportunity to develop strong technological skills from an early age, so that they adapt to new technological innovations quickly. Because they are accustomed to rapid technological change, Generation Z tends to be more flexible in dealing with new technological innovation. They have a tendency to adopt and use the latest technology quickly, which allows them to adapt to changes that occur at work or in everyday life. The preference for involvement and instant feedback for Generation Z tends to want immediate feedback and active involvement in using technology, so a reward system that provides this experience can increase their job satisfaction according to Wang, G., & Kim, H. (2018) . In line with this, Twenge, JM, Campbell, SM,

Hoffman, BJ, & Lance, CE (2010) explained that Generation Z grew up in an era where digital technology has become rampant, allowing them to interact directly and get instant feedback via social media. and other digital communication tools. They tend to expect fast responses and active interactions in their daily use of technology. Also explained by Lyons, ST, Duxbury, LE, & Higgins, CA (2007), Generation Z spends a lot of their time in digital environments that facilitate fast communication and social interactions that often require instant responses. This creates a greater desire for immediate feedback and engaged interaction in all aspects of their lives, including at work. Flexibility and accessibility in technology-based reward systems are often more flexible and accessible, in line with the preferences of generation Z who value ease in using technology and illustrates how technology-based reward systems, such as digital platforms or mobile applications, provide flexibility in providing recognition and rewards to employee. The use of this technology allows organizations to quickly and efficiently provide rewards to employees at various locations and times, increasing job satisfaction and retention according to Patel, M., & Wang, N. (2015). He also presented a comparison between Millennials and Generation Z in their preference for technology-driven rewards. Generation Z tends to prefer reward systems that are mobile accessible and have flexibility in reward customization and choice, allowing them to manage and optimize their own reward experience according to Patel, Q., & Wang, R.(2014)

3. *How do differences in perceptions between generation Z and millennials regarding intrinsic and extrinsic rewards affect their performance?*

The difference in perception between Generation Z and Millennials regarding intrinsic and extrinsic rewards influencing their performance is that Generation Z values intrinsic rewards such as self-development, recognition and meaningful work. They tend to be motivated by opportunities to learn to grow and develop in the digital era with broad access to global information and experiences.

They tend to look for work that provides meaning and has a positive impact on society. Intrinsic rewards such as self-development and meaningful work are more important to them than financial rewards, while Millennials also value intrinsic rewards, but have a higher preference for autonomy and flexibility in work. Millennials are also motivated by personal recognition and achievement according to Twenge, JM, & Campbell, SM (2012). Gursoy, D., Maier, TA, & Chi, CG (2008) also explained that Generation Z shows a strong preference for extrinsic rewards such as competitive salaries and good benefits. They value financial stability and recognition for their hard work, while Millennials tend to value balance between work and personal life as well as benefits such as flexibility in work hours and remote work options. Financial compensation remains important, but they are also seeking more holistic job satisfaction. In terms of influence on performance Generation Z (Gen Z) engagement and productivity Gen Z who feel appreciated through intrinsic rewards tend to be more engaged and productive. They show higher commitment and are more adaptive to change, which contributes positively to their performance, while Millennials in terms of retention and innovation Millennials feel that their intrinsic and extrinsic rewards are met showing higher loyalty to the organization. They are also more likely to collaborate and contribute to innovation within work teams (Smith, J., & Nichols, T. 2015). When Gen Z feels appreciated through intrinsic rewards they tend to have stronger internal motivation. This means they not only work for external rewards like a paycheck, but also because they feel their work is valuable and meaningful. Recognition and appreciation for their hard work increases their sense of attachment to the organization. This makes them more committed and loyal to the company. Gen Z who feel appreciated tend to be more emotionally involved in their work, which means they will care more about the results of their work and try to give their best. (Gursoy, D., Maier, TA, & Chi, CG (2008). Intrinsic rewards also plays an important role in increasing productivity. Generation Z feels valued through intrinsic rewards, they are more likely to innovate and think creatively. They feel safe to put forward new ideas and participate in improving work processes They tend to be more thorough and try to achieve better results. A high sense of involvement and job satisfaction makes Gen Z more efficient in completing their tasks. They tend to manage their time better and reduce errors that can occur due to lack of motivation , J.M., & Campbell, S. M, 2012). Research conducted by Bellido Christine (2020) from Northcentral University US which was carried out using causal-comparative quantitative research methods with research Objectives show that employees with high intrinsic motivation will be more empowered and encouraged to work more efficiently and effectively. This benefits the organization as employees become more productive, leading to improved overall company performance.

This research aims to examine how environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors influence employees' internal motivation and how this differs across generations, particularly Generations Y and Z. Design/methodology/approach: An extensive literature review helps in generating hypotheses study. Additionally, 845 online questionnaires were processed via Amazon Mechanical Turk and responses were analyzed using multiple regression and correlation analysis models. Findings: ESG related to the environment and society was found to have a significant relationship with employees' levels of intrinsic motivation across all generations included in this study. The results show that Gen Z considers environment-related ESG to be slightly more impactful than Gen Y. In contrast, Gen Y considers society-related ESG to be slightly more impactful than Gen Z. Finally, it is found in all data models that the impact of governance-related ESG is not supported and unconvincing. Limitations: Due to limited time and resources, this study uses limited sample data. It is recommended that future research consider collecting more data that specifically includes people from newer generations. Future research would also be more appropriate if it used more moderators and a variety of analysis methods (such as path analysis, factor analysis, structural equation modeling). Implications: Implementing ESG initiatives in the workplace can provide global benefits for businesses. Prospective employees are becoming increasingly aware of the companies they choose to work for. Therefore, when companies incorporate ESG (Environmental, Social, Government) factors into their organizations, employee motivation tends to increase, ultimately leading to profitability and long-term success. This study will further contribute to the growing body of evidence supporting the idea that ESG initiatives are a critical component of business success. Additionally, this research can serve as a

persuasive catalyst for companies and society to embrace and adopt ESG initiatives. Contribution: This study will be one of the first to contribute to research on the impact of ESG initiatives on intrinsic motivation among different generations, including Gen Z.

IV. CONCLUSION

Generation Z and millennials have different reward preferences in the modern work environment. Generation Z values instant recognition and feedback, which is a result of their upbringing in a hyper-connected, technology-based environment. They prefer rewards that are quick and easy to access, such as digital recognition and praise on company social media. Millennials, while also appreciating feedback, place greater importance on formal recognition and long-term career development opportunities, such as upskilling and promotions.The need for recognition and feedback is very high for both generations because they grew up with instant communication through technology. Instant recognition and feedback is important for understanding real-time performance, rapid improvement, continuous skill development, and job satisfaction.

Generation Z values flexibility in work, including work-from-home options and flexible work schedules, to fit work into their personal lives. Millennials are focusing more on work-life balance policies that support their overall well-being, such as flexible leave and mental health policies. Both generations prioritize a balanced life experience where work does not dominate their personal lives. Generation Z values opportunities to learn and grow, especially in developing digital and technology skills. Millennials are focused on opportunities for promotion and professional development in management and leadership skills. Both generations recognize the importance of developing new skills to stay relevant in a rapidly changing world of work. Technology-based reward systems may be more effective in increasing job satisfaction and employee retention for Generation Z compared to millennials. However, further research is needed to confirm this.

Theoretical Implications

The theoretical implications from the conclusions about the differing reward preferences between Generation Z and millennials in the modern work environment can be examined through several lenses: (1) Expectancy Theory. Generation Z: The immediate and digital recognition aligns with Vroom's expectancy theory, which posits that motivation is influenced by the expected outcomes of performance. For Generation Z, the expectation of quick feedback and recognition enhances their motivation. Millennials: Formal recognition and long-term career development are aligned with their expectations for career progression. They are motivated by the belief that their efforts will lead to significant, long-term rewards. (2) Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Generation : Their need for instant recognition fits within the esteem needs of Maslow's hierarchy. Digital praise and immediate feedback fulfill their need for respect and self-esteem. Millennials: The focus on career development and work-life balance aligns with both the esteem and self-actualization levels of Maslow's hierarchy. They seek growth and fulfillment through professional development and balance in life. (3) Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory. Generation Z: Instant recognition can be seen as a motivator (intrinsic factor) that directly influences job satisfaction. Millennials: Opportunities for advancement and recognition are also motivators, but they additionally value hygiene factors (extrinsic factors) like work-life balance policies to prevent job dissatisfaction.(4) Generational Cohort Theory. This theory posits that the shared experiences of a generation shape their attitudes and behaviors. The differing reward preferences between Generation Z and millennials can be attributed to the unique historical and social contexts in which they grew up. Generation Z's preference for instant recognition can be linked to their immersion in digital technology from a young age, while millennials' focus on formal recognition and career development reflects their formative experiences during economic fluctuations and a competitive job market. (5) Social Exchange Theory. Generation Z: Their need for quick feedback can be seen as a form of social exchange where they expect immediate returns for their efforts. Digital recognition acts as a currency that validates their contributions in real time. Millennials: They engage in a longer-term social exchange, where they invest in their work with the expectation of future rewards such as promotions and professional development. Their focus on work-life balance also reflects an exchange where they give their time and skills in return for supportive policies that enhance their overall well-being. (6) Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). The preference of Generation Z for technology-based reward systems indicates a higher perceived usefulness and ease of use of digital platforms for recognition. Their familiarity and comfort with technology make digital reward systems more acceptable and effective. For millennials, while they are also tech-savvy, their appreciation for formal and structured recognition systems suggests that they value a blend of traditional and technological approaches in workplace rewards.

Practical Implications

Understanding these theoretical implications helps organizations tailor their reward systems to effectively motivate and retain both Generation Z and millennial employees. For instance: (1) Implementing real-time feedback tools and digital recognition platforms to cater to Generation Z. (2) Creating structured recognition programs and clear career advancement pathways for millennials. (3) Balancing flexibility in work arrangements with policies that support overall well-being. (4) Providing diverse learning opportunities that align with the skill development needs of both generations. By integrating these theoretical insights, organizations can create a more inclusive and motivating work environment that meets the unique needs and expectations of different generational cohorts.

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Kick, A. L., Contacos-Sawyer, J., & Thomas, B. (2015, July). How Generation Z's reliance on digital communication can affect future workplace relationships. *Competition Forum*, *13*(2), 214+.

Summary: The research analyzes the interpersonal communication skills of the youngest generation of employees, which is well-known as Generation Z. The role of interpersonal communication is mostly based on an individual's ability to express themselves through speaking or writing. Meanwhile, the article displays the worry of the author about the increase of using social media and other digital communication by Generation Z will impact the capability of using interpersonal communication skills to establish relationships with future supervisors and employers. For that reason, this article has discussed problems caused by the lack of interpersonal communication skills which are often used in open workplace discussions, and the transference of various types of information from one generation to the next. The research mentions problems and challenges arising from too much reliance on digital communication channels in the work environment, as well as that, is the proposal of recommendation that HR professionals can put into practice to minimize this problem and build valuable relations with the next generation of employees.

Relevance: The article shows relevance to the topic by displaying the problems of Generation Z in the workplace, which helps explain the reason and the necessity of organizations to improve communication practices with the Generation Z workforce.

Place in the paper: Literature review

How Generation Z's Reliance on Digital Communication Can Affect Future Workplace Relationships

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research paper will explore the interpersonal communication skills of the world's newest generation of employees, those who were born in the mid to late 1990s, commonly referred to as "Generation Z". Employers are greatly aware of the impact that digital communication is having on the general population's presence during face to face interactions. Generation Z's reliance on social media will have an impact on their ability to use interpersonal communication skills to establish relationships with future supervisors and employers. The relationship between employees and their supervisors is essential to ensuring that an organization delivers its mission and reaches its strategic goals. This research paper discusses the numerous problems that are resulting from lack of interpersonal communication skills such as participation in open workplace discussions, the transference of various types of knowledge from one generation to the next, miscommunication, and finally, conflict between supervisors and employees. Finally, the paper provides theoretical guidelines that human resources professionals can use to help buffer communication problems within employment relationships and preserve necessary skills that are threatened by heavy reliance on social media and smartphone devices.

Keywords: Generation Z, Digital communication, Social networking platforms, Human Resources, Workplace relationships

INTRODUCTION

Interpersonal communication has been an essential part of building relationships that can be traced back to the beginning of human interaction. Individuals build relationships with one another through sending and receiving messages that have some effect on the receiver. If the message is received correctly, a bond is likely to evolve. In 1948, Harold Laswell, an American communication theorist, developed a model to describe how communication works (Hill, 2007). He stated that in order to understand how the communication process works, we need to ask several questions: "Who?", "Says what?", "In which channel?", "To whom?" and "With what effect?" (Hill, 2007). Later models of communication build on this one and are slightly more complex, describing communication being a transactional process, in which two individuals assign meaning to the interaction, sending and receiving messages, through multiple channels (Harris & Nelson, 2008). Furthermore, other researchers have concluded that what an individual achieves is directly connected to the messages he or she receives from an organization (Harris & Nelson, 2008). Heath and Bryant (2000) reiterated that a sender transmits messages to a receiver to stimulate a response from them. Even though the communication process is automatic, and doesn't require much thought, these concepts are applicable to our past and present culture and relationships, whether they are business-related or personal.

Interpersonal communication is affected by an individual's ability to express themselves whether they choose to speak or write. The Occupational Information Network, also known as ONET, is often used by individuals to discover suitable career paths. Employers use the same database to help them identify key knowledge, skills and abilities required for jobs. (National Center for O*NET Development, 2015) Data collectors affiliated with ONET define social skills as "developed capacities used to work with people to reach goals." (National Center for O*NET Development, 2015) The group titled "Social skills" is further broken down into five different parts: coordination, instruction, persuasion, service orientation, and social perceptiveness (National Center for O*NET Development, 2015). From observing the ranking system based on level of importance, Employers rank each of these as "very important" in almost all levels of positions. These include "level one" positions, jobs requiring very little preparation, leading up to "level five" positions, such as top leadership positions which

require an extensive amount of knowledge, training, and experience (National Center for O*NET Development, 2015). This means that almost all positions in the United States, even the most entry level, require effective communication as a base skill.

Much research has been done to identify numerous benefits resulting from businesses and educational institutions using social media and other forms of mobile communication. While positive benefits should not be discounted and we will most likely continue to see an increase in using such forms of communication in the future, an over-reliance on mobile communication and social media can pose potential problems in employment and educational settings. Problems with interpersonal communication can hinder the ability of both future and current employers to meet each other's needs. The reliance of the next generation, referred to as Generation Z, on smartphone devices and social media outlets can diminish their ability to communicate in an organizational setting, which can affect the overall operations of businesses. In the background section I will define the characteristics of Generation Z and recent information reported on their usage of digital communication channels. In the following sections, I will discuss the possible problems and challenges that can arise from reliance on digital communication channels, particularly in the workplace. Finally, in the recommendations section I propose guidelines that HR professionals can put into practice to diminish these problems and build effective relationships with the next generation of employees. Finally, in the limitations section, I will discuss some of the shortcomings of previous research and propose questions for future research.

BACKGROUND

The next generation of employees, commonly referred to as Generation Z are defined as those who were born in the mid-1990s and growing up in the early 2000s (Kaur, 2014). These individuals are beginning to enter the workforce and tend to rely on newer forms of digital communication. In order to assist organizations in building relationships with this next generation of talent, it is important to acknowledge the reasons that they frequently rely on the use of social media and smartphone technology for social interaction. Kaur (2014) confirmed one of the most commonly used forms of communication for Generation Z is the use of social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter. Kaur (2014) revealed that among people in their late teens and early 20s, the most common reasons for social media usage were to get information, engage in online discussions and, most often, entertain themselves. More recently, other researchers summarized that college students frequently relied on social media sites as a means to maintain previously existing relationships that were established offline, although much of their time was found to be spent simply browsing updates from friends, with little to no two-way interaction (Sponcil & Gitimu, 2013). Other reasons that younger generations use social media included building their self-esteem through disclosing personal opinions and projecting a preferred image online, gaining the support of others through social networking sites (Sponcil & Gitimu, 2013).

Other researchers recently found that Generation Z differs in their preferences for social media applications from Generation's X and Y, tending to value more privacy, often using applications such as Snapchat, a picture and video sharing app that shares content for a limited amount of time, and applications such as Whisper, where users post content anonymously (Kingston, 2014). Kingston (2014) concluded that this difference could also exist for the simple fact that these applications are newer and circulate through younger generations first. Although this information is fairly new and still developing it is clear that newer generations, such as Generation Z are connecting faster and in very different ways than the generations that lived before them.

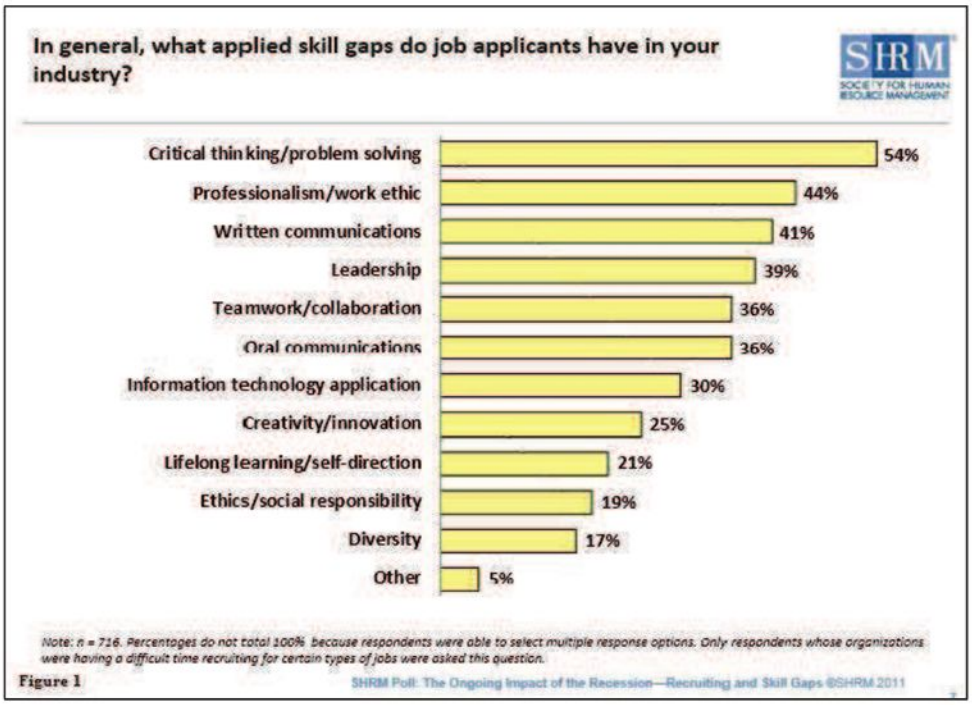
WORKPLACE PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH RELIANCE ON DIGITAL COMMUNICATION

Swarnalatha (2013) noted that the supervisor-employee relationship is one of the most important factors in employee retention. Swarnalatha (2013) further explained that communication is a key factor that human resources must use to engage employees, most effective when it is ongoing and well planned. Some of the main contributing factors to employee turnover are low job satisfaction, lack of clarity on an employee's role in an organization, and most importantly, the quality of the employee's relationships with his or her supervisor (SHRM, 2012). Interpersonal communication has a strong effect on all of

these factors, especially work relationships. If supervisors and employees do not engage in effective communication, employee performance will suffer and conflict can arise resulting in talented employees leaving. In 2011, the Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM) released survey findings from 2,286 randomly selected HR professionals across the U.S. in various industries and found that 52% stated they were having trouble filling positions at their companies (SHRM, 2011). While 54% of respondents stated that critical thinking and problem solving were the most important skills they found job applicants lacking, 41% stated that written communication in English was the most prominent that applicants lacked, as shown in Figure 1 (SHRM, 2011). In addition to lacking written communication skills, 36% of HR professionals also reported a strong need for both oral communication and the ability to work with a team. Although younger generations are entering the workforce with a great amount of knowledge and unique skills, such as being fluent and adaptable to new technologies, some of these which older generations might not possess, employers are still having a hard time finding those who have the ability to collaborate with others. Job applicants need to be able to communicate verbally and in writing to help solve problems in the workplace.

In the past, employers gave examples of communication problems such as lack of listening or simply not following instructions (Harris & Nelson, 2008). These problems are timeless and still occur today, regardless of communication choices. A supervisor could notice that a new employee may spend a large amount of time looking at their smartphone, and make the assumption that they are inconsiderately not fully listening to what they have to say. Newer generations have grown up with electronic devices and digital communication has become a major part of their daily life. Their heavy reliance on using such devices can cause numerous potential problems with how well they communicate in the workplace. Some generations who are just entering the workplace might not be aware of how they will be perceived by employers, and employers are not fully aware of how they will handle managing these newer generations and integrate them into working with older ones. Most importantly, interpersonal communication is an underlying aspect of relationship building and the only way to transfer knowledge from the generations that are leaving the workforce to the younger individuals who are staying or just entering.

FIGURE 1



SMARTPHONE USAGE AND EMOTIONAL ATTACHMENT

The use of social media applications on smartphone devices has become a regular part of daily living and some people believe that smartphones have become an extension of individual expression. Recently, researchers Roberts and Pirog (2013) have proven that people tend to experience an increased level of anxiety when they are separated from their phones, which has become a common problem in social and employment settings. Roberts and Pirog (2013) examined the behavior of younger generation's anxiety and motivations for frequent smartphone usage and came up with the phrase fear of missing out or FOMO for short. They claimed that younger generations have trouble refraining from checking updates on their smartphones for fear that they will lose connection with their social circles and miss current events (Roberts & Pirog, 2013). Other researchers have taken note of the emotional attachment that individuals have with their smartphones as well. Clayton, Leshner, and Almond (2015) observed the emotional responses of 40 IPhone users who were asked to complete cognitive tasks such as completing crossword puzzles, while separated from their cell phones. The researchers concluded that the participants, average age 21, experienced noticeable increases in heart rate and blood pressure in relation to anxiety of not being able to answer their ringing cell phones during the tasks they were asked to complete, and as a result, had trouble finishing them (Clayton et al., 2015). While this information may not apply to all situations and individuals, employers can conclude that a total ban of smartphone usage could slightly disrupt the productivity of their employee population, causing distress to employees who feel more at ease with their smartphone at their sides. On the other hand, frequent interruptions from smartphones and social media site usage can also create a problem by distracting employees, affecting the quality and productivity of their work. With appropriate policies and practices, employers can find a way to benefit from their employees' productivity while still allowing the use of digital media in the workplace.

Employers have recognized the popularity in using digital communication, such as these social networking sites, and many have begun to establish their own to use in the workplace. In 2014, researchers Peter Cardon and Bryan Marshall surveyed 227 business professionals, representing members of the baby boomer generation, Generation X and Generation Y on their attitudes and usage patterns of employer- established social networking platforms. These platforms are built similar to public social networking sites such as Facebook, but include the use of blogs and wikis (Cardon & Marshall, 2014). However, out of the Generation Y respondents, only 14.3% of professionals believed that the messages they send to co-workers on employer-established social networking platforms were efficient for team communication (Cardon & Marshall, 2014). Additionally, Cardon & Marshall found that both members of Generations X and Y believed that social networking platforms will one day replace e-mail as the traditional means of communication, yet they still find many shortcomings with relying on these channels of communication. Around only one-third of the survey respondents, members of Generation X, believed that the use of SNP's helped team members understand their roles more efficiently, increased team-member commitment and the overall quality of work (Cardon & Marshall, 2014). While social networking platforms and other forms of digital communication are becoming increasingly popular, it is important for employers to recognize the benefits of traditional forms of communication such as face-to-face conversations before investing heavily into such technology.

DECLINE OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Diercksen, DiPlacido, Harvey and Bosco (2013) predicted that employers will face a decline in interpersonal skills that will result from heavy reliance on smartphone and social media usage. Currently, many employers are observing that newer generations of employees are more comfortable in sending emails and text messages instead of calling someone or communicating face-to-face (Diercksen et al., 2015). Although many believe that newer generations are sometimes challenged in communicating face-to-face, Randstad U.S., a global human resources service company, produced a survey that investigated the preferences of 1,000 members of Generation Z aged 16 to 20, and Generation Y, aged 21 to 32 on their expectations of their future employers from 10 different countries including the United States, Brazil, Canada and the United Kingdom (Millennial Branding, 2014). The survey revealed that 51% of respondents from Generation Z claimed that they would prefer in-person communication, with 16% preferring email, and only 11% preferring instant messaging (Millennial Branding, 2014). While the percentage is slightly over one half of the surveyed population, it is not entirely clear about this same sample population in the United States and the preferences about the other half of the sample population. Regardless of what makes employees most comfortable, communicating in person is still very essential to business relationships.

TRANSFER OF KNOWLEDGE BETWEEN GENERATIONS

Each employee that is hired to work for any organization brings with them a unique set of knowledge, skills and abilities that have an impact on the company's overall success. Employees from previous generations have a longer history of work experiences that have provided them with a great amount of on-the-job training through social interactions with co-workers and supervisors. Most of these employees have worked during times that businesses did not have the options to use text messaging and social networks as a daily means of communication and established business relationships using primarily face-to-face communication. Through years of work experience and establishing relationships, certain types of knowledge are accumulated. Some researchers argue that some of these types of knowledge are harder to articulate, document, and share with others. One type of knowledge in particular, what researchers have referred to as tacit knowledge, is acquired through actual work experience and performance, basing future performance on that acquired knowledge (Jennex, 2009). Tacit knowledge is ambiguous and often hard for individuals to put into words in an effort to explain concepts to another person (Jennex, 2009). Employees who have worked over a period of years can sometimes turn their experience into explicit knowledge after reflecting on their actions, knowledge that is easy to explain and leaves little room for confusion (Jennex, 2009). This type of knowledge can be found in formal training programs and even textbooks. Venkitachalam (2014) summarized the importance of tacit knowledge in understanding a company's business processes, its customers and suppliers and, generally, knowing how to accomplish work-related tasks. A simple example of this would be knowing the right person to go to for specific information or resources. Having this type of knowledge or accessing it from another more experienced co-worker makes an employee more efficient and able to accomplish things faster. More experienced generations are likely to possess this type of knowledge whether they are aware of it or not, and may have difficulty explaining necessary information about tasks to a new employee, possibly a member of Generation Z. Employers cannot often put tacit knowledge, acquired over years of experience into company training courses or manuals, because this information is difficult to explain and document. Oftentimes, the best way to attempt to explain an issue would be through face-to-face communication and not through social media sites or text messaging. If newer employees such as members of Generation Z are unable to fully understand what is being explained, they will not benefit as greatly from relationships in the workplace. If Generation Z employees continue to rely on their preferred means of communication, they will perpetually miss out on opportunities to acquire this type of knowledge. Members of Generation Z will have to work at communicating with their mentors and supervisors more effectively to acquire this type of information so that they can more fully realize the benefits of face-to-face communication.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Employers are presently aware of the changing impact that the usage of smartphones and social media have on their employee population, especially newer generations. Companies have been weighing the costs and benefits of allowing such usage in the workplace. Overall, most businesses today use it to their advantage to reach out to their customers and enhance their public image. The ability of younger generations to adapt to new technologies is still a very useful skill that should not be ignored, and most businesses recognize that digital communication is the present norm and a great way to increase the speed of business processes. Employers are only beginning to witness the social interactions of Generation Z employees in entry-level positions, because they are still relatively new to the workforce, with little job experience. Even though there is a lot of uncertainty and lack of research, HR and employers can apply practices that they have learned through working with Generation Y and the group that they refer to as "Millennial's," as Generation Z shares some of this generation's characteristics. The following are some guidelines that employers and HR professionals can follow to buffer communication problems between multiple generations:

- Employers should make social media and smartphone policies job-related, stating what is expected of their employees when using social media and smartphone devices. Employers can legally prohibit harassment or negativity regarding their organization and its members, including releasing any private company information (Russell, 2011). Employers should communicate these expectations clearly to employees as changes are made to policies and upon hire.
- Emphasize the importance of oral and written communication skills in job descriptions, recruitment practices, training, and performance management systems.

- Use content posted on employer-established networking sites as a point of reference in face-to-face conversations and not as a primary means of communication. Supervisors who adopt forms of digital communication to work with their employees can help new employees feel more comfortable, and encourage them to build on oral communication skills, encouraging them to speak up in social settings. Younger generations are used to working from distant locations or at home and are particularly skilled at completing work in such a way, which also allows them more room for creativity (Ferri-Reed, 2014). Employers can build their own social networks to make younger employees feel comfortable because this type of communication channel is practically second-nature to them. These types of networking sites can be less worrisome because the type of material that is posted is at the discretion of the employer and can be addressed through policy.
- An employer can pair different generations together in hopes that they can exchange skills. For example, a more experienced employee could be paired with someone from Generation Z to learn how to use new types of digital communication such as smartphone applications or a work-related social networking site. On the other hand, the new employee from Generation Z can benefit from the relationship, becoming more comfortable with traditional face-to-face communication through instructing their coworkers on how to complete a task. Milligan (2014) referred to this overall process as reverse mentoring.
- Employers can establish work teams that include members of all generations. Joy and Haynes (2011) through administering a questionnaire in the UK found that employees tended to transfer more helpful knowledge to one another during mundane events they referred to as chance meetings, such as bumping into one another while passing in a hallway or a break-room. Employees who work in the same building are more likely to connect to one another, as opposed to those individuals who work as a team virtually. With this information, employers can somewhat predict that they will observe improved communication and a better understanding of knowledge that is being transferred between employees who work in close proximity.
- Employers can seek to involve new employees in volunteer events. Milligan (2014) found that many companies have helped employees of different age groups collaborate at volunteer events, outside their normal workdays. Employees began to feel more at ease in working with one another, which resulted in them beginning to question each other on how to do different things and pass knowledge back and forth (Milligan, 2014). Employers not only benefit from volunteer events giving their organization a positive public image, but relationships through these social interactions can be formed and transferred into an employee's work-related activities. Employers can take advantage of the multiple benefits of these events, as new generations of employees can develop more work-appropriate social skills to help them succeed in other areas of their work.
- Invest in additional training, if feasible. Employers can send employees to workshops to improve oral communication skills.

Helping members of Generation Z build interpersonal communication skills so that they feel more comfortable conversing with their immediate supervisors will strengthen supervisor-employee relationships, preventing much avoidable conflict and future turnover. Strengthening bonds will also increase the likelihood that important, more complex forms of knowledge will be passed down to this next generation of employees, which will ensure that an organization will survive in the future. Finally, employers should carefully weigh the costs, benefits, and employment laws related to smartphone and social media usage within their organizations and create policies that will accommodate their culture and help employees reach their highest levels of capability.

LIMITATIONS ON PAST RESEARCH

Most research that has been conducted on Generation Z only covers their current usage of social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter, and the majority of this generation of individuals is only entering the workforce in many entry-level positions. There is limited research that has been conducted in observance of their social skills in employment settings, only some minor assumptions and predictions made by individuals working with them in educational and employment settings. One reason why research on this topic is limited is because of the age of this generation and their lack of work experience, which could eventually provide them with more opportunities to get familiar with how to network and make conversations with others, including their co-workers and supervisors.

Another problem that past research has posed is that much of the studies that have been conducted are quantitative, only showing numerical data for the popularity of social media and smartphone application usage for different age groups. Much

of the research does not indicate the thought-processes and motivations behind the next generation's social media and smartphone usage. Simple observations of younger generations using social media and smartphones do not reveal the true reasons behind their behavior and can prove to be misleading.

Additionally, because digital communication usage patterns have only been studied through observation, researchers can only describe behavior and symptoms of these hypothetical problems, which makes it hard to pinpoint all possible causes. Finally, the many factors that can create problems with interpersonal communications are very complex and the many unknown causes of this problem cannot be pinpointed to one issue, such as frequently using digital communication.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Many members of younger generations tend to communicate through digital communication on a daily basis, and it is not clear about whether this has an effect on their ability to communicate in person and in writing. As smartphone applications change and offer new ways to connect with friends, family and co-workers, new options are available for communication and self-expression. More research on these types of communication should be conducted to reveal how the dynamics of interpersonal relationships are affected. More specifically, it would be most beneficial to research how the supervisor-employee relationship is affected by using different types of communication channels in daily work practices. Qualitative research on this subject could reveal the perceptions of varying generations, along with their true motivations behind their choice of communication channels. Employers can benefit from this knowledge and implement new forms of communication in their workplace accordingly. More importantly, another question to explore would be how the daily usage of varying communication channels, including digital communication, affect employee commitment to organizations, which will in turn help employers to understand how to maintain positive relationships with employees of differing age groups. Finally, longitudinal studies could reveal how this next generation of employees is performing and how their interpersonal communication skills have developed over time, after growing up using digital communication throughout various aspects of their lives.

CONCLUSION

Interpersonal communication is required in almost every position in employment, whether it is entry level or if it involves leading and managing others. Employees are relied upon to represent an organization to its customers and share information with co-workers and supervisors in order to reach a common goal. The change in options of communication channels has caused employers to become concerned with their effects on their work environments.

Multiple researchers have proven that there is a difference in beliefs regarding digital communication. Older generations often tend to view it as a hindrance to society and an addiction, but younger generations view it as an informational resource and a way to connect to others (Kingston, 2014; Sponcil & Gitimu, 2013). Other researchers acknowledged that younger generations are more efficient with using technology than older generations, but they predicted that, overall, the difference in technological skill levels between generations will decrease over time and technology will become easier to use (*Digital Natives,* 2013). Employers might perceive these same differences of perceptions between different generations in their employee populations, but can work to harness the benefits of digital communication to retain Generation Z employees in the future. Using training and development, mentoring relationships and prioritizing written and oral communication skills in recruitment and performance management, employers can increase the likelihood that new generations of employees will stay for longer periods of time with their organizations. Employers with the help of HR can weigh the benefits of using different forms of communication to create a plan to help develop future generations of employees and help them to collaborate with older generations. Researchers have proven that oral communication is still a great time and money saver, as it provides the opportunity for individuals to instantly clarify information, prevent future anticipated problems and discuss confidential information (Lankapalli, 2013). On the other hand, digital forms of communication such as email and video-conferencing can save employers money on travel costs (*Digital Natives,* 2013). Also, digital communication can benefit employers because it produces a record of conversations for documentation purposes. Using this information, employers must acquire the ability to decipher which channels of communication are most appropriate in each business situation and train their employees accordingly.

Employers will also have to work to change their corporate cultures to adapt to changes in the use of technology in their daily work routines, so that younger generations can establish mutually beneficial relationships with older generations, which will result in the transfer of valuable knowledge. To help employers build these relationships, HR can benefit from learning about the expectations of the next generation of employees in order to accommodate any roadblocks they might anticipate when it comes to helping them acquire new skills, including building upon their social capabilities. Through careful consideration of possible communication problems in the workplace, HR can work to develop a plan to diminish the negative effects of weakened interpersonal communication skills and ensure that their organizations survive through preserving and transferring knowledge from one generation to the next.

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Summary: The article gives information on different work ethics between Baby Boomers and Generation Z based on the Multidimensional Work Ethic Profile to operationalize seven dimensions of work ethic. With the increase of Generation Z entering the labor market, the study indicates that management leaders cannot assume the appropriate of traditional management practices work, which generational differences matter when it stimulates restructuring the job design in the organization to fit for employees. The research indicates the level of work ethics varies by generation helpful in finding the shared and unshared work ethics between Baby Boomers and Generation Z. This implication may be needed by the leaders who will lead new Generation Z employees successfully and reduce conflict so that may arise between those two generations by promoting mutual understanding.

Relevance: The study is related to the topic of considering the work ethics of Generation Z with the older generation which is a great reason to understand the serious generational issue of young people in the workplace. Also, this article proves the knowledge of the generational gap necessary for making a motivational sphere that is beneficial for both generations working together.

Place in the paper: Literature review

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Generational Work Ethic Differences: From Baby Boomers to Gen Z

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Abstract: This study examines work ethic differences between Baby Boomers (57-75 years old) and Generation Z (Gen Z; 25 years old and under). The Multidimensional Work Ethic Profile (MWEP) is used to operationalize seven dimensions of work ethic. Findings indicate that the level of work ethic varies dramatically by generation. Specifically, the work ethic of Baby Boomer respondents varies significantly from the work ethic for Gen Z respondents across nearly every MWEP dimension. This may

have important implications for corporate leaders, who are typically Baby Boomers, as they often lead new Gen Z employees, but also for reducing conflict that may arise between older and younger employees by promoting understanding.
Keywords: Work ethic, work commitment, generational differences

Work ethic is commonly viewed as a construct incorporating work-related attitudes and values (Li *et al.*, 2020; Porter, 2010) and has evolved with contributions from Judeo-Christian beliefs, Martin Luther, John Calvin, Puritans, Benjamin Franklin's utilitarianism, as well as the writings of early 20th century scholar, Max Weber (Porter, 2010; Weber, 1958). Weber, who is often credited with developing the concept of Protestant work ethic (PWE; Chusmir and Koberg, 1988; Hill and Petty, 1995; Hirschfeld and Field, 2000; Kalberg, 1996; Porter, 2010; Rosenthal *et al.*, 2011; Smrt and Karau, 2011) highlighted the value of work commitment suggesting devotion to work is tied to personal worth (Zellars and Kacmar, 1999). Weber raised questions as to why some people place a greater importance on work and appear more conscientious than others, and sociologists such as Karl Mannheim have put additional attention on generational changes in values, particularly for how "shared consciousness" (Rauvola *et al.*, 2019: 2) is brought on when those in a certain age group develop similar attitudes and values as they experience a common socio-cultural world (Connolly, 2019; Festing and Schäfer, 2014; Kalleberg and Marsden, 2019; McElroy and Morrow, 2010). Taken together, generational differences in work ethic has evolved as a rich and impactful literature, with the question of how values and attitudes shape workplace behavior emerging as a commonly explored issue in the field of management and organizational behavior (Gursoy *et al.*, 2008; Hansen and Leuty, 2012).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Generational Similarities and Differences

The existence of differences in the overall work ethic between generations of workers is generally accepted (Cogin, 2012; Hirschfeld and Field, 2000; Loscocco and Kalleberg, 1988) and supported by generation theory which argues that to understand the profile of prototypical individuals in a generation, researchers can "generalize cohort differences to the mean cohort level of each generation" (Goh and Lee, 2018: 21). Admittedly, there are a few studies suggesting generations may be more alike than different (Hansen and Leuty, 2012), and some have suggested Gen Z and Baby Boomers might share the same competitive nature or strong work ethic (Agovino, 2022; Seemiller and Grace, 2016). Regardless, with their labor force participation increasing, it is important to examine similarities and differences in work ethic across generations, so managers should "seek to understand how well the organization provides important work-related factors" for different cohorts of employees (Mencl and Lester, 2014: 269).

Finding research-based studies about work-related generational differences is not difficult. Early studies found differences in the work ethic of younger and older individuals (Cherrington, 1977; Cherrington *et al.,* 1979; Loscocco and Kalleberg, 1988; Taylor and Thompson, 1976), and researchers continue to contribute to this

growing literature (Hansen and Leuty, 2012; McElroy and Morrow, 2010; Mencl and Lester, 2014; Yi *et al.*, 2015). That said, as Gen Z is just beginning to enter the workforce, there is less research data on similarities and differences between these new labor force participants and their generational predecessors. Ortega *et al.* (2019), however, provide a useful research review of generational characteristics including Gen Z. Their summation of the literature describes Baby Boomers as idealistic, optimistic, and positive, as well as intellectually arrogant with a sense of self that is superior, powerful, and important. In contrast, they describe key literature findings about Gen Z as valuing intelligence/knowledge more than a degree, talkative and tech-oriented, motivated by challenging assignments, valuing a flexible schedule, and wanting to avoid meetings (Ortega *et al.*, 2019). Earlier focus group data suggests that Baby Boomers characterize themselves as being in charge, having a "live to work" philosophy, and respecting authority (Gursoy *et al.*, 2008). Furthermore, they hold core values about hard work as the key to success with "a strong traditional 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. work ethic" (Seemiller and Grace, 2016: 2). Conversely, Gen Z data suggests they are loyal, career minded, entrepreneurial, compassionate, responsible, technologically savvy, and community minded (Hampton and Keys, 2017; Pueschel *et al.*, 2020; Seemiller and Grace, 2016). Survey results of 1000 recent college graduates from the National Association of Colleges and Employers suggests Gen Z works to live (instead of lives to work like Baby Boomers); Gen Z carries a different attitude about work – it's not just being happy to get a job anymore, it's a sense of assertiveness in expecting to know details of what a job will entail before signing on (Maurer, 2022).

Of course, some of the labels ascribed to different age groups could be seen as stereotyping, but the scholarly research literature backs up many of these claims with evidential data. So, when the Society for Human Resource Management describes Gen Z as feeling more emotionally distressed than Baby Boomers (25% of Gen Z compared to 8% of Boomers) and wanting more purpose and meaning in their work, employers start listening to find new ways to attract and retain younger workers with wellness programs, student debt repayment, and more flexibility (Agovino, 2022). But there is more researchers and practitioners still need to learn about Gen Z.

Reasons Why Generational Differences Matter

HR experts are lining up to share opinions on how the workforce is changing (e.g., Agovino, 2022; Deichler, 2021; Dua *et al.*, 2022). With Baby Boomers sitting in many management positions, leading younger employees (Gursoy *et al.*, 2013), and holding a high degree of institutional memory and expert knowledge, they have a considerable impact on the workplace and (given the economy and Covid-19 pandemic) some are choosing to stay in the labor force longer (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022). That many Baby Boomers and Gen Zers are working alongside each other or, at times, with older workers reporting to younger managers, makes understanding their work values more relevant in an effort to reduce conflict (Cogin, 2012). The momentum behind this need is even greater since Baby Boomers are projected to make up about 27% of the U.S. workforce in 2025, with Gen Z comprising almost 20% in 2025 (a number that will rise over time as Gen Z ages up; Department of Labor, as cited in Lettink, 2019). As Hess notes, "organizational leaders can no longer assume that traditional management practices work" and need to understand generational differences to guide

"redesigns of organizational structure and culture…to adapt job-to-employee fit for all employees" (2020: 628). The adverse consequences of a knowledge shortfall are enormous, particularly when taking a person-organization fit perspective (Mencl and Lester, 2014) since mismatches between job design and employees can negatively affect job attitudes (Porter, 1969; Cennamo and Gardner, 2008; Mahmoud *et al.*, 2021). Hence, understanding the work ethic of employees is a requirement for any company as values drive worker engagement, job/organizational commitment, and economically prosperous cultures (Hansen, 1963; Hofstede, 1984; Li *et al.*, 2020; Mahmoud *et al.*, 2021; Porter, 2010; Woehr *et al.*, 2007).

The Current Research

While much is already known about generational differences in work attitudes and values, questions remain. First, while there is considerable literature on earlier generations in the workplace, there is less available on this newest cohort to enter the labor force (Goh and Lee, 2018; Mencl and Lester, 2014). A search on APA PsycINFO in early 2023 identifies only 36 journal articles published between 2000-2022 on Gen Z with ties to work, career, and job issues. Instead, much of the published research compares Baby Boomers to Generation X or Millennial employees (e.g., Festing and Schäfer, 2014; Gursoy *et al.*, 2008; Gursoy *et al.*, 2013; Mencl and Lester, 2014; Twenge *et al.*, 2010), and, as noted by Yi *et al.* (2015), the literature often focuses on only one generational cohort. Furthermore, some of the emerging data on Gen Z is from non-U.S. samples (e.g., China and Australia; Goh and Lee, 2018; Tang *et al.*, 2020), so while there is a dearth of literature on Gen Z, there is also a need for additional research on how this generation differs from other generations as they enter the U.S. workforce in droves.

Another concern is that some of the extant literature on generational differences explores narrow definitions of work values (e.g., central life interest, motivational factors or aspects of a job; Jurkiewicz, 2000; Kalleberg and Marsden, 2019; Yang and Guy, 2006). Published findings may, therefore, be incomplete or misleading since they focus on only one or two dimensions of work ethic (Miller *et al.,* 2001). One way to combat this is to employ an instrument with a broader definition of work values, such as the Multidimensional Work Ethic Profile (MWEP; Meriac *et al.*, 2010; Miller *et al.*, 2001; Ortega *et al.*, 2019; Van Ness *et al.*, 2010).

Add to these concerns that "empirical evidence regarding generational differences in the workplace is still scarce and further research is needed" (Festing and Schäfer, 2014: 268). This sentiment is shared by Twenge *et al.* (2010) and Mencl and Lester (2014) who note a need for more empirical data to reduce stereotyping, to increase understanding of generational cohorts, and to identify similarities so synergies can be emphasized. If organizations continue to assume that they can employ their existing methods of motivating and engaging Gen Z as they've used with older generations, managers will have ignored the potential for differing values and will not achieve the results they expect (Cogin, 2012). Therefore, the goal of the current research is to address gaps in the literature and to replace stereotypes with evidence-based understanding. The current research seeks results that will "present HR practitioners, employers, and managers with a new perspective" on employee "workplace perceptions and proclivities" (Leslie *et al.*, 2021: 171). Understanding the values of "the

generational mix" working today will enable organizations to build "a positive and productive work environment" (Guérin-Marion *et al.*, 2018: 56).

Seven Dimensions of Work Ethic

Work ethic refers to an individual's commitment to the importance of hard work; one's values, attitudes, and beliefs about work factor into this ethic (Li *et al.*, 2020). A variety of measurement approaches have been developed over the years. The often-utilized lottery question which focuses on the value of work as more than just a means to financial reward (i.e., "If you were to get enough money to live comfortably as you would like for the rest of your life, would you continue to work or would you stop working?"; de Voogt and Lang, 2017: 399) and the Work Values questionnaire (WVal) which assesses the importance of personal values at work (e.g., success, status/power, job security; Consiglio *et al.*, 2017) are just two examples. The current study employed the widely used Multidimensional Work Ethic Profile (MWEP) in its shorter 28-item format as it provides a comprehensive measure of work ethic, assessing seven conceptually distinct components or dimensions in a succinct, reliable, and valid instrument (Meriac *et al.*, 2013). The MWEP has seven dimensions: Leisure, Wasted Time, Self-Reliance, Work Centrality, Delay of Gratification, Belief in Hard Work, and Morality/Ethics (Miller *et al.,* 2001) and has been applied in studies of work ethic across a variety of contexts (e.g., entrepreneurs, correctional officers, nurses; Gorman and Meriac, 2016; Jobe, 2014a; Tipu and Ryan, 2016) as well as in studies of generational differences (e.g., Jobe, 2014b). Discussion of each component of the MWEP, with related hypotheses, follows.

Self-Reliance. Self-reliance is described as a reliance on internal resources to provide direction to actions. It enables self-expression, independent thinking, clarifies self-identity, and paves a path for pursuit of one's own goals. In the work environment, it is considered an individual's drive toward independence without the need to rely on others in task accomplishments and has been shown to be related to intrinsic motivation (Grabowski *et al.*, 2021).

Self-reliant individuals are independent and do not look toward others for standards of behavior. As such, they are less likely to require restraint of their behaviors in order to meet an external standard (Meriac, 2012). They are also more likely to desire autonomy in their behaviors (Miller *et al.*, 2001) and interactions with others. Recent research found that self-reliance is negatively related to perceived level of ego depletion, given the noted negative effects of ego depletion (e.g., increased counterproductive work behavior, decreased work engagement), organizations would be well served to reduce the likelihood that individuals experience depletion (Bazzy, 2018). Therefore, the following hypothesis is presented:

> *Hypothesis 1: Generation has a significant effect on the dimension of self-reliance, such that Baby Boomers will report greater self-reliance than Gen Z.*

Morality/Ethics. This dimension is defined as the tendency to engage in just and moral behavior. In both the Protestant Work Ethic and in the Islamic Work Ethic, one does not take from the employer what is not due and one is expected to conscientiously and attentively provide reciprocating services for benefits derived (Cf. Miller *et al.*,

2001; Murtaza *et al.*, 2016). The terms "ethics" and "morality" are often used interchangeably as a way of referring to the manner in which people act or are expected to act. In this study of work ethic, "morality and ethics" are combined to describe the belief in a just and moral existence (Miller *et al.,* 2001).

Morality/ethics literature with students as subjects has received considerable attention. Recent examples include moral reasoning and moral development (Bruess and Pearson, 2002; Pearson and Bruess, 2001; Snodgrass and Behling, 1996), academic ethics (Gbadamosi, 2004), academic dishonesty (Rawwas *et al.,* 2004), management education and business ethics (Heath *et al.*, 2019), and ethical decision making (Nill and Schibrowsky, 2005). For example, Leslie *et al.* (2021) were able to demonstrate that Gen Z shares an interest in working for companies with a ethical/moral compass from their university student sample.

Interestingly, moral awareness has also recently been shown to influence sustainable performance (Hussain *et al.*, 2021). A recent study published in the *Journal of Business Ethics* (Weeks and Schaffert, 2019) focused on meaningfulness of work, how employees can seek opportunities for moral development, and on the provision of a meaningful workplace. Their mixed method study found that generations define meaningfulness differently, with Millennials focusing on serving others and seeing lives improved while Baby Boomers focus on helping others achieve goals and reaching personal goals. Moreover, different generations were found to carry stereotyped views about whether other generations value meaning and ethical value in their work. While there may be variability between different sources of finding meaning in a job, their data demonstrated "all employees are seeking meaning" (Weeks and Schaffert, 2019: 1057). Since researchers have identified "stereotypes about young people as less giving and kind" and that older individuals carry some "cynicism" about the moral values of younger generations (Hookway and Woodman, 2021: 842), understanding Gen Z's and Baby Boomers' attitudes toward the morality and ethics of work continues to be needed. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

> *Hypothesis 2: Generation has a significant effect on the dimension of morality/ethics, such that Baby Boomers will place greater importance on morality than Gen Z.*

Leisure. Leisure is defined as a desire for more discretionary time or downtime (McNall *et al.*, 2009) and is presumed to include a desire for a flexible work schedule and enhanced freedom from work restrictions. In the 21st Century, workers are bombarded with endless emails, virtual impromptu meetings, and a need to be accessible in off-hours; these demands on an individual's time and attention may diminish the work satisfaction of an employee and increase their desire for downtime (Cf. Rojewski and Hill, 2017; Ter Hoeven *et al.*, 2016). Indeed, a large-scale longitudinal study of over 16,500 students demonstrated that leisure values have increased over time (particularly between Baby Boomers and Millennials; Twenge *et al.*, 2010).

A strong pro-leisure orientation may be the antithesis of a strong pro-work ethic (Buchholz, 1978a; Miller *et al.,* 2001; Tsaur and Yen, 2018; Weber, 1958) as workers have been known to trade their leisure time for their jobs (Schor, 1992) and as work can be a defining element in an individual's identity (Porter, 2010). Other studies find that

a high leisure orientation and a high work ethic are not necessarily opposite ends of a spectrum (Furnham, 1990; Furnham and Rose, 1987; Pryor and Davies, 1989; Tang, 1993). These studies propose that individuals who receive fulfillment from work are not necessarily excluded from receiving fulfillment from leisure activities and vice versa. Thus, one could have a strong leisure ethic as well as a strong work ethic.

While there are contradictory findings in the literature, recent research suggests that, across a range of studies, younger employees rate work as less central to their lives and value leisure more (Twenge, 2010). Furthermore, while older generations have been characterized as achievement-focused workaholics, flexibility is one of the main factors Gen Z is looking for in a job with the line between work life and personal life quite blurry (Twenge, 2023). Twenge, for example, describes a Gen Z job applicant who assumed that "she could stop working if she'd met her goals for the day" (2023: 464). So, although the literature reveals some contradictory findings, the overall evidence supports the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: Generation has a significant effect on the dimension of leisure, such that Gen Z will desire greater leisure time than Baby Boomers.

Hard Work. This is the intense focus on completing tasks and it is motivated by a belief that concentrated effort is the proper method of working. It is a presumption that one becomes a better person and can achieve goals and objectives through a sustained commitment to productivity. Research suggests that an individual who is committed to hard work perceives it as an important and worthy activity (Fluegge-Woolf, 2014), works long hours to achieve organizational goals (Tipu and Ryan, 2016), and takes pride in the quality of their contributions to organizational success (Van Ness *et al*., 2010). There is a belief in the virtue of hard work (Jonck *et al.*, 2017) as an individual committed to hard work can overcome almost any obstacle, achieve personal goals, and become a better person (Miller *et al.,* 2001). Furnham (1984) found that individuals who subscribe to the tenants of the Protestant work ethic are strongly predisposed to a hard work commitment, and Buchholz (1978b) found that hard work is a belief system almost indistinguishable from other views such as Marxist-related and humanistic belief systems.

Older and younger employees may have different perceptions of what actually comprises hard work. In a study of four generational cohorts (i.e., Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y), Cogin (2012) reported "the value placed on 'hard work' showed a clear pattern of decline with younger generations" (Cogin, 2012: 2287). In fact, hard work was found to be the most important work value for Baby Boomers, while for Generation Y it was leisure (Cogin, 2012). In addition, data recently collected from 350,000 U.K. workers demonstrates that Baby Boomers work about 30 shifts per month at an average of 8.2 hours/shift while Gen Z works 18 shifts per month at an average length of 7.4 hours – that's about 45% more hours for Baby Boomers than their Gen Z counterparts (HRnews, 2021). That said, Twenge's recent findings suggest that "Gen Z is highly practical and realizes the importance of hard work" (2023: 467). Despite some of these conflicting findings, the data available thus far leans toward the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4: Generation has a significant effect on the dimension of hard work, such that Baby Boomers will place greater value on hard work than Gen Z.

Centrality of Work. This is a mindset that work for the sake of working has its own rewards. In other words, work centrality is characteristic of an individual who considers work-engagement crucial to a complete and fulfilling life. Work centrality is also a determinant in psychological contracts, work engagement, job satisfaction, and turnover intention (Bal and Kooij, 2011). It has been found to be predictive of dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior (Meriac and Gorman, 2017).

A study of work ethic across career stages discovered significant differences in multiple dimensions of work ethic; however, it found no evidence to suggest differences in centrality of work (Pogson *et al.,* 2003). However, an earlier study by van der Velde *et al.* (1998) suggested that there is a connection between age and centrality of work. Their research involved studying three age groups of young adults: 18-year-olds, 22-year-olds, and 26-year-olds. They concluded that each group became more work centered over time. Similarly, a generational shift in the centrality of work has been demonstrated in a student sample with more students in recent years indicating "work is just making a living" and fewer students responding in recent years that "work is a central part of life" (Twenge and Kasser, 2013). Smola and Sutton (2002) found that younger generations were less likely to believe that work should be a central part of their life; focus group data confirmed this finding with Baby Boomers living to work and younger employees working to live (Gursoy *et al.*, 2008). Twenge (2010) reports Baby Boomers reflect higher work centrality while Generation X and Generation Y view work as less central to their lives. Similarly, Twenge *et al.* (2010) found differences in work centrality amongst generations with Baby Boomers scoring significantly higher than Generation X and Millennials. Exploring the differences in work ethic among three generations of nurses, Jobe (2014a) found that Baby Boomers had the highest mean scores in centrality of work and wasted time. In a rare generational study including Gen Z, centrality of work was rated significantly lower for Gen Z than the other generations tested (Baby Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y; Ortega *et al.*, 2019). Based on the results of this literature, the following is hypothesized:

Hypothesis 5: Generation has a significant effect on the dimension of centrality of work, such that Baby Boomers will see work as more central to life than Gen Z.

Wasted Time. Wasted time refers to the extent of value an individual places on the productive use of time. In the context of a work environment, it signifies a continuum with one end representing a high commitment to the efficient allocation of time to task accomplishment and the other to a laissez-faire approach to the value of work productivity where idle time is not considered problematic. The efficient and constructive use of time is consistent with a strong work ethic (Herman, 2002), and it has been long understood that improved performance is inexorably linked to efficient use of time (Mudrack, 1999). Poor time management and procrastination have been identified as an obstacle to productivity (Dembo and Eaton, 2000).

While a number of studies investigate how workers waste time (Aftab, 2003; Bauza, 2006; Donkin, 2002; Gimein, 1999; Libet *et al.,* 2001), there is little scholarly literature regarding the value different generations place on work productivity versus accepting wasted time. A recent dissertation identified that members of different generations have different work values, such as the need to be busy all the time; however, that study did not include Gen Z (Brown-Crowder, 2018). Another useful finding comes from Twenge's (2023) published research wherein younger generations were more concerned with getting work done (i.e., results) than working a full 9-to-5 day (Twenge, 2023). If that means that being continually productive is more important to Baby Boomers, then it is hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 6: Generation has a significant effect on the dimension of wasted time, such that Baby Boomers will place a greater emphasis on productivity than Gen Z.

Delay of Gratification. Delayed gratification is described as the tendency to postpone rewards until a later time. It is the ability to defer short-term rewards in order to achieve a future goal. An individual with this ability is able to choose and sustain a course of action for the achievement of a long-term goal even though there are tempting alternatives for short-term gratification (Reynolds and Schiffbauer, 2005). Impulsive behaviors are subdued, and the individual possesses a faith and trust in management's willingness and ability to sustain an environment in which long-term goals are achievable (Liu and Yu, 2017).

Delay of gratification has been studied relative to socioeconomic status and impulse buying (Wood, 1998), job performance over time (Liu and Yu, 2017), affective decision-making and perspective taking (Prencipe and Zelazo, 2005), gender (Silverman, 2003; Witt, 1990), life themes and motivations among students re-entering a university environment (Bauer and Mott, 1990), organizational satisfaction and commitment (Witt, 1990), procedural justice and distributive justice relationship (Joy and Witt, 1992), and impulsive choices and problem behaviors (Wulfert *et al.,* 2002). A few studies have examined the differences between generations. Results of these studies suggest that delay of gratification is greater for Baby Boomers than for other generations (Meriac *et al.*, 2010; Phillips, 2016; van der Walt *et al.*, 2017; Witt, 1990; Wulfert *et al.,* 2002). Based on the literature results, the following is hypothesized:

Hypothesis 7: Generation has a significant effect on the dimension of delay of gratification, such that Baby Boomers will emphasize delay of gratification more than Gen Z.

METHODS

Sample and Procedures

Two samples were used for this study. The first sample, college juniors and seniors, was selected from a small northeastern college. Participation in the survey was voluntary and administered via an online survey. There were no inducements for participation. Anonymity was guaranteed and no identifying items were included on the questionnaire.

The second sample, workforce professionals, was drawn from businesses in a wide range of industries, including manufacturing, merchandising, general services, financial services, technologies, drugs, medical supplies, and banking. The surveys were distributed to individuals via an online survey. The online survey collection was selected as it provided for efficiency (Kaplowitz *et al.,* 2004) as well as speed and flexibility (Best *et al*., 2001).

The combined total sample size was 131 individuals. The sample size of Baby Boomers was 68, with a mean age of 58.47 (SD = 1.31). This age falls right in the middle of Pew Research Center's defined ages for Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964; Dimock, 2019). All respondents fell into the appropriate age group with no outliners. The Baby Boomer sample had a gender distribution of 46% female and 54% male. The sample size of Gen Z was 63, with a mean age of 22.46 (SD = 1.77), again falling directly within the guidelines for Gen Z (Dimock, 2019). The Gen Z sample had a gender distribution of 48% female and 52% male.

Variables

Generation. This investigation uses "age" as a way to classify generational cohorts (i.e., Baby Boomers 57-75 years old and Gen Z 25 years old and under), an approach that has been utilized by other researchers studying generations and work ethics (e.g., Joshi *et al.*, 2010; Weeks and Schaffert, 2019).

Work Ethic. The short form for the multidimensional work ethic profile (Meriac *et al.*, 2013) was used to measure the seven dimensions of work ethic. The scale had 28 items, in random order, and used a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 5 = Strongly Agree to 1 = Strongly Disagree. The seven dimensions measured in the study were Self-Reliance, Morality/Ethics, Leisure, Hard Work, Centrality of Work, Wasted Time, and Delay of Gratification. Each dimension was assessed using four items. The survey and the scales have previously been subjected to psychometric validation (Meriac *et al.*, 2013). Cronbach's alphas were computed for the sample which yielded the following levels of reliability: Self-Reliance (0.84), Morality/Ethics (0.91), Leisure (0.79), Hard Work (0.86), Centrality of Work (0.90), Wasted Time (0.81), and Delay of Gratification (0.67). All reliabilities, with the exception of Delay of Gratification, were within the acceptable range. Therefore, results of delay of gratification will not be reported due to the scale unreliability.

RESULTS

The means, standard deviations, and two-tailed Pearson correlations were calculated for the seven dimensions of work ethic. The results can be seen in Table 1. Cronbach's alpha calculations are inserted on the table's diagonal axis. The means and standard deviations for all variables by generation can be found in Table 2.

Table 1
Pearson Correlation Matrix of the Factors of Work Ethic

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Self-Reliance	Morality	Leisure	Hard Work	Centrality	Wasted Time	Delay Gratification
Self-Reliance	3.26	0.94	0.84						
Morality	4.52	0.79	0.33**	0.91					
Leisure	3.17	0.67	0.39**	0.26**	0.79				
Hard Work	3.98	0.81	0.41**	0.62**	0.05	0.86			
Centrality	4.23	0.82	0.36**	0.83**	0.04	0.71**	0.90		
Wasted Time	4.12	0.64	0.52**	0.83**	0.18*	0.73**	0.82**	0.81	
Delay Gratification	2.93	0.45	0.24**	-0.03	-0.02	0.03	-0.05	0.14	0.67

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed).

Table 2
Means and Standard Deviations of the Factors of Work Ethic by Generation Status

	Generation	
Factor Name	Gen Z	Baby Boomers
	(n = 63)	(n = 68)
Self-Reliance	3.06 (0.87)	3.49 (0.95)
Morality	4.18 (0.95)	4.82 (0.44)
Leisure	3.04 (0.81)	3.29 (0.50)
Hard Work	3.76 (0.86)	4.20 (0.70)
Centrality	3.79 (0.86)	4.63 (0.53)
Wasted Time	3.81 (0.61)	4.42 (0.54)
Delay Gratification	3.02 (0.49)	2.85 (0.41)

Note: Data collected on a five-point scale (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree).
Note: A larger mean indicates greater support for the importance of the work ethic factor.

A Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was used to assess the main hypotheses. The results of the analysis can be found in Table 2. There was a statistically significant overall effect of generation (Baby Boomers vs. Gen Z (F (1, 129) = 29.142, $p < 0.001$). The overall effect was large with the Partial Eta^2 of 0.184 and generation accounted for approximately 18% of the variance in the overall work ethic dimension. Based on the significance of the overall relationship, individual univariate F-tests were completed to assess the individual effects of generation on the various hypothesized dimensions of work ethic. As shown in Table 3, there were statistically significant differences for all six reported dimensions of work ethic. However, the direction of the effect for Leisure was not in the hypothesized direction. Therefore, the results provide support for Hypotheses 1, 2, and 4 – 6.

In addition to the statistical significance of the relationships, it is important to note the effect size of the relationships. According to Field (2013), of the supported hypothesized relationships, two would be considered medium effects (Self-Reliance, $\eta^2 = 0.06$; Hard Work, $\eta^2 = 0.07$) and three would be considered large effects (Morality, $\eta^2 = 0.16$; Centrality, $\eta^2 = 0.27$; Wasted Time, $\eta^2 = 0.23$). The only relationships that would have been considered small effect sizes are for the hypothesis that was not supported (Leisure, $\eta^2 = 0.04$).

Table 3
Test of Main Effects and Tests of Generation on Work Ethic Factors

IV Name	DV Name	Wilks' Lambda (F)	Univariate F	Partial Eta^2
Generation		0.60 (29.14)***		0.18
	Self-Reliance		7.49**	0.06
	Morality		25.15***	0.16
	Leisure		4.94*	0.04
	Hard Work		10.165**	0.07
	Centrality		47.03***	0.27
	Wasted Time		37.31***	0.23
	Delay Gratification		4.26*	0.03

Notes *p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; ***p < 0.001 N = 131

DISCUSSION

The extant literature supports that "the fundamentally different experiences and events faced by different generations during their developing years may produce different expectations and preferences about work" (Twenge *et al.*, 2010: 1121). The current research supports these general findings. Except for Leisure and Delay of Gratification, five of the seven subcomponents differed across the two generations examined with effect size findings in the "medium" to "large" range. The intersection of Gen Z and Baby Boomers in organizations comes as Gen Z enters the workforce and as Baby Boomers near retirement (Goh and Lee, 2018), as the Great Recession's effects are still felt, and as younger workers and the Covid-19 Pandemic's effects are driving workplace and lifestyle change (Lowrey, 2017; Maurer, 2022; Parker *et al.*, 2022).

Study Limitations and Directions for Future Research

It is important to note limitations of the current study as these limitations may be addressed in future research. First, the current research focused only on age/generation. Cultural differences, socio-economic status, race/ethnicity, education level, and gender (Festing and Schäfer, 2014; Hansen and Leuty, 2012; Kalleberg and Marsden, 2019; Mencl and Lester, 2014; Twenge and Kasser, 2013; Yi *et al.*, 2015) may also account for variance in work values and should be included in future analyses.

Second, a reevaluation of the MWEP may be needed. There is the distinct possibility that it is time to examine the work ethic construct and assess if questions need to be modified and if additional variables or factors need to be incorporated. Since the scale was originally validated in 2002, considerable changes have been made to the ways in which work is being completed and there are very different expectations from employers regarding when and how work is being completed (see Chang, 2022). For example, Leisure and Delay of Gratification had the smallest effect sizes and the lowest reliability (both below 0.80). Perhaps there is the need to reevaluate those subscales in future research, and since multicollinearity between subcomponents may be causing these issues, future research could address these concerns.

Another direction for future research is to incorporate the meaningfulness of work, measured with the Comprehensive Meaningful Work Scale (Lips-Wiersma and Wright, 2012) to studies of work ethic. Such data could provide useful insights into the different ways older and younger workers find meaning in their work. Finally, studies about work ethic and generational differences need to be repeated periodically, as new generations enter the workforce and older generations retire. Future research should be directed at longitudinal and replication studies, using the MWEP, CMWS, or other scales to continue to understand how values change and how those shifts shape organizations over time.

Implications for Practice

In terms of practical implications, the more that is known about how employees of different generations value work in their lives, the more organizational leaders can adjust policies and practices accordingly. The cost of not addressing generational differences in work values is substantial (Cogin, 2012), with turnover (Gursoy *et al.*, 2013) and quiet quitting (Harter, 2022) affecting organizational profitability and

performance. The differences in work ethic identified between Baby Boomers and Gen Z provides organizations an opportunity to become more aware and attuned to the commonalities among and differences between cohorts of employees – and to act on that knowledge. For example, results of the current study find commonalities across generations in the areas of morality and centrality of work. Leaders could further explore these commonalities, attempt to assess why it is these commonalities exist, and then use this as a stepping-stone for building greater understanding across generations.

There are further steps that organizations can take to bridge the generation gap. Employers should engage their employees (young and older) in understanding their specific lifestyle and work values; doing so will enable Baby Boomer and Gen Z employees to have a voice in workplace and job design (maybe using Appreciative Inquiry; Gursoy *et al.*, 2008), so they can contribute to the organization effectively and positively (Baum, 2020; Cennamo and Gardner, 2008; Mencl and Lester, 2014). Organizations could also adjust their recruitment and benefit packages to appeal to diverse work values across age groups; doing so can lead to "increased employee productivity, morale and employee retention" (Mahmoud *et al.*, 2020: 394). For instance, employers might offer more paid time off, mentoring, coaching, work-life balance, amenities such as meditation rooms or laundry services, and a clear career path or a hybrid work arrangement to appeal to both work-central and nonwork-central employees (Gursoy *et al.*, 2013; Maurer, 2022; Twenge *et al.*, 2010).

In sum, learning more about the work-related ethics of different generations can enable organizations to better "recruit and retain" employees (Weeks and Schaffert, 2019: 1049). However, it is not just about appealing to a diverse workforce. Despite the fact that the current research found that generations can differ in work ethic, other studies identified the misinformed stereotypes generations hold about each other (e.g., Baby Boomers believe younger workers care more about money than finding meaning in their work, or Millennials and Generation X think Baby Boomers are "only in it for the money") (Weeks and Schaffert, 2019: 1052). Managers and organizations should, therefore, promote conversations about work-related ethics, possibly through both mentoring and reverse mentoring relationships. Doing so will promote understanding, dispel stereotypes, and build a more supportive organizational culture; without such leadership, how employees of different generations treat each other in the workplace could be affected (Weeks and Schaffert, 2019) and outcomes such as concerning job attitudes, less organizational commitment, and increased turnover rates could occur (Cennamo and Gardner, 2008).

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Summary: The article presents the topic of generation stereotypes that should not be serious to let each generation make harmful judgments about the other generation. The authors evaluate every single generation based on these dimensions: values, work ethic, technology, view of authority, communication, and percentage of workforce. The article explains to convince readers to move beyond "generation" to create ease and balance in the working environment. Each generation could learn from each other and support each other to make up the harmonious vibe in the company.

Relevance: The article presents the whole picture of the workplace where each generation has a story behind it, and each generation has barriers due to the changes in the working environment happening constantly. It is relevant to the topic to give the perfectionism of the picture if all generations contribute to building a harmonious environment.

Place in the paper: Literature review

ABBY GRAF, MELISSA MADZEL AND DEB TAFT

Eliminating Stereotypes

Professional development and learning from each other

Are you a Boomer? Millennial? You probably know exactly which generation you belong to and are familiar with the assumed characteristics attributed to your generation.

During the past few decades, research adbout the rapidly changing characteristics of each generation has proliferated and has rung true to many. During the past few years, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic, conflicts in the workplace are often attributed to generational differences.

Why do we put so much pressure on these generational stereotypes? What can we learn and what requires a second look?

How can these five generations work together to achieve the mission impact that nonprofits are committed to deliver?

5 Generations In A Work Context

You need to understand the broad characteristics of each generation. The accompanying chart broadly explains the different perspectives and experiences of each generation.

There are five generations in the U.S. workforce, yet they are not evenly distributed. It is important to consider the declining / increasing numbers of each generation in the workplace. While Boomers and Gen Xers are still the top leaders, creating policies and setting culture, they are certainly not the majority. The power balance is shifting. The recent "great resignation" and workforce shortages have given job seekers (often the younger generations) more influence in determining what an acceptable workplace culture looks like.

External factors continue to change the way we think about work. Technology and communication methods have rapidly altered how work gets done, from Slack and AI to the proliferation of videoconferencing and cloud-based systems that enable remote work. Social media gives workers at any level the ability to spread any messages they want about an organization. COVID-19 also changed our expectations about work/life balance and the need to be present in an office every day, and the demand for hybrid or fully-remote jobs has been exponential.

No organization in the nonprofit sector is untouched by this context. Beyond the monumental impact of COVID-19, racial reckonings directly led to greater professionalization of diversity, equity, and inclusion and to evolving understanding about what a "leader" looks like. Additional social movements related to #MeToo, the rise of LGBTQ+ rights, unionization and strikes, and partisan politics are all contributing to workplaces where norms and expectations for what is "professional" are rapidly changing.

Generational Tensions Play Out At Work

It's easy to over-simplify the tensions in the workplace by saying that we have generational divides, but the story is much more complicated. Issues arise around a few core areas:

Authority

Leaders and managers (mostly of older generations) believe the best work happens when authority is respected and seniority acts as the guide and manager of the newer and younger staff. Younger staff repeatedly see reasons to distrust leaders in the work world and politics and believe they have knowledge and insights that are equally important. Conflict is almost guaranteed to ensue.

In-Office Or Work-from-Home

If older generations value face time and being in the office as a way to learn and build a team, younger generations are more interested in flexibility and the option to work remotely. Issues of trust and training can become an issue.

Learning On The Job

If you are in the younger generations, you might wonder: "Why do our leaders and managers always expect us to know what to do, without clarifying their expectations for a project or program? They believe 'they learned on the job, so should we.' But some added clarity would create better outcomes." At the same time, the older generational manager might be wondering: "Why don't you feel comfortable asking for guidance or help?" or "Why do you ask so many questions? Can't you just figure it out?"

Work-Life

Older generations tend to expect a separation of work and "outside of work" responsibilities. They might not understand why their younger colleagues aren't burning the midnight oil. Younger workers wonder why their managers are not fitting work into working hours, or don't understand the challenges of juggling high-demand caregiving roles, perhaps with aging parents or young children, or that there's more to life than just work.

Looking Forward

As with so many challenges, one of the best solutions is communication. If you were in the recent session during the Bridge To Integrated Marketing and Fundraising Conference in National Harbor, Maryland, you would have seen people grouped according to their generations, identifying the stereotypes of their generation, the societal influences that impacted their careers, what felt true, and also what could be a double-edged sword. Some were worn as a badge of honor or as points of pride for their own cohort.

When the groups came back together to report out, there was some deep listening across the groups. The groups agreed that the stereotypes applied to each generation had some basis in reality, but were also broad frameworks that begged for more intergenerational communication and understanding.

Participants further along in their careers wanted younger professionals to remember that they had been in their shoes once -- juggling caregiving responsibilities, using new technologies in their work, and dealing with issues related to gender and race. Gen Z-ers wanted more understanding that they are still figuring things out and need to understand the "why" to bring their best work. Millennials were tired of being the bridge-builders and translators in the workplace.

Moving Beyond "Generations"

The various generational characterizations have become common language and shared understanding, a certain shorthand in our current workplace culture. Just like any categorization, they are often too simple and limit each person from being respected as the full human being that each of us brings to work.

Generational mores are generally not the real definer of someone's values and approach to work. Their other identities and qualities might be much more significant. Bridge Conference participants discussed the frequency with which they saw exceptions to the generational stereotypes. They agreed -- it's better for managers and colleagues to get to know them as individuals, rather than relying on media and marketing-driven descriptors.

In the end, the group at the Bridge session identified other factors coming into the mix. They are:

- Value Systems Based On Societal Shifts: Gen Z-ers and Millennials want transparency and inclusion, but that doesn't mean those things aren't important to Boomers and Gen Xers – they have just asked for those things differently in their careers.
- Expectations About The Role Of Work: We all think about work differently because of the changing world around us. Work doesn't need to be the center of our lives anymore. Some generations are responding by placing more boundaries to protect their personal wellbeing.

Millennials and Gen Z-ers watched their parents work long hours with seemingly no boundaries and still lose their jobs and retirement accounts during major layoffs. An unbalanced life or loyalty to one workplace makes less sense, so we should acknowledge that new understanding.

- Differing Interpretations Of New Norms: One Gen Z conference participant

continued on page 13

Generational Differences in the Workplace

	Silent Generation 1925-46	Baby Boomers 1947 - 1964	Gen X 1965 - 1979	Millennials 1980 - 1997	Gen Z 1998 - 2009
Values	Hardworking, practical, value teamwork, loyal to employers	Competitive, goal-oriented, teamwork, dedicated, disciplined	Creative, work-life balance, "portfolio" careers, change + challenge = opportunity	Inclusive, ambitious, resilient, adapt to change, need alignment with org values	Entrepreneurs, flexible, career multi-taskers, expect change; tech-dependent
Work Ethic	Determined to get job done	Will work past retirement to save	Work smarter, not harder; results-oriented	Will work hard as long as needs are met	Will work hard as long as location is flexible
Technology	Learned experience	Early IT adaptors	Digital Immigrants	Digital Natives	Integrated way of life
View of Authority	Respect hierarchy	Endure; value ethics + fairness	Fine with less oversight	Value coaching and mentoring	Distrust; value feedback
Communication	In-person	In-person, phone, email	Email or text/ SMS	Digital	Digital IM, but also in-person
% of Workforce	2% declining	29% declining	34% declining	34% growing	2% growing

Chart created by the authors for the Bridge to Integrated Marketing and Fundraising Conference 2023.

RACHEL SAMS

Professional Development Assessment

Learning about your team, developing a plan

have equal access to professional development opportunities within your organization?

– Consider "career pathing"-- a road map for how the employee could grow

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Eliminating Stereotypes

continued from page 11

said: "We're trying to set boundaries, but they aren't respected. Why does our manager wait until 8 p.m. to ask us a question that could have been asked during working hours?" A Boomer responded: "My work flexibility means that I need to work at night, so sometimes that requires an after-hours question." We are still developing a shared understanding of how the "new normal" is enacted, so organizational and team rules should be established.

• Understanding The Impact Of Caregiving: Boomers and Gen Xers can be accused by Millennials of forgetting the impact of caregiving on work, yet older workers are also managing aging parents and grown children. Since most generations have caregiving responsibilities, the focus may need to be more on understanding the unique challenges of middle management, where today's Millennials are.

• Economic Impacts: Boomers and Gen Xers came of age when the cost of home ownership, education, and day-to-day life were more manageable, but are looking ahead at limited retirement packages. Younger generations are saddled with student debt and exponential home prices, changing their markers of success and relying on "side hustles" just to get by. We can consider the different financial factors influencing our time and relationship with work.

Even the Pew Research Center, which has invested extensive time and money into understanding these generational differences, recently announced their decision to stop using generational framing in their research and instead look at other influences on what impacts how someone shows up at work. "Dividing society by generation obscures the real and enduring lines of race, class, and gender.

As you go forward, you might think twice before dismissing a colleague - or complimenting yourself -- based on the stereotypes of generational identity. Instead, perhaps ask yourself, what are all the factors that have come together so that this human being is showing up at this organization in this particular way today? And how can you, as a fellow human being, work with them most productively and respectfully? NPT

Editor's Note: This column is based on a session during the recent Bridge To Integrated Marketing and Fundraising Conference in National Harbor, Maryland.

Let's 'Chat' About Grant Proposals

In all the thunder and splutter about AI, ChatGPT and the rest, it's common to hear proposal writers of a certain age get nostalgic for a simpler time when — wait a minute. Was that time so simple? What do grant seekers really miss about the business of proposal writing and submission long, long ago?

First, they needed to find out what we could about funders. Back in the 1980s, they turned to the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance for information about the federal government's 2,293 programs of possible funding for our work. (You can buy anirloom version of the 900-page directory for $170). Back in the day, the job involved lots of squinting and cross-referencing and strong coffee.

What about foundations? Grant researchers became familiar with the Foundation Directory, bulky volumes of data compiled and published by the Foundation Center (it's now Candid) and housed in some libraries across the country. More squinting, more dead-ends and more coffee.

After a lot of hours doing this research, it was time to write the proposal.

If you think it's labor-intensive now, imagine the world at the dawn of word processing and web searches. Younger proposal writers might not ever know the wonderful "thwackthwack" of an IBM Selectric or Wheelwriter as the words got pounded onto the page, after page, after page.

How to submit, back in the day? Paper, paper, lots of paper, sometimes 25 copies of the whole proposal. True story: a nonprofit prepared 25 copies of a 38-page federal application, boxed them up, rushed them by small plane to Washington, D.C. The plane crashed (pilot was OK), box was found, finally made its way to the federal agency. But, it was late, and not reviewed. "The box sat unopened for days and days," said Thomas Boyd, chief editorial advisor to The Grantsmanship Center in Los Angeles, California, "while snowstorm / plane crash / holiday weekend appeals went nowhere."

In those ancient times, funders did not ask about DEI. Community-centric development had not yet been invented. Personal pronouns were he or she, him or her, period. Nothing was evidence-based. Government per diem rates were $16-25.

Of course, it's a good thing that those things have changed. Of course, today's proposal writers can click their way through the world of data without leaving home. And there are far fewer boxes of paper to be shipped to funders. It's interesting to compare and contrast the benefits and challenges of AI with what we had to do way, way back then. NPT



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Many tax-exempt organizations are invested in joint ventures with a knowing partner or through a private equity investment structure. If the result-

Source 24 (Scholarly)

Citation:

Nguyen Ngoc, T., Viet Dung, M., Rowley, C., & Pejić Bach, M. (2022). Generation Z job seekers' expectations and their job pursuit intention: Evidence from transition and emerging economy. *International Journal of Engineering Business Management*, *14*, 18479790221112548.

Summary: Understanding the expectations and job pursuit intentions of Generation Z allows meaningful for organizations to attract them. Therefore, the study focuses on examining Generation Z's expectation of looking for a job during the transition and emerging of the economy. Besides, the study also delves into the instrumental and symbolic attributes in recruitment literature. The research has figured that Generation Z job seekers are attracted to instrumental attributes of an organization, such as salary, benefits, or working hours. However, this generation is also attracted to the symbolic attributes of organization, which like competence, sincerity, or ethical image. According to qualitative research, most of Generation Z put their attention to the issues of working environment, work-life balance, and corporate social responsibility. At the end of the article, the research emphasizes the important implications for human resource management and corporate social responsibility, which are two factors that Generation Z is critically concerned about choosing their workplace.

Relevance: The article's relevance to the topic by displaying the specific improvements in communication and management practices of corporates that may attract Generation Z. The research also provides the characteristics of Generation Z in researching their job pursuit

intention, knowing what type of company they expect to work depend on instrumental or symbolic attributes.

Place in the paper: Literature review

Check for updates

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Generation Z job seekers' expectations and their job pursuit intention: Evidence from transition and emerging economy

Thang Nguyen Ngoc[1,2], Mai Viet Dung[1], Chris Rowley[3,4] and Mirjana Pejić Bach[4]

Abstract

Understanding Generation Z job seekers' expectations and job pursuit intentions can help organizations successfully attract them. However, there is limited research on this, especially for the transition and emerging economies. With these issues in mind, this study focused on two main objectives: (1) to examine Generation Z job seekers' expectations and their job pursuit intention (JPI) in a transition and emerging economy, with samples from Vietnam, and (2) to advance the understanding of instrumental and symbolic attributes in recruitment literature. We apply the interpretive research method to explore the hidden reasons behind generation Z job seekers' expectations and intentions of their job pursuit. Multiple combining questionnaires and group discussions were conducted with Vietnamese final year students soon to enter the workforce. The results showed that the Vietnamese Generation Z pays more attention to the job/organization in terms of intangible attributes (e.g. office atmosphere or workplace ethics) than physical features. Our study also found that Generation Z considered instrumental organizational attributes and symbolic meaning of corporate social responsibility (CSR). Although some studies have examined the Generation Z expectation in the workplace, no studies investigated the JPI of Gen Z job seekers. In addition, most recent studies investigated the Generation Z expectation in the workplace without using any solid, theoretical foundation underpinning human resource management. Therefore, using an instrumental-symbolic framework in recruitment, our study adds to the literature by examining how Generation Z job seekers react to instrumental attributes and symbolic attributes.

Keywords

Generation Z job seekers, instrumental attributes, symbolic attributes, job pursuit intention, transition, and emerging economies, acknowledgments

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Introduction

Over the past decades, Millennials have been the research focus for scholars. Recently, Generation Z, the cohort born from 1997 to 2013,[1] started to catch the attention of researchers.[2,3] In fact, it has been uncovered that each of the above mentioned possesses unique work-related expectations and desires, despite some behaviors they still have in common.[4] Thus, understanding Generation Z job seekers' expectations can help organizations successfully attract them. In addition, Generation Z job seekers' expectations

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are different from their predecessors. Still, they are also large in number, making up nearly one-third of the 7.7 billion global population, many of them residing in emerging countries.[3] Organizations would need to adapt to the large wave of new employees joining the workforce with their uniqueness.

Recent research has confirmed the role of instrumental attributes and symbolic attributes on an organization's attractiveness and considered corporate social responsibility (CSR) as a symbolic attribute.[2,5,6,7] However, previous research has neglected the evolution and change of CSR. Thus, they have failed to adequately consider the reality of CSR in today's globalized world. CSR is not only a symbolic attribute but also an instrumental attribute. Thang and Fassin suggested that CSR consists of two broad categories: internal CSR (e.g. labor practices) and external CSR (e.g. community responsibilities).[8] They also highlighted that labor practices are related to managing a diverse and inclusive workforce, equality, human resources development, occupational health and safety, and working conditions. With these issues in mind, this study focused on two main objectives: (1) to examine Generation Z job seekers' expectations and JPI, and (2) to advance the understanding of instrumental and symbolic attributes in recruitment literature.

It has often been argued that generation Z job seekers' expectations and their job pursuit intention might differ for applicants in different countries or cultures. We thus apply two studies using complementary methods. In study 1, we use a bibliometric analysis of Generation Z, their expectation, and JPI across several reputable journals to present the state of the intellectual structure and identify emerging trends in the research field.[9] In study 2, we apply interpretive research to explore hidden reasons behind generation Z job seekers' expectations and their intention to pursue jobs. Multiple combining questionnaires and group discussions were conducted with 48 Vietnamese final year students soon to enter the workforce.

This article contributes to and differs from the prior research by addressing the following important gaps. First, although some studies have examined Generation Z expectations in the workplace, including organizational culture and values alignment,[10,11] job satisfaction and career prospects,[12] onboarding programs in the early days of their career 2, CSR,[7,13] no studies investigated the JPI of Generation Z job seekers, especially in the transition and emerging economies such as Vietnam where a significant number of them is found. Second, most recent studies (e.g. Chillakuri 2, Schroth 4, Lis 7) investigated Generation Z expectations in the workplace without using any solid, theoretical foundation underpinning human resource management (HRM). Therefore, using an instrumental-symbolic framework in recruitment[14] our study adds to the literature by examining how Generation Z job seekers react to instrumental attributes and symbolic attributes. We believe this deepens our understanding of Generation Z job seekers' expectations and preferences for a particular attribute. Our results can help human resource managers better understand the instrumental and symbolic factors to emphasize in recruitment advertisements to attract job seekers of Generation Z. Third, while several prior studies considered CSR as a symbolic organizational attribute, Generation Z job seekers in Vietnam see CSR as both a symbolic and instrumental attribute. This finding highlights the need for both researchers and managers to change for adaptation and would also complement the unbalanced research in the CSR field, which has had more focus on the developed countries (Gharleghi, Afshar Jahanshahi and Nawaser, 2018).[15]

The article is organized as follows. First, we describe Generation Z, job pursuit intention, and how prior research has examined the relationship between Generation Z expectation and job pursuit intention. Second, we briefly explain the research methodology used in the paper. Third, we present the main results and findings. Fourth, we provide the discussion with several theoretical and practical implications. Finally, we outline some limitations and suggests avenues for future research.

Literature review

Generation Z

Research suggested that although Generation Z shares with Millennials some common characteristics such as valuing work-life balance, communicating digitally, desiring to lead, possessing a high entrepreneurship spirit [4,16] (Schroth, 2019; Gabrielova and Buchko, 2021), they behave differently due to the major events occurring around them. Hence, they deserve to be treated uniquely. Generation Z came into existence during the economic recession, high unemployment rate, and the rapid growth of the Internet and mobile devices.[17] Indeed, they are often referred to as digital and mobile natives, a characteristic widely endorsed by scientists.[18] They are also concerned about how human social interaction could be affected by the intensive use of smart devices, which could lead to a need for social skill improvement.[19,20] Apart from being more racially and ethnically diverse, they appreciate education and financial responsibility more than their parents.[17,21] As consumers, Gen Zers, who are less brand loyal,[22] consider consumption as the way to express themselves and access products or services, whereas owning them is not important.

Additionally, although conducted in emerging economies where consumers are relatively more price-sensitive, researchers concluded that CSR-related products strongly catch their attention and would be bought if the products' quality and price meet expectations,[23] or even with

additional fees.[24] The purchase decisions of Generation Z are heavily influenced by Web 2.0 due to the trust in the information shared via the Internet and social networks[25] and E-commerce transactions are not seen as unsafe.[26] As learners, Generation Z expects proper training to be able to apply new skills to the assigned tasks[27] and highly appreciates the role of teachers yet also considers YouTube as their preferred learning method channel. Nevertheless, Generation Z's digital learning intention is affected by the availability of the required facility and resources[28] As job seekers, Generation Z will be attracted to an organization based on both instrumental attributes such as pay, benefits, or work-life balance two and symbolic attributes such as CSR.[10,11]

Perhaps as Generation Z is a new cohort to the job market, research on them and the workplace is at a nascent stage. [2] Researchers have shown that this Generation has its expectation towards jobs. They greatly value work-life balance, supervisors' frequent feedback, and high tech and human connection. In addition, they are also attracted to organizations that frequently implement CSR activities.[23,29,30] The fact remains that Generation Z has officially started working with different behaviors and expectations. Organizations must respond effectively to the trend to attract talent and stay competitive.

Job pursuit intention

The instrumental-symbolic framework has provided a theoretical foundation for research in marketing.[14] Instrumental attributes are tangible and enable consumers to maximize benefits and minimize costs. Conversely, symbolic attributes are intangible and provide symbolic value for consumers. Using this framework in recruitment, researchers have argued that job seekers are interested in potential employers' instrumental and symbolic attributes. More specifically, while job seekers pay attention to instrumental attributes of organizations, such as salary, benefits, working hours, or location,[14] they are also interested in symbolic attributes of organizations, such as competence, prestige, sincerity, or ethical image.[31,32]

Organization attractiveness (OA) is passive and refers to "individuals' affective and attitudinal thoughts about particular companies as potential places for employment" (Highhouse, Lievens and Sinar, 2003).[33] To attract more applicants, organizations are increasingly focusing on both instrumental and symbolic attributes as employers of choice. In contrast, JPI is more active and regarded as a separate concept that originates from job seekers attempting actively to find out more information about the organization, its job opportunities, and eventually getting a job interview.[34] Existing literature (e.g. Nugroho[35]) shows that OA influences on JPI. In addition, JPI is also separated from job choice, which refers to the willingness to join the organization's workforce by accepting the job offer.[36,37] Recent research revealed that JPI determination criteria varied in different countries; for example, the Americans emphasized compensation, advancement opportunities, thrift, and style while the Belgians care about advancement opportunities, trustworthiness, and dominance of thrift and style.[38]

According to the instrumental-symbolic framework, Generation Z job seekers are also attracted to the tangible benefits of organizations. Recent studies show that this Generation wants a positive attitude, clear targets, clear instructions from their boss in the workplace and on-the-job training,[4] meaningful work, performance feedback, personal connection, work-life balance, and learning and development.[2] Despite their interest in instrumental attributes of organizations, however, Generation Z job seekers are still expected to seek the symbolic meanings of an organization. Indeed, there is evidence that Generation Z job seekers are also attracted to socially responsible organizations or good CSR-based organizations. For example, Lis found that to attract highly qualified graduates, companies are not only acting responsibly for themselves but also demonstrating their social commitments.[7] Such a finding suggests that Generation Z job seekers assigned traits to organizations and tended to be especially attracted to potential employers with traits like their own.

Prior research also suggested that job seekers' behaviors differ among countries.[38,39] However, most recent studies (e.g. Schroth 4, Lis 7, Network for Executive Women and Deloitte,[10] McCrindle Research[11]) agreed that Generation Z is more ethnically than any other generation. Thus, diverse ethical business practices might increase JPI because job seekers feel that they will have chances to affirm the identities that they value. Accordingly, companies that can send out positive CSR signals associated with economic, environmental, ethical, legal, and philanthropic responsibility will improve their JPI outcome.[40] Another study on the relationship between sustainability and JPI revealed that economic welfare, skill development, and employee health and safety commitments of the organizations have an impact on the JPI of job seekers. In contrast, environmental concerns do not influence such objectives.[39]

Generation Z expectation and job pursuit intention

To get a broader view of this subject matter, we conducted a bibliometric analysis on Gen Z, their expectation, and JPI across several reputable journals (e.g. Sustainability, Journal of Business, Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management…) from 2015, a moment that according to our observation, this Generation started to draw attention from scientists as new members of the workforce rather than university students, till the very beginning of 2022 when this article was finished off writing. Some authors[2,8]

collected data from intern Gen Zers who started to make a fresh start in their career. In this analysis,[23] related papers were identified in Appendix I.

Although the authors implemented various research methods to analyze different aspects of Generation Z, quantitative research was found predominant with 61%. On the other hand, the qualitative methods have been conducted creatively in various formats such as face-to-face interviews, role-playing, and, interestingly, phone interview, which was applied by Goh and Baum[49] for a quarantined hotel during the Pandemic. With a mixed-method approach, Maioli[45] analyzed Gen Z's expectations from their point of view and the managers from various industries.

Globally speaking, the Generation captured curiosity from authors from both developing and developed countries. However, curiously enough, we found a few common characteristics in terms of research concern which is recently scholars from emerging economies seem to be more interested in technology-related topics (e.g. Industry 4.0, Poland,[29] Malaysia[22]), (e.g. Web 2.0, India[25]) while generally CSR and well-being of Generation Z caught attention from both.

More importantly, even though the vast majority of the papers unveiled the expectation of Gen Z, only four mentioned their JPI. None of the four was conducted in an emerging economy. The latter triggered our curiosity to explore further the relationship between an emerging economy Generation Z's expectation and their JPI with the data collected from Vietnam combined with a qualitative approach, a method implemented with lower frequency by authors according to our analysis yet could help us explore this Generation more profoundly.[19]

Methodology

Research approach

This paper adopts an interpretive approach that widely used in Information System and in Management related fields.[2] In fact, it has provided a methodological foundation for research across a range of management literature, such as accounting (e.g. Jansen[50]), leadership (e.g. Felix et al[51]), and human resource management (e.g. Podgorodnichenko et al[52]). This approach provides a rich and in-depth understanding of participants' views and gains insights into the nature of the subject matter through semi-structured interviews [53] and a key role played by the researchers.[54] Most importantly, IR does not discard quantitative approaches[2] but rather provides us with a separate viewpoint and is especially helpful when the research field is still new to scholars.[52]

Generation Z job seekers are just now entering the labor market. Their presence, both in terms of new traits and behaviors that they might have compared to the other generations and their large quantity, especially in the transition and emerging economies, would require prudent attention from scientists and organizations. As mentioned earlier, among those 23 papers identified in our bibliometric analysis, a greater part was performed quantitatively which would hinder us from understanding Generation Z profoundly since quantitative methods might be biased or inaccurate[55] Furthermore, among the remaining papers, only three adopted face-to-face interviews for emerging markets (e.g. India,[2] Argentina,[45] Slovakia[46]). Finally, Walsham[56] argued that one of the obstacles that researchers could face is gaining the access to the targeted people and rejection could be common. In our case, the students were chosen on a voluntarily basis from a large pool, facilitating the research process. Thus, in this study, with an objective of enriching the literature of the Generation Z in the emerging market extensively, IR was implemented because it is usually carried out to explore hidden reasons behind new and complex social phenomena.[55] In this research, opinions and suggestions by Generation Z job seekers will provide an interesting picture of their expectations for potential employers.

Sample and procedure

To better understand Generation Z job seekers' expectations and their job pursuit intentions in a transition and emerging economy, qualitative research was conducted with two groups of interviewees who were final-year students in six universities in Hanoi, Vietnam, and were soon to enter the workforce. Table 1 presents the key characteristics of the sample.

Participants were final-year students who registered to find a job at the University Student Employment event of six universities in Hanoi. The students were asked to participate in the research process during the event voluntarily. As a result, 24 students with no previous work experience from several disciplines such as economics, engineering, art, communication, and journalism, and 27 students with some working experience expressed their interest in participation. Eventually, to obtain fair outcomes, the research team decided to keep an equal amount of 24 interviewees in each group and assigned members who were still new to the workforce to Group A and the remaining to group B. Since the attractiveness of organizations is perceived more by job seekers with experience than by those without,[57] we were interested to find out if their behavior varied. The participants were a fair balance between males (21 students) and females (27 students).

The data collection method used was multiple combining questionnaires and focus groups, and the process ran from May to June 2020. During the first month of the study, the two groups of participants received a set of questions of an open-ended type allowing them to freely express their

Table 1. Interviewees information.

`	Work experience	Age range	Gender		Participant Pseudonyms
			Male	Female	
Group A	No	18–22	8	16	A1, A2, A3…A24
Group B	Yes	20–23	13	11	B1, B2, B3… B24

opinions, expectations, or decisions on the subject matter.[53] Three major themes emerged: working environment, work-life balance, and CSR. We also found some unrealistic expectations from participants.

In the second month of the investigation, each group was divided into four sub-groups of six persons. Each attended a semi-structured face-to-face focus group discussion that lasted from 60 to 90 min about the three themes. We consecutively conducted eight group interviews during the four weekends of June 2020, a month that Covid 19 was not having a serious impact on our normal life in Hanoi. The member of the subgroups, starting from those belonging to group A, were invited to the Hanoi School of Business and Management, Vietnam National University, Hanoi, for the interviews. The language used during this event was Vietnamese; the messages conferred were then translated into English.

Analysis

This study adopted content analysis, which effectively reveals group open-ended survey data.[58] The researchers coded the interview transcripts manually as job pursuit intention, organizational attractiveness, working environment, physical working condition, social working condition, a portrait of the manager, CSR, recruitment process, and unrealistic expectations. Data from the two groups were separated and compared to determine whether there were any dissimilarities in their expectations or attitude toward the subject matter. To maintain the anonymity of the respondents and ease of reference, participants of Group A were named from A1 to A24 and those of Group B from B1 to B24, respectively.

Findings

A small sample size allows us to discuss during our face-to-face focus group discussion in more detail. Several work-related issues versus Generation Z's expectations were analyzed. Nonetheless, only the issues that caught the most attention from the interviewees are summarized and evaluated in this paper. The issues are working environment, work-life balance, CSR, and unrealistic expectations.

Working environment

The definition of a working environment covers two main dimensions: work and context. Work covers many aspects of a job, from how it could be accomplished, job achievement, and task variety to the value generated. Context, the second dimension, consists of physical and social working conditions.[59]

When questioned about this aspect, all respondents showed great interest in the second dimension. Generally, a friendly, "work must be fun" atmosphere or a happy social environment, as also revealed by Ozkan and Solmaz,[44] with high teamwork spirit where colleagues often hang out with each other is expected.[46] Several participants pointed out the importance of going beyond the professional relationship and making friends. Sincerity and workplace ethics are very important to them. Additionally, between workers, collaboration is favored over the competition. These can be seen in the quotes below:

> "…Colleagues matter since you will work most of your life…" (B4).

> "I would like to be part of a company where everyone has a nice attitude towards each other" (A3).

> "It would be easier if I could work with people that could be treated as friends because I would be able to share my opinions with them without hesitation. This makes me feel like having significantly contributed to the company" (A15).

> "…Colleagues matter since you will work most of your life. I expect a working environment where all members could be sincere to each other, not just among colleagues but also between the employees and the employer…" (B4).

> "As a newcomer to the workforce, I observe and listen to stories. I have seen some companies where their employees are not ethical. Some are not honest with their managers; some worse cases, even steal merchandise from the company... I want to work in an ethical environment because the prestigious ethical image of the company will also be mine…" (B9).

Both groups agreed that physical conditions make the organization more attractive, even though they could not specify the type of physical condition expected. The participants shared the same general concept of an open, clean

office space previously described by Iorgulescu[43] in her research on Gen Z in Romania and a nice break room instead of the traditional cubicle desk. Perhaps, due to the working experience gained, several members of Group B referred to some big corporations, such as Viettel, FPT, Samsung, or Nestle, to name a few, as an example of good physical conditions, as shown below.

> "The headquarter of Viettel looks fascinating, very different from the others. Although I still do not know what I would be doing there, I love that kind of workplace" (B23).

> "I have been working for Nestle Vietnam for nearly 1 year, and the experience is great. Their impressive innovative interior design always makes me feel productive and relaxed at the same time" (B18).

As noted above, both aspects of the context, the second dimension, are attractive to participants. However, when asked whether the intangible attributes (e.g. office atmosphere, sincerity, or workplace ethics) or the physical features (e.g. office space, office design, chair and desk, pantry) were more important,[39] voted for intangible attributes, [5] voted for physical features. The rest did not give an immediate response. Some examples follow.

> "Well, a cool office space is nice, although I would prefer to have a relaxing environment. I hope to find a company that could offer me both" (A5).

> "I am an easy person. As long as the people around me are sincere and we could be happy working with each other, I would be satisfied, I don't mind if the physical condition is not perfect" (A18).

> "For me, it is pretty straightforward. I have to work around 40–50 h per week, a nice office with bad colleagues would only make me stressful. I don't want to drag myself to work every day" (B7).

Work-life balance

Work-life balance could be achieved once the job we do for a living complements the element of our full life rather than forces us to choose our priority.[60] Flextime, including part-time work and tele-homeworking, could improve work-life balance and reduce absenteeism and sick time while increasing productivity.[61,62]

Except for only one participant, B8, who would require more specific information to decide, all the others considered the traditional way of working of 8h per day, 5days per week, unattractive from the job applicant's point of view. Most would like to have a certain level of autonomy to decide their own flexible time throughout the day, which could be used to go to a gym, meet a friend or run some errands. Furthermore, participants support the idea of being able to work out of the office occasionally. They also showed much interest in how clear the flexibility rules at the workplace are communicated and implemented. These ideas can be seen in the examples below.

> "Staying in the office the whole day could be boring and make it hard to stay focused. The solution to it could be having the flexibility to switch the working environment" (A3).

> "Some Vietnamese creative agencies give their employees the right to choose their workplace, either in office, at home or elsewhere, in exchange for being reachable 24/7 as long as they complete their tasks. I like that idea very much" (B3).

> "You work to live, not you live to work" Ideally, we should be able to work half of our time in the office and the other half elsewhere. They still can get the job done and at the same time solve the personal issues" (B1).

> "…I think I would accept the way organizations currently work. Maybe I would be able to work from home" (B8).

The responses of our interviewees matched with other previous studies and market research where work-life balance and flexibility are highly valued by Generation Z.[2,10,11,48] Perhaps, "Can I have work-life balance when working for that company?" is one of the few questions that could be supported by 100% of the focus group participants.

Corporate social responsibility

CSR affects the organizational attractiveness as a potential employer.[5] During our interviews, the participants gave the impression that they seemed to have a wide understanding of CSR, its related activities, and what firms could benefit from. We identified a consensus that such activities could positively affect their intention to apply for the job, which 15 members confirmed from group A and 19 from group B. Some examples follow.

> "...Some of the corporations have gone green; for example, Fresh Garden is using paper straw, Big C and Lotte are promoting the use of recycled bags, and they are gaining support from the customers. Once graduate, the companies that care about the environment will be my target as an employer" (A7)

> "Companies still can be profitable while being socially responsible, and they can give more employment opportunities to disabled people, for instance. I know a company employing many disabled people to make and sell traditional crafts near Ha Long Bay, and the store attracts many customers, including foreigners" (B21).

> "The government has been fighting against corruption so hard recently, and I am very happy with it. I will always do a lot of

research on the company I work for to ensure transparency" (B23).

"We studied CSR during our bachelor's degrees. It was interesting to find out firms could benefit from being socially responsible to the environment, community, customers, and the workers" (A17/B25).

Although our study aims to reveal the link between the Generation Z expectations and their JPI, we also found that individuals were also greatly concerned about the firms' socially irresponsible activities, which could create a negative impact on both Generation Zs JPI and job loyalty. This can be seen in the following.

"I think my friends would seriously criticize me if the company where I work for is polluting a river or using child labor. If I were in that situation, I would change my job immediately" (A4).

"Regarding ethical issues, I believe that our generation is aware of our choices. My friends and I have talked about these so many times. We don't want to be part of any unethical decision" (A15).

"I quit my first job because the management prioritized the employment of male workers. As a woman, I think I was lucky to be hired, but I dislike gender inequality. It was quite a large corporation though" (B13).

"I have blacklisted some companies with bad CSR reputation. You know, I do my research and talk to people. There are so many companies out there. I would like to avoid those" (B22).

Unrealistic expectations

Earlier studies have suggested that managing Generation Z's expectations would be challenging because they hope for meaningful and interesting tasks to be assigned to them.[2,4,49] In our study, the companies' expectations seemed unrealistic as they wanted to be valued as important and irreplaceable throughout the recruitment, adaptation, and staff development process. For example:

"I put great effort into what I want to achieve and have very high expectations for the companies" (A2).

"The fact that recruiters show interest in me during the recruitment process is very important" (A20).

"I want to feel that they are genuinely interested in me, not just in anybody" (B6).

"I shouldn't be replaceable because what I do is important for the company, and as an individual, I should also be respected" (B8).

Most of the members showed a low degree of organizational commitment early in their careers. For example, all members of group A, although possessing no working experience, agreed that they would change their job a few times before deciding to settle down in an organization. For example:

"Spending my whole career in a single company, working hard and then retiring is not my plan, even well-off" (A3).

"There are so many organizations and opportunities today, why we should endure with only one" (B24).

While the respondents gave prominence to the opportunity to grow within the firm, they expressed that a limited clear career development plan from the recruiting organizations might lead to job-hopping. Some suggested:

"I highly appreciate the development opportunities and the career plan that the employers have for me. I wouldn't mind switching jobs until I find such an employer" (B2).

"If I am offered a better opportunity to grow somewhere else, I might accept it if the current employer doesn't do anything to retain me. I would not change job just for fun or curiosity" (B4).

When asked about an ideal company to work for, nearly one-third (7 of 24) of Group A and one-half (12 of 24) of Group B disclosed a strong desire to work for well-known Vietnamese or international firms because they believed that their profiles would immediately improve and catch more attention from the other recruiters once they leave said organizations. For instance:

"… I have a list of the largest Vietnamese companies such as Vingroup, Viettel, FPT… I plan to work for them for a short time and then, I will be able to get a higher position in a smaller company" (A15).

"Well, a CV with a reputable multinational company name would catch recruiters' attention. That's how we get a higher pay job" (B5).

Discussion

Theoretical implications

This study aims to advance the understanding of the Generation Z job seekers' expectations and their JPI in the transition and emerging economies with the data collected from Vietnam. Our findings show that Generation Z, with or without working experience, highly values and consider both instrumental and symbolic attributes. Such results support previous studies that have observed the influence of the instrumental and symbolic attributes on the JPI of

Millennial job seekers (e.g. Kumari and Saini[6]) and Generation Z job seekers (e.g. Schroth[4]) or Generation Z expectations for onboarding (Chillakuri[2]). However, our study extends the previous finding by adding some new insights. Previous studies have not compared the instrumental and symbolic attributes of the job seekers' expectations. Our study shows that the Vietnamese Generation Z pays more attention to the job/organization in terms of intangible attributes (e.g. office atmosphere, sincerity, or workplace ethics) than physical features. Several reasons may contribute to this finding. First, while instrumental job/organizational attributes play a critical role in attracting job seekers, most job seekers are unlikely to know about a particular organization's real working environment, compensation, and benefits policies. Perhaps, Generation Z's initial attraction to an organization is the symbolic meaning of an organization. Second, Generation Z has greater economic well-being than any other generation. They have been found to value fun culture, social environment, and flexibility[11,45] and value salary less than every other Generation.[10,41,47] Third, Vietnamese cultures are predominantly collectivistic. Culture shapes individuals; hence, individuals are embedded in collectivistic cultures' group identity, community, and spiritual values.[63]

The Vietnamese Generation Z participated in our research process and highly valued flextime and autonomy but did not expect them to be granted at the beginning of their career. Such a finding might be explained by their lack of work experience, understanding of businesses[42] and expectations about workplace coaching and training. In addition, the participants shared a common belief that technology companies could only provide flextime or working from home and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), while conversely, more established and big organizations are more traditional. These findings are not in line with a recent study uncovering that HRM practices of SMEs tended to be more traditional and built based on a large business HRM model.[64] Unfortunately, our interview does not allow us to explore this contradiction in more detail.

CSR can be seen as part of the symbolic organizational attributes.[5] Our findings show that both internal CSR (e.g. gender equity or business ethics) and external CSR (e.g. continuous environmental and social activities) are highly valued by Generation Z. Such results are consistent with the findings of Schroth[4] that Generation Z appreciate and would expect diversity, equity, and inclusion from an organization and Network for Executive Women and Deloitte[10] shows that to attract Generation Z, organizations need not only to pay attention to their ethics but also to demonstrate their commitment to societal challenges such as sustainability, climate change, hunger, and poverty.

However, as compared to instrumental factors, Generation Z rate CSR higher than other instrumental factors, such as pay, bonus, and benefits in their JPI. In comparison to Millennial job seekers, our finding differs from Kumari and Saini's[6] findings when they indicate that career growth opportunities, an instrumental factor, had the highest effect on JPI. At the same time, CSR, a symbolic factor, is a weak predictor of JPI. Two possible reasons might explain this. First, Generation Z differs from its predecessors in many aspects such as expectations, education, work ethics, and behaviors because cultural values and practices change over time.[4] Second, CSR has evolved in stages like social conditions of work, health and safety at work, responsible employee relations, and human development in the workplace. Accordingly, we believe that Generation Z may consider career growth opportunities or work-life balance part of CSR for employees.

This finding is a logical extension of the existing literature when the combination of external and internal CSR is considered. External CSR relates to activities that have environmental protection, community development, and sustainable aims. In contrast, internal CSR has an objective of improving the satisfaction of internal stakeholders (e.g. employees) through practices like career orientation, training and development, diversity programs, and safety enhancement.[8]

In several prior studies, researchers considered CSR as a symbolic factor. They focused on studying the CSR signals in attracting job seekers,[65,66] CSR image and communication in attracting potential employees,[5] CSR reputation in influencing JPI[6] or CSR practices in increasing employees' creativity while decreasing intention to leave the company.[15] While these studies make important contributions, our finding indicates that Generation Z is not only concerned with the CSR signals or reputation in general but also is motivated by CSR activities (e.g. career growth opportunities or work-life balance) implemented for employees or an organization's labor practices in JPI. Thus, CSR covers both instrumental and symbolic attributes, which we believe is a unique contribution of our study to literature.

Practical implications

The findings of our study also have implications for managers. First, to attract the best Generation Z talent, managers today in the transition and emerging economies have to understand Generation Z expectations for JPI and the unrealistic expectations of the Generation. Accordingly, managers need to design effective HRM interventions (e.g. office atmosphere or work-life balance programs) and provide a realistic job preview for Generation Z job seekers to improve applicants' decisions about job fit, reducing the turnover rate. Second, our study shows that CSR had changed as a response to the public interest and included a broader set of real activities rather than symbolic attributes. Thus, companies must not only demonstrate their

commitment to a broader set of CSR but also act consistently with their ethics and values because Generation Z is more highly educated. Ethical than any other generation.[4] This meant that managers in transition and emerging economies need a strategic approach to CSR by integrating CSR into the company's policies if they want to win Generation Z's hearts and minds.

Conclusion

There is limited research on understanding Generation Z job seekers' expectations and JPI in the transition and emerging economies. We focused on examining job seekers' expectations and JPI to advance understanding of instrumental and symbolic attributes in the recruitment literature. Our results showed that the Vietnamese Generation Z paid more attention to the job/organization in terms of intangible than physical features and considered CSR an organizational instrumental and symbolic attribute. These findings have theoretical and managerial implications regarding recruitment literature and practice.

While our study has important implications for HRM and CSR research, it has limitations. First, this revolves around a small sample size of participants from only one transition and emerging economy, Vietnam, at one time. Therefore, our findings should not be generalized to Generation Z as a whole. Replications of similar research in other transition and emerging economies could give us a more global picture of the findings in developed countries for comparison and contrast purposes. Second, the study adopted a qualitative approach. It may not provide statistical representation, and data collection may have a degree of bias, which may lessen the accuracy of the findings. Future studies should consider employing a quantitative approach with a large sample size.

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Appendix 1

Review on gen Z expectation and JPI

No	Author	Sample size	Response rate (%)	Location	Gen Z's expectation	Gen Z's job pursuit intention (JPI)
1	Goh and Lee[12]	178	39	Australia	Hospitality is an exciting people contact industry, but the people component is also perceived as difficult	Family members highly influence the decision to work in the hospital industry
2	Chillakulari[2]	136	100	India	Organizations to have clear visions, values, and strategic objectives. Flexible work arrangement, transparency, career advancement, and growth	N/A
3	Cyfert et al[29]	646	Not specified	Poland	The importance of the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of CSR could be augmented by the application of management solutions supporting industry 4.0	N/A
4	Sun et al[30]	463	Not specified	Not specified	N/A	In-kind donations improve Gen Z's JPI more than cause-related marketing (CRM)
5	Tang et al[20]	400	100	China	Their national culture influences the subjective well-being (SWB) of Chinese Gen Zers	N/A
6	Kurniawan et al[41]	200	Not specified	Indonesia	Indonesian Gen Z students are not attracted to startup unicorns due to their salary and benefits, but ethics, CSR, and diversity	N/A
7	Gabrielova and buchko[16]	N/A	N/A	N/A	The expectation of leadership style, motivation, teamwork, and social interactions of Gen Z might make them enter into conflict with Gen Y, who currently should be their managers	N/A
8	Lestari[26]	1047	100	Indonesia	E-commerce transactions are not perceived as risky	N/A
9	Rodriguez et al[42]	51	100	USA	Career development, flexibility, ranks, and reward system for performance	N/A
10	Thach et al[3]	1329	86	USA	Enjoy socializing with family and friends	N/A
11	Thangavel et al[22]	260	94	Malaysia	To be able to compare and contracts products in the E-commerce platform before making a purchase decision	N/A
12	Iorgulescu[43]	188	83	Rumania	Open space office, group work, generous salary, and job security	N/A
13	Priporas et al[19]	58	66	UK	Enhanced smart information technologies to match their buying needs and concerned about the negative impact on interpersonal relationships derived from intensive usage of smart devices	N/A
14	Ozkan and Solmaz[44]	276	100	Turkey	Happiness in the workplace with a low degree of authority	N/A

(continued)

Appendix 1 (continued)

No	Author	Sample size	Response rate (%)	Location	Gen Z's expectation	Gen Z's job pursuit intention (JPI)
15	MacGregor Pelikánová and MacGregor[24]	250	72	Czech Republic	Good CSR practices and willingness to pay extra for products and services that are CSR related	N/A
16	Maioli[45]	400	100	Argentina	Good salary, job stability, and a clear career path	N/A
17	Ariker and Toksoy[23]	272	92	Turkey	Attracted to companies that conduct CSR activities and would purchase their products or services of the price set is reasonable	N/A
18	Vasan[25]	150	100	India	Fun, humorous aspects and credibility of information provided via web 2.0 would enhance the purchase decision	N/A
19	Kirchmayer and Fratričová[46]	235	100	Slovakia	Being able to enjoy work, build a good relationship with colleagues, and achieve professional goals	N/A
20	Grow and Yang[47]	98	89	USA	A lower degree of interest in money and higher in the stability and personal fulfillment	N/A
21	Cho et al[27]	306	100	USA	Proper training to obtain the right skills for the assigned tasks	Volunteer activities are considered an intermediary step for seeking jobs
22	Sánchez-Hernández et al[48]	131	100	USA	Good work environment, work-life balance and flexibility	N/A
23	Goh and baum[49]	42	100	Australia	Working in a quarantined hotel is exciting, and courage is required	Family support has an important impact on the motivation to seek a job in a quarantined hotel due to safety reasons

Source 25 (Scholarly)

Citation:

Kapuściński, G., Zhang, N., & Wang, R. (2023). What makes hospitality employers attractive to Gen Z? A means-end-chain perspective. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, *29*(4), 602-616.

Summary: The study is about the hospitality industry to discover the factors that make employers attract Generation Z employees. In the setting that employees play in gaining competitive advantage, organizations implement employer branding to make them stand out among other competitors in the labor market, which lately led them to the successful result in attraction and retention of talent. The research has used a means-end-chain theory approach, and under the setting of employer branding, the goal of means-end-chain theory is to determine employer attributes that are key to target employees, the benefit derived from these attributes, and relevant personal values. With personal values, the article goes deeply to analyze psychological, development, and social values. Receiving back is the strategy allowing employers to tailor their value image to match their offer with Generation Z expectations.

Relevance: Although the article specifically studies on hospitality industry, however, the use of means-end-chair theory is effective for employers to define hierarchical knowledge structures from Generation Z, later providing an efficient approach for employers to deliver the employer branding image.

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What makes hospitality employers attractive to Gen Z? A means-end-chain perspective

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Abstract

Success in attracting talent in the hospitality industry rests on employers' ability to project value proposition that closely corresponds with the requirements of its target employees. Despite their importance to the hospitality industry, Gen Z perspectives on employer attractiveness received limited attention in the academic literature. This study applies an employee-centric approach to employer brands to identify motivational structures which determine Gen Z hospitality employer choices. Underpinned by means-end-chain theory, the study uncovers the hierarchical knowledge structures that link employer attributes, the benefits derived from these attributes, and personal values. Findings confirm the usefulness of the means-end-chain theory in generating insights into motivational structures of potential employees. The value structures of Gen Z are psychological, development and social value. Findings are relevant to hospitality employer brands as it allows them to understand how attributes are interpreted by potential employees, and lead to benefits and higher value forms. In turn, this enables employers to tailor their value proposition to match their offer to Gen Z and employers' resource base.

Keywords

Employer attractiveness, employer branding, Gen Z, means-end-chain theory, employee benefits, values

Introduction

The ability to attract, motivate and retain high-quality employees is critical for businesses to survive and thrive in today's highly competitive environment (Bhattacharya et al., 2008; Turban and Greening, 1997). This is particularly true in high customer-contact and labour-intensive service sectors, e.g. hospitality, which rely on employees to provide satisfactory and memorable customer experiences (McColl-Kennedy et al., 2015). Nonetheless, owing to unfavourable characteristics of most hospitality jobs (excluding those at managerial levels or technical in nature), such as low wage, unsocial working hours, lack of career development opportunities etc. (Baum, 2008), attracting and retaining talent remains a recurring challenge for hospitality employers (Financial Times, 2021; Goh and Okumus, 2020). The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated this challenge, as both existing and prospective hospitality employees are reportedly seeking non-hospitality jobs which provide higher compensation, better work-life balance, and more job security (Clough, 2021; Ross, 2021), thus magnifying the concerns over the long-term sustainability of the hospitality industry. To complicate things further, hospitality-trained personnel are in high demand as many service organisations (e.g. banking, healthcare, and retail) seek to improve customer experience by applying hospitality-driven

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principles (Robinson et al., 2019a; Smith et al., 2018).

In recognition of the critical role that employees play in gaining competitive advantage, employer branding (EB) emerged as a means for organisations to differentiate themselves from competitors in the labour market (Lievens and Highhouse, 2003) and achieve positive outcomes in talent attraction and retention (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004; Tanwar and Prasad, 2016). EB rests on the idea of an employer projecting a distinct and attractive employer value proposition (EVP), that closely corresponds with the needs and expectations of its target employees (Berthon et al., 2005). In the hospitality industry, such EVPs (often reflected in job adverts) are, historically, provided to appeal to the generic workforce, with emphasis on the 'economic' (e.g. 'we offer competitive rates and benefits') and/or 'social' value (e.g. 'we are a leading hotel company', 'you are joining a great team') of working in the organisation. We contend that such a traditional view of hospitality EVPs fails to adequately consider the employees' true needs and expectations, and any continuous use of such EVPs in today's recruitment activities is unlikely to help organisations compete for the best talent, especially in the emergent dominant hospitality workforce, the Generation Z (Gen Z) (Goh and Okumus, 2020; Mooney, 2016; Robinson et al. 2019b). This is because job seeker's needs and expectations are not static; and Gen Z have been found in several studies (e.g. Goh and Lee, 2018; Sakdiyakorn et al., 2021) to possess distinct values and work motivations compared to their counterparts in previous generations. Yet, our understanding of Gen Z's needs and expectations that determines their hospitality employment choices is limited. Given the ongoing global shortage of hospitality workers, as well as a worsening image of hospitality employment (triggered by ramifications of Covid-19), this research aims to answer the question: 'What makes an attractive hospitality employer in the eyes of Gen Z job seekers?'

Inspired by the work of Ronda et al. (2020), this research applies a 'means-end-chain' perspective to identify key characteristics of hospitality employers that Gen Z find attractive in determining employment choice. The 'means-end-chain' theory explains how a product or service choice enables the achievement of personal values by uncovering hierarchical knowledge structures of consumers (Gutman, 1982). The theory proposes that consumers link product or service attributes (the means) to their benefits and then inner values (the ends). Applied in the context of employer branding, this requires the identification of employer attributes that are key to target employees, the benefits derived from these attributes, and relevant personal values. Uncovering these links is key as they illustrate how employment choice decisions might be driven by personal values (Schwartz, 2012), which are manifested through chosen employer attributes and benefits.

This research contributes to the EB and talent management literature by applying an employee-centric approach to employer brands and providing insights into motivational structures which underpin Gen Z hospitality employer choices. The findings we report are of relevance to employers that seek to attract Gen Z hospitality-trained employees.

Literature review

Employer brand and employer branding process

EB is "a targeted, long-term strategy to manage awareness and perceptions of employees, potential employees, and related stakeholders regarding a particular firm" (Sullivan, 2004). To Backhaus and Tikoo (2004), EB is a process that seeks to build an identifiable and unique employer identity, which is established by an employer brand. According to Ambler and Barrow (1996: 8), an employer brand can be defined as "the package of functional, economic, and psychological benefits provided by employment, and identified with the employing company". This offer of unique employer characteristics is also known as EVP (Eisenberg et al., 2001). Theurer et al. (2018) argue that EVP can be understood as an ideal employer identity, or, how the firm wants to be perceived by applicants or employees as an attractive employer.

The literature recognises different stages of the EB process. A recent review of EB research by Theurer et al. (2018) proposes a four-stage EB value chain model. These are (1) employer knowledge development and investment; (2) applicant/employee mindset; (3) firm performance and competitive advantage; (4) financial market performance and shareholder value. The link between the first and second stages is the focus of this paper.

Concerning the first stage, EB is understood as a three-step process composed of: (1) development of EVP; (2) external marketing of EVP to target employees and organisations of interest such as recruitment agencies, and (3) internal marketing of EVP to the existing workforce (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004). Given that EB is concerned with applying marketing principles to human resources management (Minchington, 2010), it requires a marketing orientation focussed on applicant and employee segments (Maheshwari et al., 2017). In this approach, an EVP becomes a fundament of a strong employer brand, and its development is based on the understanding of target employees' needs, including functional, economic, and psychological preferences (Moroko and Uncles, 2009). Such insights allow firms to better align with the target market needs and the characteristics that make a firm a great place to work. This step in EB aims to design an EVP that is unique, compelling, and relevant to the target market (Minchington, 2014). For instance, recognising differences in the relative importance to job-seekers of different employer characteristics, an EVP may need to be positioned differently for first-time applicants than in the case of experienced applicants.

Means-end-chain theory and development of EVP

The means-end-chain theory (Gutman, 1982) has been introduced to recognise the role of personal values in marketing consumer products (Veludo-de-Oliveira et al., 2006). The theory focuses on providing insights into important meanings consumers associate with products and services they purchase and use (Gengler et al., 1999). According to Gutman (1982: 60), the theory can be defined as "a model that seeks to explain how a product or service selection facilitates the achievement of desired end states". The theory suggests that consumer knowledge structures are organised hierarchically into means-end-chains (MECs), in that product or service attributes (the means) are linked to their consequences or benefits, and the personal values (the ends). The central tenet of the theory is that consumers' personal values drive buying behaviour by determining why some product attributes (and their consequences) are personally relevant and meaningful to consumers (Homer and Kahle, 1988). Products or services are selected based on their attributes (e.g. contactless payment), which indicate their ability to produce the desired consequences (e.g. convenience and safety). In turn, the consequences are prioritised on their ability to help the customer achieve a valued state of being (e.g. happiness or self-esteem). In this sense, MECs represent "the linkages between where a person wants to be and the means chosen to get there" (Gutman, 1982: 68).

Uncovering MECs is important because attributes provide only a surface understanding of why individuals purchase and use products and services (Botschen et al., 1999). Understanding how people link product attributes to their value system is key because personal values govern perception, memory, and ultimately behaviour (Reynolds and Gengler, 1991).

According to Vriens and Hofstede (2000), the results of a MEC can be used for new product development, brand assessment and brand positioning, advertising strategy development, and market segmentation. Such insights are also key to brand persuasion as adverts which reflect all levels of the means-end hierarchy of a target consumer can be more effective (Reynolds et al., 1995). Building values into marketing communications creates the potential for matching more closely the content of messages to valued end-states considered by consumers to be vital. In other words, the links of attributes to benefits and values increase the strength by which the product or brand is perceived to be consistent with one's personal values (Vriens and Hofstede, 2000). Given the highly competitive nature of the employee market or the "war for talent", organisations need new positioning strategies that are more directly relevant to the decision-making criteria of target employees.

Attributes. Product attributes are features or aspects of products or services (Reynolds and Gutman, 1988). Attributes can be divided into abstract and physical (or concrete) characteristics. Physical or concrete characteristics can be understood as properties that are objective and measurable in physical units, for instance, colour or weight. Abstract characteristics are more subjective in nature, for instance, intense flavour or friendly atmosphere. In a similar vein, in the employer context, Lievens and Highhouse (2003) differentiate between two types of employer attributes. Functional attributes describe elements of employment in more objective terms, whereas symbolic attributes concern more symbolic organisational features. These attribute categories are reflected in EB literature. For example, functional or concrete

employer features include "desirable geographical location" (Agrawal and Swaroop, 2009) or "above average wages" (Bellou et al., 2015). Abstract attributes concern features such as "external reputation" (Lievens and Highhouse, 2003) or 'freedom of opinion' (Bonaiuto et al., 2013).

Consequences/Benefits. Consequences can be understood as direct or indirect outcomes of the purchase, use, or consumption of products or services (Reynolds and Olson, 2001). In marketing, desirable consequences of using a product or a service are typically referred to as benefits (Vriens and Hofstede, 2000). Benefits and attributes are different in that attributes reside in the product or service, and benefits are derived from the relationship between the consumer and the product or service attributes (Zeithaml, 1988). The hierarchical nature of MECs means that consequences cannot affect product or service attributes but using products or services with certain attributes can produce different consequences (Gutman, 1982).

Olson and Reynolds (1983) differentiated between functional and psychosocial benefits. Functional outcomes concern the direct benefits received by the consumer following consumption (e.g. "saves money and time"), whereas psychological outcomes indicate psychological or social outcomes following product or service use (e.g. "wins more friends", "others think I am special"). Following a review of EB literature, Ronda et al. (2018) recognise three employee benefit categories, i.e. functional, psychological, and experiential. For example, functional benefits include 'flexible working hours' (Baum and Kabst, 2013) or "few hours overtime" (Tüzüner and Yüksel, 2009), symbolic or psychological benefits comprise of "self-confidence" (Roy, 2008) or "acceptance and belonging" (Aliancik et al., 2014), and experiential benefits may include items such as "supportive and encouraging colleagues" (Alnıaçık and Alnıaçık, 2012) or "team atmosphere" (Bonaiuto et al. 2013).

Values. A personal value is an "enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable" (Rokeach, 1973: 5). Personal values can be considered self-relevant, ultimate goals a person strives to accomplish in life (Pieters et al., 1995).

Rokeach (1973) proposed two types of value: terminal and instrumental. Terminal values are the ultimate ideal end-states of being (e.g. happiness, security), and instrumental values are related to modes of behaviour (e.g. honest, fair, open-minded etc.) needed to achieve the end-states. In the workplace context, employee perceived value has been seldom studied (Ronda et al., 2018). Examples include social value, development value, application value, interest value, and economic value (Berthon et al., 2005).

Gen Z as future hospitality workforce

Generation theory suggests that birth-year ranges define different generations, such as Baby-Boomers (born between 1946–1964), which are indicative of a set of characteristics shared among individuals of this generation (Strauss and Howe, 1997). For instance, individuals from the same generation are likely to have common work values and attitudes toward work (Gursoy et al., 2008). These characteristics are relatively stable and are said to be an outcome of key life experiences shared among a generation (Schewe and Noble, 2000).

Gen Z has most commonly been defined as individuals born between 1995 and 2009 (Goh and Lee, 2018). Limited number of studies to date devoted attention to characteristics of Gen Z to better understand their needs, wants, and expectations (Goh and Okumus, 2020). According to Ozkan and Solmaz (2015), Gen Z embraces team spirit, expect workplace flexibility, assurance for their future career, a work-life balance, faster career progression, and seek independence and happiness at the workplace. Goh and Lee (2018) studied Gen Z attitudes, difficulties associated with hospitality work, and important social reference groups. Their findings indicate a mixture of desired and unwanted employer attributes, such as "opportunities for training", "long/odd hours", or "low pay". The attitude category also suggests a range of consequences, such as "mentally and emotionally exhausting", which could be an unwanted outcome of the attributes mentioned above. Goh and Lee (2018) suggest that Gen Z hospitality workers are motivated by job satisfaction, and to attract talent, hospitality employers should emphasise the ability to offer employees dynamic, fun, exciting, and stable international careers. Self et al. (2019) note that Gen Z seeks opportunities to travel and work in multiple countries and receive continuous feedback over annual appraisals.

According to Sakdiyakorn et al. (2021), Gen Z is characterised by a distinctive set of values. Based on Schwartz's theory of values (2012), the authors demonstrate that the most important

values of Gen Z university students are universalism (value e.g. harmony, justice, fairness, integrity and helping others), benevolence (value e.g. sincere relationships and personal connections), self-direction (value freedom and independence), achievement (value e.g. recognition, appreciation, growth) and security. The above studies provide valuable insights, highlight the need for more attention to Gen Z, and specifically, disentangling the potential links between attributes, benefits, and values represents a gap in this area of research.

Methods

The laddering method was used to uncover the attributes – consequences - values (ACV) hierarchical structures which underpin the means-end-chain theory (Gutman, 1982). The method has been used extensively to identify underpinning drivers of consumer decision-making (Phillips and Reynolds, 2009), including in organisation research focussing on concepts such as employer attractiveness (Ronda et al., 2020). The laddering method involves in-depth, semi-structured interviews, which guide the participants through different steps in the ladder of abstraction associated with individual choices (Reynolds and Gutman, 1988).

The research sample consisted of 40 final-year undergraduate and master's hospitality management students at a UK university. The sampling technique was convenient in that we accessed students enrolled at our own university; yet, it was also purposive as we specifically targeted Gen Z hospitality job seekers. At the time of research, these students made a suitable research sample of potential employees because they were highly active in employment search and evaluation due to proximity to graduation. They had varying levels of hospitality employment experience, ranging from 6 months to 4 years. The appropriateness of using graduating students as a quality research sample for hospitality employer attractiveness studies was also recognised in the work of Kapuściński et al. (2021). Although the advised sample size of laddering interviews that achieve validity is between 20 and 25 (Reynolds and Olson, 2001), we decided to increase this number to ensure that enough individual voices in the focus group were heard. Participants were recruited on campus during term time with posters and leaflets about this study handed out after class. Those who were interested in participating were asked to contact the lead researcher to confirm the focus group interview they could attend (or, simply, to find out more about the research). To encourage participation and involvement, we offered Amazon vouchers.

Data were collected between January 2020 to February 2020 and involved six focus group interviews, each including six to eight participants. Discussions were conducted face-to-face and took place in meeting rooms on the university campus. The length of each interview lasted between 75 min to 90 min. Following the well-documented procedures, we developed the interview protocol. The interviews started with identifying attributes that are personally relevant to participants in a projected situation. The respondents were asked, "What do you pay attention to in a potential employer?" or "In your opinion, what makes an attractive employer?". The responses were then used to formulate probing questions that sought to uncover the reasons as to why the attributes are important to the respondent. For instance, the respondents were asked, "Why is this important to you?" or "Why is it important that an employer has this quality?". The probing questions were asked until the respondent revealed the consequences of desired attributes. The interviewer continued to ask probing questions to uncover why the consequences of personally relevant attributes are desirable to the respondent. This part of the interview sought to uncover the personal values or end-states of existence and was revealed by more abstract ideas such as "It gives me a sense of happiness". Following the means-end-chain methodology and the associated laddering technique, questioning persisted to a point of saturation. This was identified as a point where probes were no longer leading to new ideas, and the participants agreed that all attributes of importance, as well as their consequences were captured. With participants' permission, all focus group interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim.

The choice of the number of focus-groups was theory-driven as qualitative researchers should theoretically reflect on gathered data to decide whether to collect more. Theoretical saturation in this context means that no new relevant data emerges concerning a category, that categories are well-developed and links between categories are well-established (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Theoretical saturation was reached after focus group number six.

The focus groups were moderated by two researchers. One researcher led the discussion,

and the second took notes and drew a graphical representation of key ACV concepts and linkages. This allowed the construction of an initial Hierarchical Value Map (HVM). After the laddering part of the interview concluded, the researchers checked the connections between different levels of ACV structures to ensure these accurately represented participants' views.

Data analysis followed the laddering technique procedures specified by Reynolds and Gutman (1988). The first step involved coding all transcripts to identify key words and phrases which relate to the elements of the means-end hierarchy i.e. the 'attributes', 'consequences/benefits' and 'values'. All authors participated in the coding and each coded two transcripts.

The second phase involved the development of meaningful categories by grouping key words and phrases with identical meanings. This was achieved with reference to phrases and key words used by participants, and concepts derived from the literature review. For instance, if the participants mentioned that employers should be in locations that are easily accessible, this statement was linked to 'workplace location'. The research followed an iterative process of recoding data, splitting, and combining categories.

In the last phase, we aggregated codes across focus groups, which allowed us to represent our findings in a series of HVM diagrams, defined by Gengler et al. (1995: 245) as "a graphical representation of a set of means–end chains which can be thought of as an aggregate (e.g. market-level) cognitive structure map".

To facilitate a high inter-coder reliability, we selected one transcript and identified one section for each author to code. Independently, we started by reading through the agreed section to highlight key words, phrases and sentences related to 'attributes', 'consequences', and 'values' and labelled them mostly in the same term as they were mentioned by participants. All authors then shared and compared each other's initial codes, where any inconsistency was noted and resolved through discussion. When all authors achieved the same understanding in this coding exercise, we proceeded to code our assigned full transcripts.

Anonymity of participants, defined as keeping participants' identity secret (Saunders et al., 2015), was achieved to a point of keeping the identity of participants hidden from everyone but the researchers involved in primary data collection. As in most qualitative research contexts where researchers know who participants are (Scott, 2005), true anonymity was by definition not achievable. To protect participants' identity, we did not report identifying details such as the participant names, name of the university where participants study, or any additional participant information such as their age or nationality. Moreover, recordings of focus groups as well as transcripts were kept in a secure, password protected cloud, only accessible to the research team. Although keeping what participants said could not be confidential as we chose to quote participants in this manuscript, participant identity cannot be discovered on this basis. These procedures were explained to participants through a participant information sheet, at the beginning of the focus group, and consent was obtained.

Findings

The analysis of focus group interviews revealed 20 attributes, 21 benefits, and seven values. In line with the literature (Ronda et al. 2018), we categorise benefits into functional (e.g. convenience), psychological (e.g. sense of freedom), and experiential (e.g. agreeable work environment) benefit types. Following the coding phase, these were organised into three HVMs: psychological, development, and social. These maps are presented in sections below (Figures 1–3). In all three cases, value is satisfied from multiple benefits. For instance, in the case of the psychological value map (see Figure 1), the value of 'mental health' is linked to the benefits of 'self-esteem' and 'sense of freedom'. Moreover, the benefits are organised in chains, for instance, benefits of 'self-growth', 'feeling of belonging, direction, and purpose', 'pride from membership', and 'fit with organisational identity', result in 'self-esteem', which refers to confidence in one's self-worth. In the same vein, 'financial security' and 'convenience', akin to a good perceived work-life balance, lead to a 'sense of freedom'. We conceptualise 'sense of freedom' as a sense of having the power in life to act as wanted, as well as being able to perform work duties without undue restrictions from the employer.

Similarly, a benefit may result from one or more attributes, for instance, convenience is linked to attributes such as 'base salary and total compensation' and 'workplace location'. By extension of this argument, one employer attribute can lead to one or more benefits, for instance, 'base salary

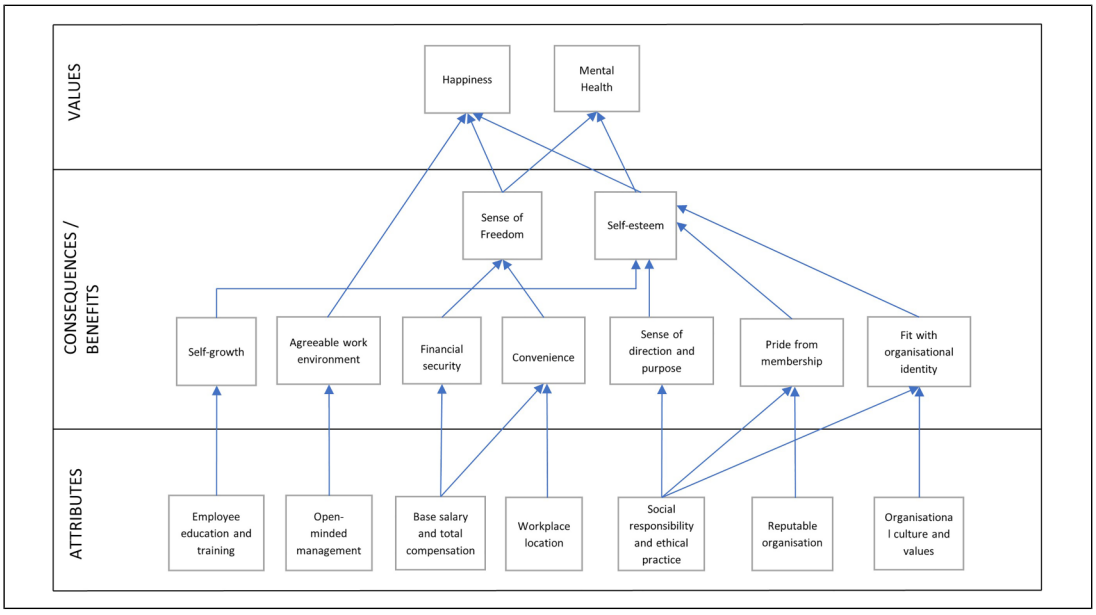


Figure 1. Hierarchical value map: Psychological value.

and total compensation' results in 'financial security' and 'convenience'.

Psychological value

The psychological HVM (Figure 1) reveals two psychological values important to Gen Z hospitality job seekers when making employer choices: 'happiness' and 'mental health'. Although the frequency of each value mentioned differs, we do not claim that one value is superior to another value. Happiness signifies enjoyment or satisfaction at work and/or in life. Mental health refers to mental wellbeing.

The attributes relate to abstract organisational characteristics, such as 'reputable organisation', 'organisational culture and values', 'open-minded management', and tangibles, such as 'workplace location'. Other important attributes concern 'base salary and total compensation', 'employee education and training', and, reflecting the global nature of the hospitality industry, 'travel and international exposure'. These attributes are linked to benefits categorised as *psychological*: 'sense of direction and purpose', 'self-esteem', 'self-growth', 'sense of freedom', 'pride from membership', *functional*: 'convenience', 'financial security', and *experiential*: 'agreeable and exciting work environment', 'fit with organisational identity'.

The HVM also depicts linkages among attributes, benefits and psychological values, which are evident from the participants' reasoning. For instance, one informant revealed why the attribute of 'reputable organisation' is personally meaningful: "*If the company has a high reputation, they probably have high expectations of me, and if I made it … it makes me proud. It's like OK, coming back to the self-esteem, gives me confidence, happiness … boosts you up*". Several other informants commented on the importance of the organisation being reputable from the guest perspective and inferred that being employed by these companies would *'reinforce their sense of self-worth'*. Another important attribute is the 'social responsibility and ethical practice', which leads to a range of benefits, including a 'sense of direction and purpose'. One participant indicated, "*It helps with seeing a purpose, not just going to work every day, doing the same, leaving and sleeping and waking up and going to work, but it's like you can see a purpose in what you do … and you see what is the higher mission and vision of where you are going*." This quote suggests that the 'sense of direction and purpose' appears to make hospitality work more meaningful to Gen Z and help with overcoming hardships and enduring mundane aspects of daily tasks. Also related to the attribute of 'social responsibility and ethical practice' is the 'organisational culture and values', which leads to benefits of a 'fit with organisational identity', 'self-esteem', and, ultimately, the value of 'happiness'. This is stressed by one participant, "*company culture is important in that actually … that you share the same values, cause you have to comply to their*

standards, but you still want to be yourself." The informant elaborates, "*being yourself and working in that environment [of shared values] makes your confidence … self-esteem … you don't need to hide anything. Being yourself is important because we just can't pretend to be someone else, and that would take a direct hit on you. It could lead to frustrations within the workplace, unhappiness*".

Moving beyond the implications of abstract employer attributes, participants revealed a link between the attribute of 'base salary and total compensation' and the benefit of 'financial security', which points to future-oriented career planning. One participant explains, "*there comes, I think, a time in every woman's life when they need to think about the job that they have and whether that can fund when they go on maternity leave or if they start to plan a family, so I think good pay gives me security*". Salary and compensation also lead to a shorter-term benefit of 'convenience', meaning the participants have the financial resources to cover daily expenses as well as to enjoy themselves by engaging in leisure activities. Through this, participants obtain a healthy 'self-esteem' and a 'sense of freedom', which are relevant to the ultimate goals of 'happiness' and 'mental health'. Interestingly, the relationship between salary and compensation, freedom, and happiness, is characterised by a sense of unsettlement and inner pressure for change. Reflecting on these concepts, one informant stated, "*I'd like to have money. And I'd like to see a different, change of job after a while … because I can be happy and, what's next? … in Western society, we always want to move forward, we want to move forward in our career, in our lives, you want to do something new."*

Development value

The second HVM (Figure 2) concerns Gen Z development, which includes values of 'recognition', 'achievement' and 'self-fulfilment'. Recognition refers to the need of being recognised or to be respected at the workplace. Achievement signifies gaining career-enhancing experience and a sense of achievement or accomplishment at the workplace. Self-fulfilment denotes the need for personal development or feeling good about oneself as a result of working for the organisation.

Attributes important to Gen Z are centred on aspects of organisational culture and values: 'opportunities to grow', 'clear path to progression', 'opportunities for international career', and employee-employer relationships: 'recognising employee achievements, 'support to development', and 'employee empowerment'. These lead to benefits which are psychological: 'self-efficacy', 'personal development/ achieving personal goals', 'feeling of being appreciated and trusted', and functional: 'gaining personal status and financial rewards', 'career development and professional progression'.

'Employee empowerment' was a notable attribute revealed through a range of practices that Gen Z look out for. These included the provision of additional responsibility to junior staff and trusting employees to be capable of solving problems. Reflecting on the importance of 'employee empowerment', respondents note implications for benefits such as 'feeling of appreciation/support, and 'self-efficacy'. One participant explains, "*it shows that they trust you, which is really exciting when you are given some more power, some more authority … if they give me the responsibility to do that, they know that I can do this job. So I'm confident I'm gonna do it properly*". Another prominent chain is revelated through the focus on the importance of a 'clear path for progression', which leads to the benefit of 'career development and professional progression'. According to one participant, "*You want to see what the options are [for career progression] … going there knowing that I can actually build up from here … I wanna feel like I'm going somewhere professionally*". Participants also recognise the importance of the international dimension to personal and career development. The attribute of 'opportunities for international career' is associated with the benefit of 'varied and interesting work'. Interestingly, the lack of an international dimension, as revealed through a comparison to the alternative of working in one geographical region, appears to be associated with a negative sentiment. As one participant explains, "*It means I can work in an international environment or have tasks and projects all over the world and not only focus on one country or one region or one city. So for me, it makes it more interesting, more varied work and more differences in your tasks and not only the same kind of locations or projects or environments*". This highlights that although Gen Z job seekers place significant attention on professional development opportunities, they are also conscious about their

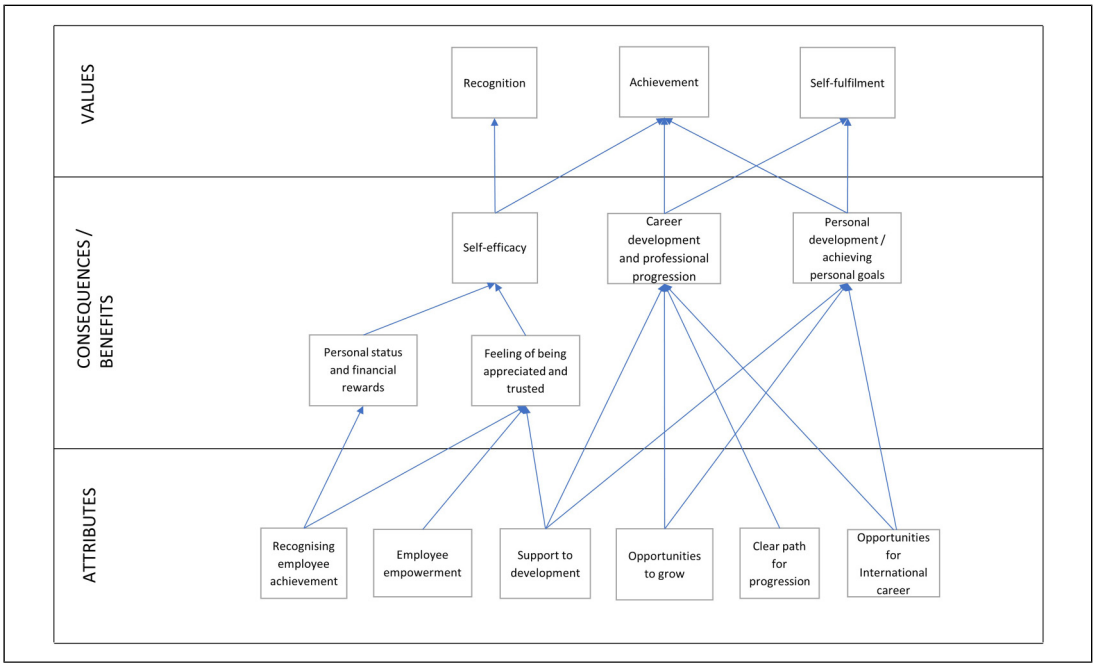


Figure 2. Hierarchical value map: Development value.

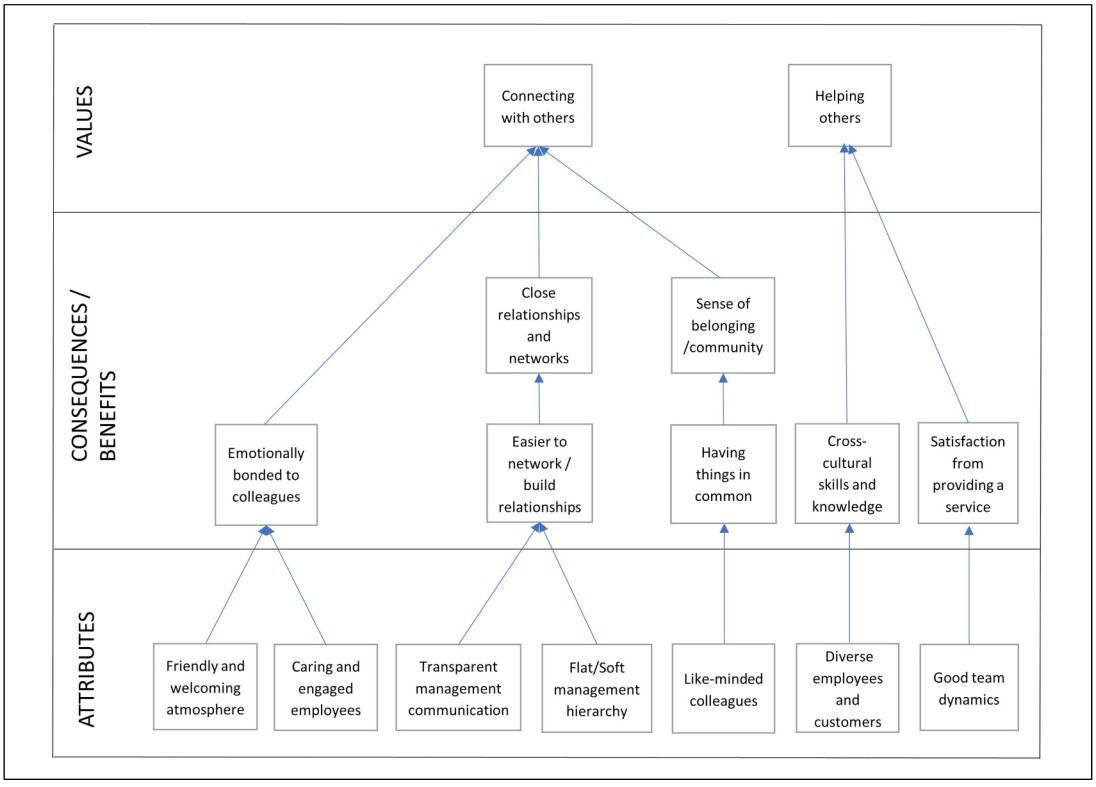


Figure 3. Hierarchical value map: Social value.

personal development and enjoyment and are searching for a career that can contribute to their idea of a meaningful life through 'self-fulfilment'.

Social value

The third value structure (Figure 3) is the social value. This comprises two values: 'connecting with others' and 'helping others'. Both values

underscore the aspects of work that are specific to service contexts. The high customer and co-worker contact character of hospitality work is reflected in the category of "others" common to both values. 'Connecting with others' concerns meaningful employee to employee relationships, whereas 'helping others' denotes provision of good quality service which leads to employee personal satisfaction.

Attributes important to Gen Z are centred around the characteristics of employees and customers: 'like-minded colleagues', 'caring and engaged employees', 'diverse employees and customers', and the quality of relationships with work colleagues: 'friendly and welcoming atmosphere', 'good team dynamics', 'flat/soft management hierarchy', 'transparent management communication'. These attributes are linked to a range of benefits which are psychological: 'sense of belonging/community', 'emotionally bonded to colleagues', 'satisfaction from providing a service', functional: 'easier to network/ build relationships', 'cross-cultural skills and knowledge', and experiential: 'close relationships and networks', 'having things in common with colleagues'.

One of the important chains noted during the discussion regarded the attribute of 'flat/soft management hierarchy' and benefits relating to the quality of relationships and networks. This feature of an organisation makes it 'easier to network/build relationships', and leads to 'close relationships and networks'. The closeness of relationships is a key benefit, as expressed by one participant, "*it's really important to have someone that you can genuinely express feelings to. If you don't feel like you can talk to them, even about something minor, it can then become a bigger thing*". We note that the consequences of a flat/soft hierarchy also have a professional networking dimension, as expressed by comments such as, ??*networking is definitely a benefit because then I can meet different people, find out what they do … it helps because I know that I want to move around, go and try different companies*". Ultimately, the attribute and its consequences are personally meaningful to Gen Z because it allows them to attain the value of 'connecting with others', which is well captured by one respondent who notices, "*for me hospitality is all about connections*". A different chain demonstrates why the attribute of 'good team dynamics' is relevant to Gen Z. It is noted that the attribute leads to the benefit of 'satisfaction from providing a service', and ultimately, the feeling of 'helping others'. As explained by one participant, "*in some brands you are expected to give a completely different type of service to the guests … like a different class with a better team and overall work dynamics. For me, personally, I get a lot of satisfaction from giving a good high service*". On the contrary, poor team dynamics lead to a negative outcome, "*staff that do not work well together, I personally would be kind of afraid that that's … I would lose the satisfaction from doing a good job*".

Discussion

The findings of this study contribute to research on employer branding and talent attraction by providing insights into motivational structures which underpin the choice of employers by Gen Z job seekers in the hospitality industry. This was achieved by applying a widely used means-end chain theory (Gutman, 1982) in the context of employer brands, which allows recognising hierarchical structures of employer attributes, employee benefits and employee values that exist in job applicants' minds. Studies that differentiate between attributes, benefits, and values associated with employer choices are rare (Ronda et al., 2020), and this study confirms the usefulness of applying this theoretical lens to understanding what drives Gen Z employees in the hospitality industry. This is an important perspective, as it allows hospitality employer brands to move beyond the surface understanding of attributes of relevance to job seekers, to identify how attributes are interpreted by employees to lead to benefits and higher value forms. In turn, employers can use this knowledge to tailor their EVP to match their offer to target employee needs and the employer resource base.

Overall, our findings point to three prominent value structures, namely, psychological, development, and social value. Social and development value structures are reflected in categories proposed by Berthon et al. (2005). Social value refers to the extent to which employees perceive that the employer "provides a working environment that is fun, happy, provides good collegial relationships and a team atmosphere" (Berthon et al., 2005: 159). We find that in the hospitality industry context, the social value structure comprises 'connecting to others' and 'helping others'. The social aspect of work is of value in the sense of 'connecting to others' through a positive collegiate atmosphere and networking, but also in 'helping others' through applying cross-cultural skills and personally satisfying service.

To Berthon et al. (2005), development value refers to obtaining "recognition, self-worth and confidence, coupled with a career-enhancing experience and a springboard to future employment" (Berthon et al., 2005: 162). This study shows that beyond the value of recognition, Gen Z employees also pay attention to the value of 'achievement' and 'self-fulfilment', which arise from self-efficacy, and career and personal development. The third value structure we identify, namely, psychological value, was previously recognised by Sivertzen et al. (2013), who conceptualise it as the extent to which employees trust that working for the employer will make them feel better about themselves and feel more confident. Sivertzen et al. (2013) demonstrate that psychological value comprises two items, i.e. self-esteem and confidence, previously conceptualised by Berthon et al. (2005) as part of the development value. We find that psychological value comprises 'happiness' and 'mental health', which arise from 'self-esteem', 'agreeable work environment' and a 'sense of freedom'. We argue that psychological value structure may be particularly important to potential employees in the context of changes to employment realities brought by the Covid-19 pandemic.

On a theoretical level, in line with broader consumer behaviour studies (Wu et al., 2020) and studies that focus on the employee perspective (Ronda et al., 2020), we confirm that relationships between attributes, benefits, and values include multidirectional links. Although previous studies in the employer branding context often note a direct relationship between an attribute and benefit, e.g. the salary attribute typically result in an economic benefit (Berthon et al., 2005), our findings suggest that salary is meaningful to Gen Z as it allows to realise two types of psychological value (i.e. happiness and mental health). Moreover, contrary to assumptions of past research regarding the unidirectional relationship between attributes and benefits, our findings showcase that one attribute can lead to multiple benefits, e.g. attribute 'social responsibility and ethical practice' leads to benefits of 'sense of direction and purpose' and 'pride from membership' (see Figure 1). Equally, one benefit can be realised by several attributes. Therefore, we argue that using the means-end chain theory is beneficial as it allows employers to understand that, for example, salary can be interpreted in various ways by potential employees. This understanding is key if the EVP is to truly reflect the needs of the target employees.

Practical implications

Practical implications can be inferred from this study. First, the HVMs presented in this study can assist employers in understanding which attributes help Gen Z job seekers to differentiate between employers in the hospitality industry and why these attributes are personally meaningful. These findings provide hospitality organisations with information to construct EVPs that reflect values sought by Gen Z job applicants. For instance, given that Gen Z are motivated by feelings of appreciation and support, an employer might focus on the provision of employee empowerment (e.g. through additional responsibility), support to development (e.g. through a mentorship or buddy programme), and recognising employee achievement (e.g. through sharing employee success storeys on social media channels). Moreover, given the importance of benefits such as personal and career development to development values, offering opportunities for an international career is key. This can be achieved by increasing staff mobility by offering training or work opportunities in different locations/countries.

Second, seeing that the hospitality industry is dominated by independent SMEs that tend to be challenged in the provision of attributes such as competitive pay, our study suggests that highlighting other attributes which are closer to the resource base of SMEs may result in an attractive value proposition to Gen Z employees. For instance, owing to smaller team size, hospitality SMEs may want to signal strong social value by highlighting they pay particular attention to good team dynamics, and a caring, collegiate, family-like work atmosphere. This highlights that insights into employee means-end chains afford employers more flexibility to build EVPs based on attributes they can realistically deliver.

Third, the means-end chain framework we apply in this study can help organisations to conduct studies with their target employee base. As we argued, revealing the motivational structures of potential or existing employees could allow employers to develop more effective EVP that responds to their needs. Although the soft laddering method we utilised in this research is relatively time consuming and requires experienced interviewers and coders, the hard laddering

approach (Phillips and Reynolds, 2009) has been found to produce similar results, yet it is easier and less costly to administer, which may be more suitable to SMEs.

Limitations and future research

Limitations of this study are related to the sampling strategy. First, although the participants included non-Europeans, the sample is dominated by potential employees from the UK, which provides a largely Western perspective to what makes an attractive hospitality employer. This may limit the extent to which these findings are transferable to other contexts, therefore, findings should be applied with caution. Therefore, future studies should consider participants from different cultures to allow the comparison of value structures. Second, it cannot be ruled out that students who were financially motivated by the vouchers, and those who were more actively engaged in employer search were more likely to partake in the study. Moreover, students who were not physically present during the events (employment mentoring events) and classes we targeted (these were compulsory modules for the entire student cohort) were less likely to be included.

Moreover, it is important to acknowledge potential biases introduced during focus group interviews. As this method is associated with the possibility of outspoken individuals dominating the discussion, we took steps to minimise this by referring to each group member by name and encouraging equal participation in turns. Another issue concerns social pressure from the interviewer and other participants. Some participants may want to appear respectable and overly mature, which may misrepresent reality and lead to artificial answers. To minimise this issue, we sought to make participants at ease and to encourage a natural atmosphere by providing refreshments.

Another issue concerns the researcher bias introduced in data analysis. Separation of participant ideas into attributes, consequences and values is delicate and depends on accurate content analysis. This was minimised by reliability procedures we explained in the methods section.

With respect to the application of the laddering method, one of its limitations is that interesting insights emerging from interviews may be overlooked because they do not fit with the pattern imposed by the technique. In addition, the method applied in this study does not consider the relative importance of different attributes and benefits identified by participants. Therefore, researchers in future studies should consider alternative methods that allow addressing such questions. Moreover, this study did not differentiate between different types of hospitality employment such as hotels versus restaurants, or the different qualities of employers within such sectors, such as the size of the employer hotels, i.e. SMEs versus large hospitality groups such as Hilton or Intercontinental Hotels Group. Future research may seek to identify whether different employer types impact on value structures of potential employees.

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Summary: The article gives an introduction to the challenges of employers due to the entering the workforce of Generation Z. Even sharing some traits and characteristics with Millennials, Generation Z also exposes unique characteristics influenced by the penetration of the digital era. This generation is well known for being most achievement-oriented, highly educated thanks to their economic well-being, and more ethnically and racially diverse than any other generation. Inverse, Generation Z is recognized as unlikely to have a job when they are young and mostly suffer from depression and anxiety. Since Generation Z enters the labor market, employers must know the formative events that only occurred in this generation and how they transformed them to become future employees. The article will go over each of the characteristics of Generation Z, including lack of work experience, belief in diversity, equity, and inclusion, and the feeling of anxiety. Along with that, the study also mentions that the company manager should prepare to manage expectations, foster autonomy and mindset, fostering communication effectiveness, which is successfully integrating Generation Z employees into the workplace.

Relevance: The article shows relevance by providing the characteristics of Generation Z in the workplace and the context of the growing up journey helpful to understand the barrier Generation Z may face when entering the workforce.

Place in the paper: Literature review

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Human Resources

Are You Ready for Gen Z in the Workplace?

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Holly Schroth[1]

SUMMARY

Gen Z (1997-2013) is just now entering the labor market and employers need to be prepared for their arrival. While Gen Z shares many traits with the Millennial Generation, they also bring in new patterns of behavior. Managers today not only have to understand how to best manage youthful, inexperienced employees, but also the unique characteristics of the generation shaped by their experiences. Every generation has its doubts about the younger generation's culture and technologies. Understanding their behavior and the distinct needs that they have in the workplace will lead to better integration of the new employees and mutual success.

KEYWORDS: human capital, human resource management, improving performance, leadership development, management, management communication, management development, management skills, organizational behavior, leadership

The Post-Millennial Generation also known as Gen Z (1997-2013)[1] is just now entering the labor market and employers need to be prepared for its arrival. Generational or cohort differences in traits occur because the pervasive cultural values and practices change over time.[2] While Gen Z shares many traits with the Millennial Generation, it also brings in new patterns of behavior. Managers today not only have to understand how to best manage youthful, inexperienced employees, but also the unique characteristics of the generation shaped by their experiences. Every generation has its doubts about the younger generation's culture and technologies. Approaching generational differences with a blame mentality, which was prevalent with the Millennial Generation, only fosters complaints and derision toward the group instead of focusing on growth-oriented solutions. In addition, every generation is narcissistic, but narcissism is more associated with youth than cultural value differences and diminishes over time with exposure to more life experiences.[3] Gen Z has been found to be the most achievement-oriented of the generations.[4] In addition, Gen Zers have greater economic well-being, are more highly educated, and are more ethnically and racially diverse than any other generation.[5] However, they are also the least likely to have worked when they

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were young[6] and most likely to suffer from depression and anxiety.[7] To appreciate Gen Z, it is important to understand the formative events that are unique to this generation and how it has shaped them as learners and future employees. The most prominent of these include lack of work experience,[8] the advent of the smartphone and social media,[9] social justice movements,[10] and growing up in a culture of safety.[11] Understanding their behavior and the distinct needs that they have in the workplace, whether a factor of youth or generational difference, will lead to better integration of the new employees and mutual success.

Lack of Work Experience

In 1979, 60% of teens held a job, while in 2015, 34% of teens held a job and it is expected to drop to 25% in 2024.[12] Post-Millennials are entering adulthood with less experience in the labor market than prior generations. Roughly one in five 15- to 17-year-olds in 2018 (19%) report having worked at all during the prior calendar year, compared with 30% of Millennial 15- to 17-year-olds in 2002.[13] There are several factors that may be contributing to this. First, some measures of economic well-being indicate Gen Zers are growing up in more affluent circumstances than previous generations did. They live in households with higher median household incomes than older generations did when young, so they may not have to work to help the family.[14] Another reason may be greater competition to get into top higher education institutions, so the summer is filled with extracurricular activities and summer enrichment classes.[15] Many lower level jobs are also being filled by unemployed graduates or older workers.[16] Work, especially entry-level jobs, helps teens learn what is expected in the workplace and how to interact effectively with others. Without this early work experience new entrants can often have unrealistic expectations of work, which in turn fosters lower levels of commitment and higher turnover.[17]

Managing Expectations: A Realistic Job Preview

Giving new employees a realistic job preview increases motivation and decreases turnover because employees have realistic expectations of both the positive aspects and challenges of the job.[18] This makes them mentally ready to tackle any obstacles that they may encounter. The realistic job preview can help to improve applicants' decision about job fit. Typical topics that should be presented in the realistic job preview include the following:

- Essential job responsibilities
- Expectations for hours worked, travel, and working conditions
- Top positive and negative aspects associated with performing the job
- Top positive and negative aspects of working for the organization
- The top positive and negative aspects of working for the manager
- Culture, growth, and career path

Managing expectations are crucial as Gen Z employees often have an idealistic picture that the work will be interesting and meaningful, that their managers will want to hear and implement their ideas, that they will have flexibility in the schedule, and that they will enjoy everyone they work with.[19] Many students do have some internship experience, but more frequently than not, they report that their experience was nothing like their "real job" and they are quickly disillusioned wanting to quit within three months.[20] A Gen Z employee of a company I recently worked with admitted that she is in her third job within the year and has realized that her "expectations about work were unrealistic" and that she now has to "buckle down and start putting in the effort needed to work her way up to something better."

Managing Expectations: The Psychological Contract

Complicating matters of organizational entry, new employees have an unwritten set of expectations about the employment relationship that greatly impacts their attitudes, feelings, and behaviors.[21] This is called a psychological contract, and it is what management expects from workers and vice versa. For example, management is expected to pay commensurate with performance; give opportunities for training, development, and promotion; give feedback on performance; and treat employees respectfully. Employees are expected to work hard, develop new skills, follow directions, and be courteous to the boss, clients, and colleagues. Violations of the psychological contract can lead to poor performance and productivity, low satisfaction, high turnover, and theft.[22] The psychological contract is unique to each employee-employer relationship because it is based on the two party's individual perceptions and cognitions shaped by past interactions.[23] As a result, it is important to talk to each new employee to understand that person's expectations about the work relationship and to manage these expectations. For example, when asked what they want most from their boss in the workplace, Gen Z cited positive attitude (42%) and clear targets (37%), while Millennials stated open communication and feedback (42%) followed by clear targets (38%). Although their Gen X bosses did indicate that they were most likely to offer open communication (42%), they were less likely to offer a positive attitude (33%) and set clear targets (31%).[24]

This will improve the employee's performance, satisfaction, and commitment while reducing the likelihood of turnover. A meta-analysis of data from 30 case studies over 15 years found that for workers earning less than $75,000 annually, the costs of turnover is 20% of salary. The cost is consistent across jobs at different pay levels, except the highest paying jobs where the cost of turnover is even greater.[25]

Managing Expectations: Onboarding

Another important organizational entry tool for companies and managers of new employees is the concept of onboarding. Onboarding can be defined as "all formal and informal practices, programs, and policies enacted or engaged in by an organization or its agents to facilitate newcomer adjustment."[26] There are

many positive outcomes resulting from effective onboarding practices for both new employees and organizations. These include better performance, retention, satisfaction, commitment, and self-efficacy.[27] Onboarding practices help to reduce the inevitable uncertainty and anxiety newcomers experience,[28] bring greater clarity and understanding to their new role,[29] and help them make sense of their new environment.[30] It also provides them with the necessary tangible (e.g., explicit knowledge) and intangible (e.g., relationships) resources to become fully functioning organizational members effective in their new role.[31] Gen Z's higher level of fear and uncertainty about the workplace increases the necessity of good onboarding practices.[32] Top companies begin the onboarding process when the offer is accepted and continue to track and report the process of new hires.[33] Only 12% of new employees say their company does a good job onboarding them and 87% say they do not have the optimum level of knowledge and tools necessary to do their job.[34] Gen Zers report that they could have performed closer to their bosses' expectations if they were given more clear instructions and training on the job.[35] Lack of proper onboarding is cited as the reason that 25% of new employees report that they want to quit their jobs within the first six months.[36]

Some best practices for onboarding new entry-level employees advocated by practitioners and supported by research data include the following[37]:

- *Providing a checklist*: Include a specific timeline, goals, responsibilities, and resources/support available for the first day, first week, first month, and three months. This includes any information, materials, and experiences to help them learn what they need to know to be successful in their new roles and in the organization. Make sure that the manager sets aside time to welcome the new employee and to go over the checklist. Higher education institutions train students to work off a syllabus, checklist, and rubric.[38] Understanding this, managers can present new employees from higher education institutions with a checklist initially. Managers and employees can then have a shared expectation to have employees actively work toward going beyond what is required in the checklist and thinking for themselves.
- *Facilitate communication*: Have Q&A sessions with senior leaders, HR, key staff, and coworkers with whom they will be interacting and are integral to their success in the company. Use technology such as videos and a variety of communication media to introduce information about the company and demonstrate any communication (e.g., Slack) or social networking tools used to facilitate internal interactions. The top learning method for 59% of Gen Z's is YouTube.[39] Have an orientation program with other new hires to facilitate socialization and get to know coworkers.
- *Reinforce existing culture and sense of purpose*: Explain the significance of their new role and how their presence makes a difference for the team. Reaffirm their decision to join the company. Reinforce the existing culture using success stories, especially stories that communicate effort and persistence, learning from mistakes, and growth and achievement. The more personalized an example the better.

- *Provide feedback channels*: As a manager, set aside a block of uninterrupted time to spend with the newcomer to answer questions and address concerns. Make sure feedback goes in both directions.

My undergraduate students tell me that they are much more likely to be motivated to work hard on an assignment if their manager explains why it is important, especially to their future growth and achievement. Gen Zers, characterized as very achievement-oriented, desire ongoing professional development and opportunities for promotion in their company (77% in the United States, 63% worldwide).[40] Younger Millennials and Gen Zers say a top benefit they want from their employer (#1 and #2, respectively) is to have their ideas valued while older Millennials ranked this as #4 behind health insurance (also important to Gen Z), work-life balance, and vacation.[41] The undergraduate students say they will not respect their manager if they feel disrespected. Disrespect to them is not listening to their ideas or being dismissive of their ideas. They also will consider employment decisions unfair if they do not fully understand the process and procedures used to make those decisions, such as project assignments and promotions. This is not novel to Gen Z as research in the field of procedural justice indicates that the perceived fairness of procedures and how one is treated greatly affects a person's workplace satisfaction,[42] performance,[43] commitment and trust,[44] as well as self-esteem.[45]

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The notion of equality is important to Gen Z, with 91% believing that everyone is equal and should be treated that way.[46] Issues surrounding diversity, equity, and inclusion are more salient than in any other generation.[47] Gen Z is also the most racially and ethnically diverse generation, as a slight majority of 6- to 21-year-olds (52%) are non-Hispanic whites.[48] Although Gen Z feel passionately about issues of social justice, they are more likely than any other generation to support free speech restrictions[49] and, on campuses, to disinvite speakers who do not support their point of view.[50] The shift in government guidelines in 2013 broadened the definition of sexual discrimination harassment, suggesting that harassment does not have to be "objectively offensive" to warrant complaints. It demands colleges take action against alleged aggressors even before judicial hearings are held. The result of the policy is that Gen Z has to rely on their own subjective feelings of justice to decide whether a comment is unwelcome and grounds for a harassment claim.[51] Organizations and managers are now tasked with clarifying what speech and behavior is acceptable in the workplace. The controversy at Google over the internal memo on gender equity and subsequent firing of the memo's author is a good example of the challenges ahead for companies with regard to free speech and protecting against perceived and real bias.[52]

Managing a Diverse and Inclusive Workforce

Antiprejudice campaigns that exert strong pressure on people to be nonprejudiced appear to backfire, yielding heightened levels of prejudice.[53] Unconscious or implicit bias training programs, promoted at Google and popular in higher education institutions, may lower the threshold for what is offensive. This results in employees perceiving subtle signals of prejudice where there are none.[54] Such training can lead to an increase in tension among employees and false claims.[55] It can also cause an increase in anxiety and depression.[56] A female employee had said to me she used to like her job, but after implicit bias training she is "hypervigilant and sensitive to the smallest potential slights" so she cannot help but feel slighted every day and is thinking of quitting. Instead, introducing expectations of positive behaviors in the workplace and reinforcing those behaviors will lead to more effective interactions and discussion among diverse groups rather than suggesting that everyone is biased and therefore biased in their interactions.[57] Workshops can encourage personal valuing of diversity and equality by examining the benefits to both the individual as well as the organization of having a diverse and fair workplace.[58] Programs that promote procedural justice also increase positive feelings toward the company, job satisfaction, organizational commitment,[59] and self-esteem.[60] In addition, training in negotiation and conflict resolution skills teaches participants how to manage emotions, engage in a positive dialogue, build trust, develop relationships, and manage conflict in order to create value and work toward mutually satisfying agreements.[61]

Anxiety and Depression

Gen Z is significantly more likely to report their mental health as fair or poor as compared with all other generations.[62] They have the highest rate of diagnosed depression followed by anxiety.[63] Only half feel they do enough to manage their stress while 25% say they do not feel they do enough.[64] Sixty-seven percent of Gen Z in the United States and 85% worldwide say that stress prevents them from taking on leadership responsibilities.[65] Considering these statistics, companies may consider putting more resources into their health and wellness programs. Support groups and some interventions that focus on teaching general psychosocial skills have been found to increase overall well-being[66]; 73% of Gen Zers feel that they could have used more emotional support in the past year.[67]

Fostering Autonomy

Gen Z is unique in growing up with a culture of safety where overprotective parenting inadvertently took away their opportunity to learn life skills.[68] This interfered with their social, emotional, and intellectual development, making it difficult for them to become autonomous adults, able to navigate the challenges of life, let alone the workplace. Becoming autonomous involves learning how to make responsible decisions and take actions in ambiguous and uncertain situations. Parents can foster autonomy in their children by loosening control,

having them make choices, and allowing them to take on more responsibility while not shielding them from unpleasant facts or outcomes.[69] Autonomy is also facilitated by role modeling of parents who convey stable and consistent values demonstrating a congruence between beliefs and actions.[70] Similarly, in the workplace, autonomy can be fostered by managers showing trust and support for new employees to make decisions, allowing them to take eventual ownership over projects and have greater control over their time management and how they complete tasks.[71] There should be a shifting ownership in the process and accountability for the outcome from the manager to the employee, where the manager models what good processes look like and gives the tools and resources as needed to the employee to succeed.[72]

Fostering a Growth Mindset

Parents are raising kids to stay kids longer, a "slow life strategy," because there is less of a need for modern teens to become adults.[73] Growing up more slowly combined with protection from life's adversity detrimentally impacts this generations' development and ability to cope.[74] In her more than 20 years of research on mindsets,[75] Carol Dweck has definitive evidence that protecting children from failure, removing obstacles for them, and only giving positive feedback can have lasting effects on their ability to cope in the workplace and life. Furthermore, overprotecting children can lead them to having a fixed mindset, where they have a desire to look smart and are fearful of showing they are not competent because they see intelligence and abilities as fixed traits. In the workplace, employees with a fixed mindset are unwilling to take on more challenging work.[76] They hide or blame others for mistakes and avoid asking questions so as not to appear unknowledgeable. They ignore useful feedback and become defensive when given constructive advice, which they see as unfair criticism and are threatened by others' success, seeking allies to complain about the boss and/or company to shore up their self-esteem. Those with a growth mindset believe intelligence and abilities can be developed and have a desire to learn. This leads them to embrace challenges, persist despite obstacles, see effort as a path to mastery, and learn from criticism.[77] They are inspired by others' success. Those with a growth mindset are also much more engaged employees.[78]

Gen Z cites the fear of failing in a leadership role (34%) and a lack of confidence required to lead (33%) as the main reasons they would not take on more leadership responsibility in their roles.[79] The concern for new managers is to recognize and then develop those who have a fixed mind set to have a growth mindset. According to Dweck, mindsets can be changed but it requires coaching. So what can you do to help your new employees develop a growth mindset? Dweck's research suggests the following:

- Present skills as being learnable and that everyone is learning on the job.
- Convey on multiple occasions that the organization values learning, effort, and perseverance, and that mistakes are inevitable but can and should be learned from. Remember to praise for effort and initiative and not just results.

- Create a culture where feedback is seen as valuable. Acting on feedback is seen as helping them to achieve their goals and will be met with greater opportunities to move up in the company. Coach employees to seek both positive and constructive feedback, not just from their managers but from their peers.
- As their manager, present yourself as a resource and coach for learning—share your own mistakes and what you have learned from them.

Some companies have promoted a culture of experimentation which includes "safe to fail" challenges, helping them exercise their strategic thinking and risk taking in a safe environment.[80] In addition, my students indicate they are more willing to take on challenges and ask their manager for help if the managers tell their personal stories of overcoming a failure and how that has helped them to grow professionally and achieve success. Just listening, understanding, sharing stories and then setting some developmental goals together can make a big difference not only in the quality of the relationship but in effort, attitude, and quality of work performed. Forty-two percent of Gen Z say they want their boss to have a positive attitude and 33% want open communication[81]; 35% of Gen Z also say they expect "motivating behavior" from their manager, but only 25% of Gen X managers say they offer this.[82] Closing the gap may reduce conflict and increase employee success.

Workplace Coaching

More and more is being expected of modern managers. Workplace coaching is a one-on-one, custom-tailored learning and development process that uses a collaborative, reflective, goal-focused relationship to achieve professional outcomes that are valued by the coachee.[83] It is gaining widespread acceptance in the workplace as many organizations realize that technical expertise is no longer enough. Managers are now expected to relate to their team members in a way that maximizes their engagement, well-being, and performance, while also facilitating personal change.[84] Coaching has been found to provide emotional support and to reduce stress of employees. It helps in goal attainment as well as increased psychological and workplace well-being.[85] Gen Zers say they prefer collaborative learning rather than a "telling" approach.[86] Consultative coaching helps employees explore alternatives and challenges the employee's thinking by asking the employee questions rather than telling them what to do.[87]

The coaching process typically facilitates goal attainment by helping employees:

- Identify desired outcomes
- Establish specific goals
- Enhance motivation by identifying strengths and building self-efficacy
- Identify resources and formulate action plans

- Monitor and evaluate progress
- Modify action plans where necessary

Coaching may be a short "hallway" conversation or more lengthy formal session. Coaching can focus on developing a specific skill set to improve performance or enhancing emotional competencies to increase engagement and well-being.

Communication Skills

Companies are seeking employees who have the ability to communicate and interact effectively with others.[88] Communication skills include both what is said during a social interaction and how it is said. This includes choice of words and phrases, appropriate facial expressions, tone of voice, body language, and eye contact. Employees' social effectiveness depends on their ability to read, understand, and control social interactions,[89] and it is related to job performance.[90] The advent of the smart phone has had a significant impact on social interaction among this generation.[91] The introduction of smart phones has been shown to reduce the amount of face-to-face interactions that teens have with each other.[92] Technology plays a central role in Gen Zers' lives, from socializing to schoolwork, entertainment to exercise, relaxation to reference.[93] This can impair their ability to effectively communicate and interact with others, including the older generation, in the workplace. When asked on a typical day whether they communicate more in person or digitally, Gen Z and Millennials reported they communicate 74% digitally and 26% in person.[94] Face-to-face communication fosters the development of interpersonal synchrony and rapport, leading to more trusting, cooperative behavior.[95] By relying on text messaging primarily for their interaction, Gen Zers have missed out on learning some vital rules of conversation. This includes how to listen, ask questions, interject in a way that is seen as respectful to others, build relationships, problem solve in real time, and resolve conflicts.[96] For example, when a message is complex or when there is conflict involved, it is best to use face-to-face interaction.[97] However, Gen Zers are more comfortable using technology to communicate, even when the use of technology is not appropriate.[98]

Fostering Communication Effectiveness

Smartphone-related patterns of communication will continue into the workplace unless the manager helps the new employee adapt to different modes of workplace communication and understand why relying on e-communication is not the most effective. Managers would be wise to address when and how to use each of the different communication mediums. They need to explain the level of formality in language expected with different constituents. For example, is slang permitted and if so, when? What about the use of emojis.[99] Companies

rate communication skills, critical thinking, and ability to apply knowledge to the real world as the most important skills for recent graduates, yet find a serious lack of preparedness in these areas.[100] Evidence suggests that the development of social skills increases an employee's self-esteem, autonomy, and more importantly for Gen Z, their ability to cope with stress while also reducing anxiety, depression, and frustration.[101]

Moving Forward

Managers face special challenges with the new generation of employees because Gen Z is not as prepared for the realities of the workplace as past generations. It is important for managers to understand the factors that have influenced Gen Zers to think and behave as they do. These factors include a lack of work experience, the advent of the smartphone and popularity of social media, social justice movements, and growing up in a culture of safety. Understanding their behavior and the distinct needs that they have will help managers to better integrate the new employees into the workplace for mutual success. Managers can best prepare the Gen Z employees for the workplace by taking time to help manage their expectations. This can be done by providing them with a realistic job preview during the job interview process so they understand both the positive aspects and challenges of the job. This helps them decide whether the job would be a good fit and allows them to mentally prepare for any obstacles they may encounter in the workplace. Upon arrival into the company, the manager and employee should engage in a psychological contract, which is a more detailed agreement of mutual expectations for the manager-employee relationship. In addition, employees will perform closer to their managers' expectations if they are properly on-boarded, provided checklists of performance goals and resources as well as an orientation program to facilitate internal communications. To reduce anxiety in the workplace, managers can help new employees gain a sense of autonomy by allowing them to take greater ownership of projects and make more of their own decisions over time. Furthermore, managers can foster a growth mindset in their employees by emphasizing learning on the job and creating a culture where feedback is valued and acted upon. Ultimately, a manager acting as a coach to guide the employee and provide emotional support reduces stress and anxiety of employees while helping them in their development. By employing these strategies, managers can successfully integrate their new employees into the workplace, increasing workplace satisfaction and productivity, while reducing costly turnover. While some companies were caught off-guard by the arrival of the Millennials, it is not too late to prepare for Gen Z.

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Source 27 (Scholarly)

Citation:

Otieno, J. O., & Nyambegera, S. M. (2019). Millennials and Generation Z employees are here: is your organization ready?. *Journal of Language, Technology & Entrepreneurship in Africa*, *10*(2), 68-85.

Summary: The article provides a comprehensive review of organizational development intervention in the context of managing millennials and post-millennials, also known as Generation Z, in the workplace. The research examines how organizations can effectively adapt to the joining of Millennials and Generation employees through structured change management and organizational development intervention. Generation differences between Millennials and Generation Z are mostly found in the desire for feedback, adeptness, flexibility, and expectations for transparency of work-life balance. The focal point in this study is the change framework which organizations can use to understand and precisely articulate the type of change they face. Another component that contributed to the success of the change program is the ability of the organization to follow the development process. Well-conducted change program results in the organization allow the organization to have a better understanding and design effective organizational development interventions that solve the problem, which specifically in this case is the disruption that Millennials and Generation Z bring to the workplace.

Relevance: The article is relevant to the topic by giving a perspective of how organizations evaluate and analyze any changes that happen, particularly in here is the change of workforce.

Place in the paper: Literature review

Millennials and Generation Z Employees are here: Is your Organization ready?

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Abstract

This paper provides a review of organisational development change process and design of organisational development interventions (ODIs) in the context of millennial and post millennial employees. Data was collected through a desk top literature survey of primary and secondary data from millennial and post millennial studies as well as a review of primary and secondary data from scientific research on change management and organisational development. The review found that for effective successful change, organisations need to be cognisant of theory E and theory O of change. Organisations must diligently apply the organisational development four-stage process of "Entering and contracting", "Diagnosing", "Planning and implementing change" and "Evaluating and Institutionalizing Change". The review also found that the millennial (Generation Y) employees are not the only problem affecting the future of the workplace and recommends for further research to be done on the impact of the post millennial (Generation Z) employees and the 4^{th} industrial revolution on the future of the workplace.

Key Words: Millennials, Generation Z, Change, Organization Development

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to review the progress that has been made in the field of organisational development interventions (ODIs) to address the impact of millennials and post millennial employees on the destiny of organisations. This paper discusses the findings presented in extant research and studies in the field of planned change, ODIs design and implementation in the context of generational cohorts in the workplace. The focus of this paper is to review how the concepts and theories of change are practically applied in industry and provide directions for further research.

Background

The workplace is made up of a mix of multiple generations of employees whose experiences in their respective times have moulded them into individuals with characteristics that define their generation (Nnambooze & Parumasur, 2016). These different generations have different behavioural characteristics that define their expectations and preferences at the workplace. The diverse profiles of various generations bring unique benefits to the organisation but also places unique demands on the organisation to provide an environment in which all the generational age cohorts will thrive in the workplace. The working age population is defined as those aged between 15 to 64years (OECD, 2019). Table 1 shows the age definition of the generational cohorts and the names that have been adopted for the various generations. The taxonomies of the generational cohorts can be explained by the Theory of generation as posited by Karl Mannheim in 1928. According to Mannheim , as cited by (Pilcher, 1994), people are influenced by the socio-historical environment and notable events that involve them actively, particularly during their youth which gives rise to shared experience within the social cohorts that in their turn influence events that shape future generations

Table ***Error! No text of specified style in document.*** Age definition of the generational cohorts

Generation Name	Years of Birth	Age Cohorts in 2019
Traditionalists (Silent Generation)	1928 - 1945	74 - 91
Baby Boomers	1946 - 1964	55 - 73
Generation X	1965 - 1980	39 - 54
Millennials (Generation Y)	1981 - 1997	20 - 38
Post Millennials (Generation Z)	1998 - Present	< 21

Source (Pew research center, 2019)

Millennials are quickly representing most of the staff in many organizations as Baby Boomers decrease in numbers by way of retirement (Bartz, Thompson, & Rice, 2017). The definition of generations in table 3-1 and the working population age defined by OECD imply that the first millennials started joining the workforce in the year 1996 and the first of Generation Z employees started joining the workforce in the year 2013. The traditionalists have since retired from the workforce and the last of the baby boomers will remain in the workforce only until the year 2028. The last of generation X employee will stay in the workforce until the year 2044. This means that from the year 2045, the entire workforce will be constituted of only millennial and post millennial employees.

The millennials and post millennials bring with them a different set of characteristics and behavioural traits that will introduce new dynamics in the organisational setting. Therefore, organisations will have to carefully diagnose the impact of issues brought about by the new

generations entering the workforce and design appropriate interventions to ensure that the organisation remain effective, efficient and continue to perform successfully. Jenkins (2019) provides the following as the characteristics and behaviour traits of millennials.

1 Millennials desire feedback, making a difference, and diverse collaboration

2 Millennials approach differently how they learn, work, socialize and communicate due to technology.

3 Millennials are the first generation that didn't consider parents or teachers as the authority but rather the Internet. They treat the Internet as their external brain and approach problems in a whole new way from previous generations

4 Millennials are early adopters of technology (e.g. social media, cell phones, and texting) and seek opportunities to innovate especially as they enter the workforce.

5 Millennials' (and every other generation's) communication has and will continue to be shaped by technology.

6 Millennials are contributors looking for an active role and immediate impact.

7 Millennials are heavily persuaded by their peers. Constantly turning to their networks for new opportunities, to stay in touch, connect with a brand, and to acquire news.

8 Millennials demand transparency from leaders, employers, and brands.

9 Millennials work/life behaviour and values continue to be shaped by technology.

10 Millennials high-tech and hyper-connected upbringing have made them disruption-prone leaders.

Jenkins (2019) further summarises the characteristics and behavioural traits of the post millennials (generation Z) as follows:

1 Generation Z will approach work with a do it yourself (DIY) approach, work hard, and pragmatic mindset.

2 Generation Z gravitates towards gamified processes or procedures and are native to global communication and collaboration across virtual platforms.

3 Generation Z is a video and mobile-centric generation where their mobile devices serve as the remote control of their lives.

4 Generation Z is quick to adopt new communication channels and prefers real-time, transparent, and collaborative digital communications.

5 Generation Z wants teachers and managers to not be the sole source of their learning but rather supplement their learning -- coaching them through their questions, mistakes, and successes.

6 Generation Z has developed a much higher instinctual relationship with technology and the increasingly interconnected world shifts their expectations for how work can and should be executed.

7 Generation Z prioritizes honest, transparent, and authentic messaging from friends, leaders, employers, and brands.

8 Generation Z expects to co-create with brands, contribute on teams, and collaborate with managers; and they expect innovation from their employers, leaders, and brands.

9 Generation Z are self-starters, self-learners, and self-motivators seeking swift impact at work.

10 Generation Z place a premium on entrepreneurship, innovation, and "side hustles."

11 Generation Z's relationship with technology will re-wire how they show up as workers and consumers.

12 Generation Z will leverage the diversity of thought and experience of their generation to create innovative solutions for tomorrow's complex problems.

To understand the different demands that the millennials and post millennials bring to the work place, there is need to compare their traits and characteristics with that of their older counterparts generation X. The following are the traits and characteristics of the generation X (Bartz, Thompson & Rice, 2017).

1 Highly independent and goal oriented regarding achieving a position of power

2 Thrive in structured hierarchical environments

3 View people in positions of power as experts

4 Value flexibility and adaptability within a hierarchy

5 Quick to adopt new communication channels and prefers real-time, transparent, and collaborative digital communications.

6 Follow a “live to work” mentality

7 Concerned that they will not be able to retire comfortably;

Structured, punctual, and “linear” in thinking

8 Action oriented AND move through work quickly

Bartz, Thompson and Rice, (2017) further asserts that baby boomers are quite different in terms of their characteristics and behavioural traits as follows:

1 Loyalty to the organization where they work

2 Value recognition for hard work

3 Value flexibility and adaptability within a hierarchy

4 Understand change is necessary, but are cautious to adapt (e.g., technology

5 Value face-to-face and written communication

6 View of work-life balance tends to be more focused on work

7 Sometimes apprehensive to diversity and tend to defend status quo

8 Value workplace rules, policies, and procedures designated for efficiency and getting quality work done

9 Believe in continual professional development for advancements in career, being productive, and effectively meeting job requirements

10 Value money and lucrative retirement plans

Various studies have summarized the challenges that millennials and post millennials bring to the workplace to include those related to recruitment of millennial employees; retention ; and leadership , management and engagement (PWC,2013), (KPMG, 2017), (Deloitte, 2018). Much has been written in both mainstream media and in social science research reports about who the millennials and post millennials are; what they want in life and how they impact or will impact the workplace. But the question is "are the millennials and post millennials really the problem?" Whereas the social media and main stream media is made up of a mix of stereotype claims and some factual claims on the subject of the generational gaps, there is a lot of research and studies that present empirical facts that provide answers to the dilemma caused by the generational gaps in the workplace. Examples of such studies and research are, Schuman and Scott (1989), Pilcher (1994),PWC (2013),KPMG (2017), Delottie (2018).

To address the disruptions associated with millennial and post millennial employees, organisations are turning to organisational development practise to ensure that they remain efficient, effective and continue to sustainably enjoy positive performance. To attain the desired transformation, the organisational development process should not only focus on building the organisation's ability to assess its current functioning and to achieve organisational goals, but should also focus on improving the total ecosystem, i.e. the organisation and its parts in the context of the larger environment (Cummings & Worley, 2009). Organisations will realise their desired transformation, through careful design of organisational development interventions and expert implementation of planned change programmes. Cummings and Worley (2009), identified the

three major trends that shape change in organisations as being; - 1) globalization; 2) information technology; and 3) managerial innovation.

Concepts and theories of Change

Burnes (2004), identifies the three main modules of change to be the incremental model; the punctuated equilibrium model; and the continuous transformation model. Incremental change model views change as a process in which individual parts of an organisation deal incrementally and separately with one problem and one goal at a time. The punctuated equilibrium model views organisations evolving through long periods of stability that is punctuated with short bursts of fundamental change. Continuous change model is based on the assertion that the environment in which the organisations operate is continuously changing and therefore organisations must continuously transform to keep aligned with the changing environment (Burnes, 2004). Change may happen at an individual level, at a group level or at a system or organizational level. Burnes (2004) suggested bringing these two concepts together to create a change matrix that could be used to explain most change situations as shown in table 2.

Table 2: Change Matrix

	Incremental Change	Punctuated change	Continuous Change
Individual level	Learning	Promotion	Career development
Groups Level	Kaizen	Team-Building	Changes in Composition and tasks
Organization level	Fine-tuning	Business Process Re-engineering (BPR)	Culture

Drawing on the work of Quinn (1996), Cummings and Worley (2001), Stace and Dunphy (2001), Burnes (2004), proposes change to run along a continuum from small-scale incremental change to large-scale transformational change. Burnes (2004), goes on to propose an approach to manage change relative to the environment in which the change is taking place, suggesting that planned change is more suitable for stable environments while emergent change is suited for turbulent environments. From this phenomenon, Burnes (2004), introduced a third continuum which focuses on behavioural and cultural change at one end, and the other end focuses on changes in organisational processes and structures to create a framework for change model. The framework for change is illustrated in figure 1.

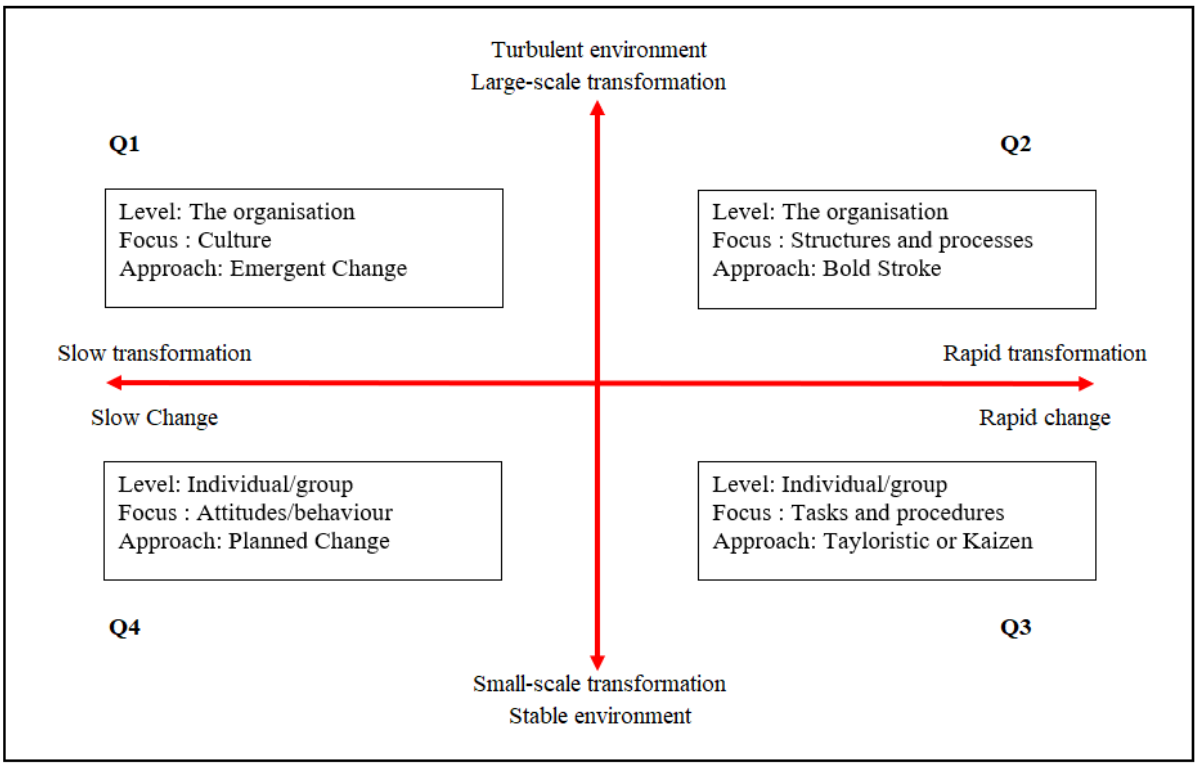


Figure ***Error! No text of specified style in document.***: A framework for change

Source (Burnes, 2004).

This framework helps to provide guidance, during the change process, in categorising the nature of change and suggests the approach that managers can take to implement the change in their organisations relative to the environment with which they operate. Research on change has found that 70% of all change initiatives fail (Beer & Nohria, 2000). The failure of change initiatives has been largely attributed to organisations and managers not selecting the correct approaches to effectively implement change. To effect successful change, Beer and Nohria (2000), proposed two basic theories of change, Theory E and Theory O. The two theories view change from two different perspectives. Theory E is based on change through initiatives that will bring economic value which is measured only by shareholder returns. This approach increases business returns through economic incentives, drastic layoffs, and restructuring (Beer & Nohria, 2000). Theory O focuses on developing corporate culture and human capability, patiently building trust and emotional commitment to the company through teamwork and communication.

Beer and Nohria (2000), further found out that all corporate transformations can be compared along the six dimensions, i.e. organisational goals, organisational leadership, focus of the organisation, organisational processes, organisational reward system and the organisation's approach to use of consultant. Table 3 summarizes the application scenarios of theory E and theory O to the six dimensions of change to achieve organisational transformation.

Table 3: Application of Theory E and Theory to organisational transformation

Dimensions of Change	Theory E	Theory O	Theories E and O Combined
Goals	maximize shareholder value	develop organizational capabilities	explicitly embrace the paradox between economic value and organizational capability
Leadership	manage change from the top down	encourage participation from the bottom up	set direction from the top and engage the people below
Focus	emphasize structure and systems	build up corporate culture: employees' behaviour and attitudes	focus simultaneously on the hard (structures and systems) and the soft (corporate culture)
Process	plan and establish programs	experiment and evolve	plan for spontaneity
Reward System	motivate through financial incentives	motivate through commitment—use pay as fair exchange	use incentives to reinforce change but not to drive it
Use of Consultants	consultants analyse problems and shape solutions	consultants support management in shaping their own solutions	consultants are expert resources who empower employees

Source (Beer & Nohria, 2000)

Organisation development process

A general model that organisational development practitioners and members of an organisation use to implement planned change programmes is made up of four basic activities which flow sequentially, with a feedback loop, "starting from entering and contracting", to "diagnosing", to "planning and implementing change", to "evaluating and institutionalizing change" (Cummings & Worley, 2009). The set of sub-activities that make up the four basic activities of the organisation process are summarized in Table 4.

Table ***Error! No text of specified style in document.***4: Organisational development process

Entering and contracting	Diagnosing	Planning and Implementing change	Evaluating and Institutionalizing Change
Gathering initial data to understand the problem	Detailed study to understand the problem	Plan and implement Organisation Development interventions ODIs	Feedback the results of the interventions
Develop a contract and agreement to engage in planned change.	Gathering and analysing, and feeding back information at - Organization level - Group level - Individual level	4 groups of ODI are; --Human process interventions -Technostructural interventions - HR management interventions - Strategic interventions	Reinforce change through feedback, rewards, and training.
	Methodologies include - Interviews - Observations - Survey feedback - Focus groups	Lead and manage the change process	

Source (Cummings & Worley, 2009)

Organisations around the globe are using this four-stage planned change model to address the disruption that millennials and post millennials are bringing into the workplace. Some recent research found that organizations that have used this approach are the PWC's research "a global generational study" in 2013, KPMG's "Meet the millennials study" of 2017 and Deloitte's "2018 millennial survey"

Empirical review of generational employee studies

In the year 2011, PWC in conjunction with university of South California and London Business School conducted a global generational research to study the attitudes, behaviour and goals of millennial employees in the workplace. The research was a comparative study and used both qualitative and quantitative methods. Data was collected from PWC employees and employees from PWC partners around the globe by way of survey, interviews and focus groups. The research covered over 40,000 respondents. The variables under study were workplace culture, communication and work styles, compensation and career structure, career development

opportunity and work life balance. The study defined millennials as employees born the years 1980 and 1995.

The data was collected between 2011 and 2012 and subsequently compiled, analysed and the results of the study released in a report in 2013. The study found that work life balance is one of the most important drivers for employee retention. The study also found widespread similarities between the millennial and their older non millennial counterparts. The findings of the study are summarised in table 5.

Table ***Error! No text of specified style in document.***: Key findings of the PWC NextGen study 2013

	Key findings of the PWC Next generation study 2013
1	Millennials value work/life balance, and the majority of them are unwilling to commit to making their work lives an exclusive priority, even with the promise of substantial compensation later on
2	Millennials want more flexibility, the opportunity to shift hours—to start their work days later, for example, or put in time at night, if necessary. But so, do non-Millennials, in equal numbers
3	Millennials place a high priority on workplace culture and desire a work environment that emphasizes teamwork and a sense of community
4	They also value transparency (especially as it relates to decisions about their careers, compensation and rewards).
5	They want to provide input on their work assignments and want and need the support of their supervisors
6	Millennials also are particularly attuned to the world around them, and many want the chance to explore overseas positions
7	They have grown up not expecting their organisations to meet all their needs, including job security, and don't see themselves working for one organisation for their entire careers
8	Although Millennials have a natural aptitude for electronic forms of communication, email and social media platforms are not always their communication vehicles of choice, especially when it comes to discussions with their managers about their careers
9	Also, while a common perception exists that Millennials are not as committed or hard working as their more senior colleagues, the study effectively "busted" this myth by revealing that Millennials are as equally committed to their work

10	Millennial attitudes are not totally universal, although there is significant commonality between the United States/Canada and Western Europe. Additionally, we discovered in a few countries where there is a strong differentiated culture that cultural norms can 'trump' Millennial views that surfaced elsewhere in the world.
11	The NextGen study revealed that while the reasons for staying or leaving the firm are virtually the same between both Millennials and non-Millennials,
12	Millennials have a greater expectation to be supported and appreciated in return for their contributions, and to be part of a cohesive team. Flexibility in where they work and how much they work is also a key driver in Millennial satisfaction
13	This view differs in importance from that of the non-Millennial generation, which places greater importance on pay and development opportunities

Source (PWC, 2013)

The NextGen study found that Work-life balance, employee engagement, competitive pay and job opportunities drive employees' emotional connection with the firm, and this leads to employee retention (PWC, 2013). Utilising this finding and the rich data obtained from the NextGen study, PWC got a greater understanding of the turnover risk of staff by level, geography and other demographics. This information is already being used in territories around the PWC network to improve people engagement and reduce turnover. From this research, PWC put forward some recommendations that organisations can use to plan for and implement change to address the disruptions that the millennial employees bring to the work place.

Table 6 provides a summary of the recommendations proposed by this research. Organisations should reflect on the core learnings of this study and explore new policies, procedures and cultural attitudes that reflect a new workplace order and will support a sustainable business model where all generations feel welcome (PWC, 2013).

Table **Error! No text of specified style in document.**: Recommendations from the PWC Next generation study 2013

	Recommendations from the PWC Next generation study 2013
1	Create a flexible work culture, adopt policies that promote greater work/ life balance, such as providing employees greater flexibility in their work location or schedule without having to execute a more formal flexible work arrangement

2	Fully leverage technology, To Millennials this is an absolute must—they expect to have access to the best tools for collaboration and execution.
3	Increase Transparency around compensation, rewards and career decisions.
4	Build a sense of community. Emphasize teamwork, appreciation and support from supervisors, and give employees honest, real-time feedback, face-to-face
5	Consider introducing or accelerating your global mobility program
6	Evaluate the impact that Millennials may have on the contingent workforce strategy of your organisation.
7	Invest time, resources and energy to listen and stay connected with your people. Understand the generational Create innovative ways to keep employees engaged and perform at their best
8	One size does not fit all. Generational differences do exist among Millennials and non-Millennials, and should be considered by organisations that include employees from both groups

Source (PWC, 2013)

In 2017 KPMG conducted a study on a small sample size of 70 millennial and post millennial to understand employee attitudes around employment related challenges, employment priorities and expectation from employment. The millennials were defined as those born in the years 1980 to 1995 and the post millennials those born in the years 1996 to 2010. Data was collected using survey and interview methods. The data was analysed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. This study also researched gender related issues among the millennial. The findings of the study were reported based on three themes of what millennial want in relation to the workplace. These three themes are; attracting millennial talent; engaging millennial employees in the workplace; and retention millennial employees. The results for this study are summarised in table 7.

Table ***Error! No text of specified style in document.***7: Findings and recommendations from KPMG's Meet the millennials study 2017

	Attracting millennials to the workplace
1	They prioritise culture. How the employer portrays the overall experience of working for them is a key differentiator when they decide which positions to apply for. Companies need to formally prioritise work-life balance
2	They want to enjoy their working experience. Companies need to focus their efforts on ensuring that from the time they start their work day to the time they finish, millennials are enjoying every minute

3	They want open and honest communication. Companies need to adopt a transparent communication policy.
4	They want flexibility. Companies need to formally prioritise work-life balance
	Engaging millennials in the workplace:
1	Social impact is important. Companies need to cultivate a reputation for social responsibility
2	They want to socialise. Companies need to shun the perception that socialisation at work is a distraction and start actively encouraging it
3	They want mentoring. Companies need to consider how they are going to provide mentoring to 50% of their workforce
4	They want celebration for smaller successes as well as big. Companies need to understand how to engrain more employee appreciation into their ways of working
5	They want to talk business. Companies need to involve millennials more in this bigger picture
6	They need the right manager. Companies need to encourage the adoption of different management styles.
	Retaining millennials in the workplace
1	They demand balance Work-life is balance. Companies need to engrain flexibility to foster an 'anytime anywhere' work environment to replace the traditional 9-5 mentality. Opportunities such as being able to work from home
2	They want to see internal promotions over external hires. Companies need to set honest expectations for millennial workers so that they know that if they stay longer, they will be rewarded with a better title, more money and the opportunity to grow.
3	They yearn to e-learn. Companies need to prioritise learning and, more importantly, upgrade how it happens
4	They want security. Companies need to focus on providing millennials with the safety blanket they so need. Proactive communication helps, giving them the opportunity to constantly air their thoughts and concerns.

Source (KPMG, 2017)

This study also identified that millennials have different characteristics, among themselves, that will influence their needs and expectations at the workplace. The research found that there are

gender issue differences between female and male millennials. Their millennial DNA make up is different; they want different things, face different challenges therefore companies should pay attention to these differences when designing change programmes (KPMG, 2017).

Data collected from the post millennial respondents provided the early indicators of the generation Z. These findings are summarised in table 8. To prepare for the post millennial, organisations should start to engage with the parents and teachers to shape the generation Z.

Table 8: Characteristics of Generation Z

	Characteristics of Generation Z
1	They're less focused Gen Z are living in a world of continuous updates. They process information faster than other generations thanks to apps like Snapchat and Vine. Thus, you won't blame them if their attention spans are significantly lower.
2	They're better multi-taskers
3	They're early starters. Researchers are predicting that Gen Z will go straight into the workforce, opting out of the traditional route of higher education.
4	They're more cautious. Growing up amid tumultuous times of a global recession, war and terrorism has made Generation Z more realistic that opportunities are not boundless, as many millennials believe. They're expected to take less risks and seek more stability than the freedom and flexibility that millennials seek
5	They're more entrepreneurial. Being born into a highly networked and tech-fueled world has resulted in the entire generation thinking and acting with an entrepreneurial hat on.

The KPMG 2017, study concluded that today's workforce isn't quite the traditional, homogenous cohort that it once used to be, and one size really doesn't fit all. There has been a genuine focus on embracing and capitalising on these differences to move towards a more harmonised, generationally diverse workforce (KPMG, 2017). The implementation of the recommendations from this study in industry has led to a reduction of HR's headaches of constant recruitment and resignation. Employers are happier as they can now rely on a more consistent delivery team, and the company's brand image has never looked better. Employees are delivering faster, innovating more and producing higher quality as their voices are being heard. This is reflected in organisation's bottom line profits (KPMG, 2017).

Deloitte, a multinational consulting company has been conducting annual studies on human capital trends globally over the last two decades. The 2018 Deloitte millennial survey received responses from 10,455 millennials across 36 countries. This study defined millennials as those born in the years 1983 and 1994. The sample was drawn from millennials who have college or university

degrees and are working in large private-sector organisations. The research methodology was survey and interviews and the results were analysed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. This study also included 1,844 Generation Z respondents from Australia, Canada, China, India, the United Kingdom and the United States. The research defined Generation Z as those born in the years 1995 and 1999. The sample was drawn from post millennial respondents who are currently studying, have obtained a college/university degree, or are working either full time or part time. The findings of the Deloitte 2018 study are summarized in table 9.

Table ***Error! No text of specified style in document.***9: Findings of Deloitte 2018 millennial survey

	Deloitte 2018 millennial survey Summary of findings
1	There continues to be a stark mismatch between what millennials believe responsible businesses should achieve and what they perceive businesses' actual priorities to be
2	Both millennials and Gen z find Diversity and flexibility are key to loyalty.
3	Millennials feel unprepared for Industry 4.0.
4	Millennials see business leaders having a more positive impact than religious or political leaders
5	Millennials see employers falling short in developing soft skills
6	Climate and income inequality are now among young workers' top concerns
6	Millennials and Gen z are optimistic about the economy, less so about the social and political situation
7	Only in emerging markets are younger workers confident about the future
8	Millennials see employers falling short in developing soft skills

Source (Deloitte, 2018)

The Deloitte 2018 survey shows a dramatic, negative shift in millennials feelings about business motivations and ethics. Respondents were disappointed that business leaders' priorities don't seem to align with their own (Deloitte, 2018). The research also found that millennials are increasingly taking on senior positions in which they can influence how their organisations address societal challenges.

Discussion

All the three studies on the millennial and post millennial employees that have been reviewed in this paper identified that there is a problem the employee generational cohorts will cause at the work place. After gathering initial information to understand the problem that needs solving, the three organisations entered into contracts with internal or external organisational development

practitioners with the aim of instituting change programmes that would solve the problems caused by millennial and post millennial employees. The set of activities at this initial stage are consistent with the "entering and contracting" activities described in the planned change model outlined earlier.

In this initial stage of identifying the problem, the information that is known about the millennials and post millennials is scanty and mainly made up of stereotypes and myths from mainstream media and internet blogs. Research has shown that there is a lot of similarity between the millennial employees and their older counterparts (PWC, 2013) (KPMG, 2017) (Deloitte, 2018). To correctly diagnose the problem that requires intervention, the three companies undertook detailed studies to understand the root cause of generational problems. The method used to diagnose the organisations was the survey feedback method. Scholars of organisational development have identified the survey feedback method as one of the effective methods for engaging the organisation during the problem diagnosis stage of the organisational development process (Cummings & Worley, 2009). The findings from the three studies indicate that as much as the magnitude and priorities may vary, the millennials and the older generations want the same things from the workplace, and they have similar expectations of their employers.

This suggests that millennials are not the only problem that organisations should concern themselves with. The question then is; how did the generational cohort phenomena become a problem in the first place? Studies on generational cohorts traits, behaviour and attitudes have shown that the differences observed among the different cohorts are as a result of the changes in global events over time from the first industrial revolution, to global economic recessions, political climate and finally the digital technology transformation that the workplace is experiencing today (PWC, 2018). Therefore, when diagnosing the problem, organisations must focus on both the human behavioural factors from the generational cohorts as well as the economic, political and technological factors of the changing times. The studies reviewed in this paper have found that the post millennials (Generation Z) on the other hand, do have some different characteristics and traits that need to be watched as they start to enter the workplace (KPMG, 2017). Organisations should start preparing for the disruption that the Generation Z will bring.

The finding from the three studies summarized the problem that organisations face due to these generational cohort dynamics as; 1) challenges in attracting and recruiting new talent, most of whom will come from Generation Y and Generation Z; 2) managing and engaging the employees at the workplace; and 3) employee retention. The studies put forward several recommendations to solve the problem the millennial employee is posing. A close examination of the recommendations shows that there is no "one size fits all" approach when it comes to designing the organisational development interventions to implement change. The studies propose interventions which are aligned with the four organisational development interventions for planning and implementing change. There are recommendations that address the human related processes at the workplace. Some of the recommendations address the technological factors and the structures of the organisations. Then there are recommendations that address issues related to the human relations management issues at the workplace. And finally, there are recommendations that address the

organisational overall strategy to ensure that the implemented change is institutionalized and remains sustainable over time.

The studies reviewed in this paper provide evidence that organisations are already enjoying the benefits derived from implementation of some of the recommendations from the millennial research projects. (KPMG, 2017), (Deloitte, 2018). This is consistent with Beer and Nohria' theory E and theory O which holds that for effective successful change to occur, organisations must focus on changing both the economic factors as well as the corporate culture and human capability of the organisation.

Conclusion and future directions

Organisations today are operating in a complex environment that is constantly changing. To remain effective and efficient, organisations need to correctly address the challenges that the changes bring. The change framework proposed by Burns (2004) provides an effective framework that organisations can use to understand and precisely articulate the type of change they face. The framework also provides guidance on which approach will be required to implement the needed change programme. Further, organisations must be cognisant of Beer and Nohria' theory E and theory O of change.

Another ingredient of a successful change programme is the ability of the organisation to diligently follow the four-stage organisational development process, i.e. "Entering and contracting", "Diagnosing", "Planning and implementing change" and "Evaluating and Institutionalizing Change". This will ensure that the organisation engages competent resources that will correctly identify the actual problems ailing the organisation and prescribe or design effective organisational development interventions that will solve the problems. Well implemented change programmes result in the institutionalization of the desired change initiatives which in turn will give the organisation sustained competitive performance over time.

This paper identified that the millennial (Generation Y) employees have a lot of similar expectations and similar demands as those of their older counterparts. This finding points to the fact that Generation Y employee is not the only problem that employers will face at the workplace. The post millennial (Generation Z) employees and other factors such as global economic issues, political issues and the 4th industrial revolutions bring with them unique disruptions in the workplace. This paper recommends that further research should be done to understand what impact the post millennial (Generation Z) employee and the 4th industrial revolution (Industry 4.0) will have on the future workplace.

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Source 28 (Scholarly)

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Pichler, S., Kohli, C., & Granitz, N. (2021). DITTO for Gen Z: A framework for leveraging the uniqueness of the new generation. *Business Horizons*, *64*(5), 599-610.

Summary: The article is about the increase of the Generation Z population, who tend to be the largest demographic of entry-level employees joining the workforce for the next couple of years. According to that, the article mainly presents a DITTO framework for organizations to effectively manage, and support Generation Z. DITTO stands for Diversity, Individualism, Teamwork, Technology, and Organizational Support, these factors are listed and carefully explained by the writer in the article seeing how companies address the need of Generation Z. Implementation of Ditto can be short, medium or long-term time, which the biggest intention of corporate is to attract, retain, and support Generation employees while enhancing overall organizational performance.

Relevance: The article shows relevance to the topic by proposing a framework that is helpful for corporate management practices to be more dedicated, which attracts Generation Z employees workforce.

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DITTO for Gen Z: A framework for leveraging the uniqueness of the new generation

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KEYWORDS
Generation Z;
Gen Z workers;
Incoming workforce;
Workplace diversity;
Organizational efficacy

Abstract Generation Z, or Gen Z, represents 24% of the U.S. population and is very different from earlier generations. A higher proportion of Gen Zers are earning college degrees, and they are now moving to the next phase in which they will constitute the predominant majority of the incoming workforce. Gen Z faced an unusual set of technology-driven circumstances while growing up and thus bring a distinct set of characteristics into the workplace. We offer a new research-based framework, DITTO, which encapsulates specific recommendations for organizations on diversity, individualism and teamwork, technology, and organizational supports. DITTO serves as a useful mnemonic to help managers recall specific ways to support Gen Zers and leverage the strengths of Gen Zers to benefit the organization and the workforce. Research shows that Gen Zers are more open to diversity and more individualistic and technology-driven than other generations. To the extent that companies use the DITTO framework, the more attractive they should be to Gen Z workers; but the principles of this framework also extend beyond Gen Zers to existing workforce with similar efficacy.
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"Entire industries and businesses will rise and fall in the wake of Gen Zers, yet few industries seem to be ready for it. Are you?"—Deloitte & Network of Executive Women (2019)

1. Gen Z: The face of the incoming workforce

Generation Z—also referred to as iGen, Homelanders, Digital Natives, and most commonly as Gen Z or Gen Zers—comprises individuals born between 1995 and 2012 and accounts for approximately 24% of the U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019). While millennials remain the largest demographic in the United States, Gen Z

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will edge past them globally next year by .5%, comprising 32% of the global population (Mondres, 2019).

Gen Z has experienced much disruption in a short time with changes in the political, social, technological, and economic landscape. This includes hyper-technological advancement, tumultuous world politics, racial inequity, and now a pandemic, making them fundamentally different even from millennials—the generation that immediately preceded them—in their outlook (Ernst & Young, 2015). While this is a "generation lying in wait" when it comes to the C-suite (Bennett, 2020), Gen Zers (Parker & Igielnik, 2020) are already attending college in larger numbers (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020) and are now poised to be the largest demographic of entry-level employees joining the workforce for the next several years (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019).

Understanding Gen Zers is critical to the business success and gaining competitive advantage. That said, little work has been done to translate research on this generation into opportunities and challenges for businesses. Accordingly, we review research on the factors that shaped Gen Z. We follow this with a discussion of their distinctive characteristics; in conjunction with that, we outline specific, evidence-based guidelines that companies can follow to optimize organizational effectiveness by leveraging the uniqueness of Gen Z. Our proposed framework—DITTO—serves as an acronym for a set of mutually reinforcing policies and practices for managers to not only appeal to the new generation in the workforce, but to also apply these best practices to others in the workforce. This also explains the careful choice of the acronym—as in its similar or same (ditto) relevance for workers of other generations in the organizations.

2. The factors that shaped Gen Z

While generational research is not an exact science, research indicates that persons within a generation experience defining events related to war, culture, politics, technology, and economics (Mannheim, 1952), all of which create shared values. These values remain fairly stable as individuals transition from college to the workforce (Kuron et al., 2015). Across previous generations, changes in values followed a gradual evolution (Macky et al., 2008); however, several significant factors have led to abrupt shifts in values and behavior for Gen Z (Twenge, 2017). Table 1 provides an overview of the key factors.

The rapid growth in technology is a foundational catalyst for the change in values and behavior among Gen Z, compared to those of the previous generations. In the late 20th century, this growth was exponential (Kurzweil, 2005), coinciding with the arrival of late millennials and Gen Z. Millennials adapted to social media, connectivity, and instant entertainment and knowledge (Dimock, 2019), but Gen Zers grew up with these, further accelerating the changes (Parker et al., 2019). Gen Z is the first digitally native generation with internet access available at all times (Seemiller & Grace, 2016); technology plays a central role in most aspects of their lives, including communication, socialization, and leisure activities (Lenhart, 2015). In 2018, 95% of teens said they have access to a smartphone compared to 73% in 2014. In 2018, 45% of teens said they were online constantly compared to 24% only 4 years earlier (Anderson & Jiang, 2018). Between 2006 and 2016, 12th graders using the internet during their leisure time doubled. In 2008, 52% of 12th graders visited social media sites almost daily, compared to 82% in 2016 (Twenge, 2017; Twenge et al., 2019a).

On the flip side, the constant engagement with smartphones, videogames, and social media has led to technology addiction, lack of sleep, attention deficit issues, and depression among Gen Zers (Twenge, 2017). From 1985 to 2019, incoming self-reported emotional health among college students continued to decline. Comparing 2015 to 2019, 59.0% vs. 50.4% of men and 43.7% vs. 34% of women reported their emotional health as above average (Stolzenberg et al., 2019). Between 2007 and 2018, rates of anxiety, non-suicidal self-injury, and attempted suicide increased among undergraduate students, with many rates doubling over the period (Duffy et al., 2019). Among Gen Z adolescents, those with less in-person social interactions and higher use of social media reported the highest degree of loneliness (Twenge et al., 2019b).

Compared to previous generations, the ready access to technology make Gen Zers more individualistic in learning, interpersonal interaction, and communication (Chicca & Shellenbarger, 2018; Twenge, 2017). The self-reliant nature of technology has made learning through video, social media, and search an independent endeavor (Seemiller & Grace, 2016). In a study comparing millennials to Gen Zers on attitudes toward group projects in college—during the same periods in their lives—Gen Zers were significantly less likely to enjoy the camaraderie and more likely to be anxious that the group member would not perform their share of the work (Schlee et al., 2020). Overall, Gen Zers spend more time alone.

Table 1. The factors that shaped Gen Z (versus millennials)

	Gen Z	Millennials	Reference
Technology	**Internet technology and smartphones always a part of their lives** • 95% of teens have access to smartphone (2018) • 45% of teens online constantly (2018)	**Internet technology and smartphones are innovations to which they adapted** • 73% of teens have access to smartphone (2014) • 24% of teens online constantly (2014)	• Anderson and Jiang (2018)
Mental health	**Elevated levels of depression and anxiety** • 50.4% of males and 34% of females report above average emotional health • Undergraduate student rates of anxiety, self-injury and attempted suicide increase, some doubling since 2007 (2018)	**Moderate levels of depression and anxiety** • 59% of males and 43.7% of females report above average emotional health • Undergraduate student rates of anxiety, self-injury and attempted suicide are moderate (2007)	• Stolzenberg et al. (2019) • Duffy et al. (2019)
Individualism & teamwork	**More individualistic and less social** • Anxious about group member contributions • 27% of 10th graders get together with friends every day (2015) • 70% of Gen Zers struggle with in-person communication	**More group-oriented and more social** • More likely to enjoy camaraderie in group • 47% of 10th graders get together with friends every day (2000) • 50% of early millennials struggle with in-person communication	• Schlee et al. (2020) • Twenge (2017) • Bridgeworks (2017)
Diversity	**Most diverse generation ever** • 48% are non-white • 62% believe increasing diversity is good for society • 81% rated tolerance for others with different beliefs as strong (2019) • 78% rated ability to see world from others' perspectives as strong (2019)	**Diverse generation** • 38% are non-white • 61% believe increasing diversity is good for society • 73% rated tolerance for others with different beliefs as strong (2008) • 65% rated ability to see world from others' perspectives as strong (2008)	• Fry and Parker (2018) • Parker et al. (2019) • Pryor et al. (2008) • Stolzenberg et al. (2019)

Compared to early millennials before them, college-bound seniors of Gen Z spend an hour less a day engaging in in-person social interaction, despite no changes in homework, extracurricular time, and declines in paid work—shifting the extra hour to screen time (Twenge, 2017; Twenge et al., 2019b). Between 2000 and 2015, the number of teens who got together with friends was almost cut in half (Twenge, 2017), with an increase in reliance on electronic communication (UPCEA, 2019) and a reduced opportunity to develop the much-needed social skills. Learning how to deal with people and working in groups is a key challenge they face (Grow & Yang, 2018). In fact, 74% of Gen Zers say they struggle with in-person communication compared to 50% of early millennials and 65% of late millennials (Bridgeworks, 2017).

Gen Zers are more racially and ethnically diverse than any other generation. Forty-eight percent of Gen Zers are non-white, compared to 38% of millennials during the same period in their lives (Fry & Parker, 2018). In 2015, grade 12 students reported that half of their high school was another race, three times the amount compared to 1980 (Twenge, 2017). Gen Zers have a lower tolerance for inequality because they have experienced a greater diversity of cultural perspectives (Parker et al., 2019; Twenge, 2017). On this, they are somewhat similar to millennials but different from older generations. For example, 61% of millennials and 62% of Gen Z specifically believe that increasing diversity is good for society; for Gen X and Boomers, these numbers are 52% and 48%, respectively (Parker et al., 2019). Comparing American 9th graders in 2008 and 2019, tolerance for others with different beliefs increased from 73% to 81%, ability to work with diverse people grew from 79% to 87%, and ability to see the world from someone else's perspective moved from 65% to 78% (Pryor et al., 2008; Stolzenberg et al., 2019).

3. DITTO: A framework for leveraging the uniqueness of Gen Z

Based on the review above, we now discuss the uniqueness of Gen Z as it relates to the workplace and formulate prescriptions about how organizations and managers can leverage this effectively. Our proposed framework, DITTO—an acronym for diversity, individualism and teamwork, technology, and organizational supports is memorable, easily comprehendible, and serves as a mnemonic. It offers evidence-based recommendations for managing Gen Zers and also represents key best practices for organization and management in general. We elaborate on each of these aspects below and provide concrete examples in Table 2.

3.1. Diversity

As we explained above, Gen Zers are more diverse and open to diversity than previous generations. As such, they are also more interested in organizations with greater diversity (Deloitte & Network of Executive Women, 2019; Yello, 2019). Accordingly, firms should adopt policies and practices that will promote diversity. Research has shown that organizations with more diverse employees tend to outperform their competitors because of improved organizational attraction and retention of workforce (Kossek & Pichler, 2007; Richard et al., 2003). With this in mind, it seems to be in the best interest of employers to recruit a diverse workforce using tools such as targeted recruitment (Newman & Lyon, 2009). We believe that even if it does not improve organizational performance, not accommodating this new diverse and diversity-preferring cohort will lead to conflicts and compromise organizational performance. Organizations benefit by creating teams that have varied and synergistic knowledge and skills (Stagl et al., 2006), and generationally different groups such as Gen Zers could serve as role models for being open to diverse team members.

Workforce diversity is related to firm performance, but increasing diversity is ineffective for firms that do not have an inclusive culture. In other words, researchers have differentiated the concept of workforce diversity from a truly multicultural workplace with an inclusive work culture (Kossek & Pichler, 2007). As we argue later, perceptions of organizational support are fundamentally crucial to Gen Zers. Therefore, firms should explicitly adopt policies and practices that promote inclusivity. These can include nondiscrimination policies (Pichler et al., 2018), diversity training (King et al., 2012), and employee resource groups (Welbourne & McLaughlin, 2013). With the influx of this new generation in the workplace, these are desirable necessities. Promoting diversity and inclusion will be vital to attracting, supporting, and retaining Gen Z workers—and thus to gaining and sustaining competitive advantage. It

Table 2. DITTO: Research-based policies and practices to leverage the uniqueness of Gen Z

Principles	Organizational policies and practices	Rationale
Diversity	• Be prepared for the inherent diversity coming with Gen Z recruitment • Recruit a more diverse workforce through programs such as targeted recruitment • Create generationally diverse teams where Gen Z can serve as role models for openness to diversity • Implement policies and practices that promote inclusivity such as nondiscrimination policies and diversity training	• Gen Z is one of the most diverse generations • Gen Z is more open to diversity than other generations • Promoting diversity can increase firm performance
Individualism & teamwork	• Adopt socialization programs that will enhance person-organization fit • Promote meaningfulness through the understanding that being part of a team means being part of something that is bigger than oneself • Provide opportunities for Gen Z workers to serve as exemplars in terms of coordinated work with team members who are dispersed geographically and communicate electronically	• Gen Z is used to learning and working individually • Gen Z is more individualistic than other generations • Meaningfulness can improve individual and team performance
Technology	• Implement opportunities that facilitate more virtual interactions through remote work and electronic communication technologies, which may become even more desirable in the post-pandemic workplace • Allow employees to create their own avatars for intra-organizational communications • Integrate technology with performance management and employee development systems	• Technology is a way of life for Gen Z • Gen Z is used to communicating through technology • Leveraging technology for social interaction can help employees feel supported
Organizational supports	• Consider adopting formal benefits such as employee assistance (EAP) programs, as well as health benefits and deferred income and savings programs • Promote perceptions of organizational support through supportive work conditions (e.g., by recognizing individuals for their work) • Facilitate social support through electronic communications	• Gen Z grew-up in a financially precarious time • Gen Z has a need to feel socially supported by others at work • Perceptions of organizational support improve well-being

Table 3. A roadmap for the implementation of the DITTO framework across short-, medium-, and long-term time horizons

	Time Horizon for Implementation			
	Short-term	**Medium-term**	**Long-term**	**Desired outcomes**
Diversity	• Diversity taskforces & ERGs • Targeted recruitment • Nondiscrimination policies	• Diversity training (including team training) • Build diverse teams	• Create an inclusive, multicultural organizational culture	Enhance organizational attraction
Individualism & teamwork	• Employee socialization programs • Q&A Sessions with organizational leaders	• Create a sense of purpose for employees & teams • Support adaptation to teamwork • Allow for self-directed work teams	• Promote effective work organization & person-organization fit	Retain top talent
Technology	• IT tools that support virtual interactions • Allow for employee avatars	• Online/web-based learning • Integrate technology with PM and T&D systems • Training in information & communication technologies	• Support new and alternative ways of working	Gain competitive advantage
Organizational supports	• Employee recognition programs • Supervisor support training	• Wellness programs • Employee assistance programs • Employee benefits (e.g., deferred income programs)	• Improve employee health and wellness	Improve firm performance

Notes: ERGs = Employee resource groups; IT = Information technology; PM = Performance management; T&D = Training & development.

is also important to note that inclusivity programs rely on support and advocacy from top management—underscoring the need for its involvement (Pichler et al., 2017).

In terms of implementation of diversity and inclusion policies, firms should consider forming diversity taskforces, one of which could be a taskforce for generational diversity. This is something with which other firms have had great success when it comes to linking diversity to business strategy. As an example, when Lou Gerstner took over as CEO of IBM, he felt that there was a disconnect between IBM, its employees, and its potential customers. Gerstner implemented eight diversity taskforces, each focused on a specific aspect of diversity (e.g., women, LGBTQ, Asian Americans) and charged with the task of coming up with new ideas as to how to connect IBM's business to its customers. The taskforce for women came up with the idea of promoting sales and services to small to mid-sized minority and women-owned businesses, which generated $300M in new revenue for IBM (see Thomas, 2004). In other words, diversity and inclusion programs and taskforces should not only support Gen Zers, but they should also promote organizational effectiveness and market competitiveness.

3.2. Individualism and teamwork

Promoting generational diversity and leveraging Gen Z as change agents is a potential opportunity for business organizations, but this comes with challenges. Gen Z seems prone towards individualism in terms of learning, communication, and interpersonal interaction. Working in groups can be a challenge for this generation in particular. As such, organizations should adopt socialization programs that will help them adapt to cultures and work designs that emphasize collaboration and teamwork. For instance, experts have suggested that it is important that Gen Z workers get to know their coworkers through socialization programs and offer Q&A sessions with organizational leaders and human resource professionals (Schroth, 2019). These socialization programs are essential because they can facilitate perceptions of person-organization fit among Gen Z workers. *Person-organization fit* is a perception that one's background—for example, preferences, experience, and personality—fit with the organization in terms of its culture and ways of working (Cardy & Selvarajan, 2006). Of course, these types of socialization programs can enhance person-organization fit not only for Gen Z workers but for a firm's workforce more generally. To the extent this enhances the person-organization fit, it also improves performance (Hoffman & Woehr, 2006).

Organizations have been increasingly emphasizing group-based work; so teams are not only the way of the future but also the norm for most modern organizations (Schlechter & Strauss, 2008). Some organizations have found that a way to integrate Gen Z workers into teams and promote collaboration is by helping them understand that being part of a team means being part of something bigger than themselves and assisting others in building on their ideas (Goldin, 2017). It is also important to provide support for individuals—who are inclined to work independently—and opportunities for them to adapt to team-based work, such as providing healthy group norms around the importance of cooperation (Gonzalez-Mulé et al., 2014). Moreover, given the customization that Gen Z is used to, based on their use of technology, organizations may want to consider adopting self-directed work teams since these provide relatively large degrees of customization of work and decision latitude (Fisher, 1993). Individual contributions to team goals can also be recognized. Given the trend toward remote work and virtual communication, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic (Gerdeman, 2020), Gen Zers can serve as exemplars for coordinated work with team members who are dispersed geographically and communicate electronically. This is a key opportunity for organizations to leverage the uniqueness of Gen Z workers.

The implementation of socialization programs and promoting team-based work designs go hand-in-hand. That is, socialization programs can be designed to provide employees with expectations about what it means to be part of a team in organizations. Socialization programs can also demonstrate why group-based work designs are important to an organization's success. Organizations that are well-known for group-based work have found that helping workgroups establish these types of norms is a key ingredient to success. For instance, Google created Project Aristotle in an attempt to uncover the most important factor to successful group and team work. Results showed that norms were more important than all other factors, such as group composition, personality traits, and educational backgrounds (see Duhigg, 2016). In addition to designing socialization programs that support group work, it is important that managers be trained to lead not just individuals, but groups and teams as well.

3.3. Technology

The closeness Gen Z has with technology presents opportunities and challenges for employer organizations. For instance, many employers observe that Gen Z is more comfortable sending emails and text messages instead of calling someone or communicating face-to-face (Schwieger & Ladwig, 2018). The challenge, which we explored above when discussing Gen Z and teamwork, is that Gen Zers may have difficulty adapting to face-to-face interaction required in most modern organizations. There, it seems essential that employer organizations consider implementing opportunities that facilitate more virtual interactions such as remote work and virtual communication tools like Zoom (Charalampous et al., 2019). Since Gen Zers are so used to communicating using avatars, it could be useful for organizations to consider allowing employees to create their avatars and virtual environments for intraorganizational communications. This will enable them to better express their own identity.

Gen Zers also prefer technology to develop a broader range of skills to plan for their future (Buzzetto-Hollywood & Alade, 2018). As such, employers should consider how they can integrate technology with employee development and performance management systems. For instance, since Gen Zers tend to communicate with emojis, symbols, pictures, videos, and post reactions (Cilliers, 2017), digital performance tools that allow for instant feedback could be useful, especially on mobile devices (Kaplan, 2012). While some of this may seem over-the-top or trivial from the perspective of older generations, it is important to realize how these things are ingrained in the behavior of Gen Zers and how ignoring these can cause dissonance.

Gen Zers have used technology to learn alone, and they are accustomed to solitary learning (Seemiller & Grace, 2016). Organizations could, therefore, consider systems that allow for asynchronous (e.g., web-based) learning, training, and development programs. The more closely organizations tie human resource management systems to their employees' backgrounds and preferences, the more likely they are to attract and retain employees (Piszczek & Berg, 2020), support the development of firm-specific human capital, and improve performance and retention (Andersén, 2019). Adobe is an excellent example of a company with advanced online training and development programs that tailor employee learning and feedback. A 2018 survey by *Forbes* found that Adobe was the number one employer for recent college graduates, largely due to Adobe's educational resources provided through its Accelerate Adobe Life online platform in which individuals receive feedback, check-ins, and training programs even before they start their first position (Updyke, 2019).

Integrating technology with management and organization should not only be attractive to Gen Zers, but this is also the way of the future. For instance, individuals and organizations have found an increased utility for electronic and virtual communications given the recent pandemic (Folsom, 2020). Since many workers anticipate that remote work may be the new normal once the pandemic subsides (Mindege, 2020), leveraging technology to support this type of work organization is necessary. It becomes important, therefore, for individuals to receive training in how to use technology for purposes of virtual communication and for managers to receive training in how to lead with and monitor performance using new technologies (see Larson et al., 2020).

3.4. Organizational supports

Using technology to support interpersonal communication and new ways of working is especially relevant when it comes to Gen Z given their disproportionately higher rates of anxiety and depression. Organizations can provide a wide variety of supports to promote well-being. In general, the literature tends to differentiate between formal and informal organizational supports (Dulebohn et al., 2009). One essential form of organizational support that is increasingly relevant to Gen Zers is employee benefits (Dulebohn et al., 2009), especially health benefits and deferred income and savings programs. We predict that these will likely grow in importance to Gen Zers as they are experiencing the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting health and economic disaster.

Research has shown that for other forms of formal organizational supports, interventions such as wellness and related programs are a key way to help employees stay healthy, active, and productive (Arena et al., 2013). Organizations like Google are famous for having on-campus gyms, athletic activities, and healthy cooking programs (Yang, 2017). A relatively cost-effective way to promote psychological health is employee assistance programs, which offer short-term counseling for psychological challenges (Yu et al., 2009). While not all organizations can afford to provide each of these formal organizational supports, we believe

employers should offer supports that have the most utility for their respective workforce.

Informal organizational supports can sometimes be more effective than formal supports, at least when it comes to reducing psychological strain (Kossek et al., 2011; Muse & Pichler, 2011). Informal supports come in the form of perceived organizational support, supervisor support, and coworker support. Perceptions of organizational support are important because they lead to lower stress, reduced psychological strain, and increased well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Support from supervisors and coworkers are also important to perceptions of organizational support (e.g., Kossek et al., 2011). Research shows that Gen Z workers are keen on organizational support, including social support from supervisors and coworkers (Gassam Asare, 2018). This isn't surprising given their levels of anxiety and depression. The Work-Family Health Network at Harvard University is a world leader in providing free training materials and toolkits for managers and organizations to develop supportive supervisor behaviors and help employees achieve less stressful, more fulfilling lives (WFHN, 2020).

While organizational efforts to support psychological health and overall well-being may be especially helpful to Gen Z employees, this will benefit all workers (Nielsen et al., 2010). Training supervisors to be more socially supportive is a cost-effective way for organizations to promote perceptions of organizational support and support employee health and well-being (Kossek & Hammer, 2008). Perceptions of organizational support are also higher when organizations are fairer, provide supportive work conditions like job security and autonomy, and recognize individuals for their work (Shore & Shore, 1995). While Gen Zers may be especially in need of organizational supports, all employees are likely to reciprocate perceptions of organizational support in the form of improved job performance (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Thus, to the extent that organizations train supervisors to be socially supportive, promote supportive work conditions, and provide formal organizational supports by way of firm-specific benefits, employees will benefit psychologically and firms will increase their competitive advantage.

4. Implementation

Organizations cannot implement all of the policies and practices from the DITTO model simultaneously given resource constraints related to time, finances, and other resources. It becomes important to consider the time horizon by which these policies and practices could be implemented, their logical flow across time, and the synergies between them. In Table 3, we provide a recommended timeline for the implementation of the DITTO model over the short-, medium-, and long-term, as well as the desired downstream outcomes of the model. By short-term, we mean policies and practices that could be implemented either immediately or within several months; by medium-term, we mean several months to 1 year; and by long-term, we mean 1 year or longer.

As an example, if we take the diversity component of the DITTO framework, nondiscrimination policies could be implemented immediately, and targeted recruitment could be implemented within a few months. It is logical for practices like diversity training and building diverse teams to follow from these policies. Implementing policies that prevent discrimination and build a more diverse workforce create the conditions that justify investments in diversity training and enhancing organizational diversity—including generationally diverse teams. In the longer term, creating a more inclusive, multicultural organization becomes a meaningful programmatic diversity-related initiative; this requires not only adopting the policies and practices of the DITTO model but also time and commitment from the organization as a whole.

The timeline for the diversity component is synergistic with other components of the DITTO model; in fact, each of the DITTO components is synergistic with the others in terms of timing. For instance, creating diversity task forces in the short-run is complementary to introducing socialization programs because the former can inform and influence the latter. Implementing diversity training in the medium-term is consistent with creating a sense of purpose for employees and teams and offering online learning. Creating an inclusive, multicultural workforce is consistent and mutually reinforcing with supporting new and alternative ways of working. As we have suggested throughout, and we denote in Table 3, the ultimate goals of the DITTO model are to attract Gen Zers and talented employees more generally, retain top talent, enhance competitive advantage, and improve firm performance.

5. Building a better workplace for all

We proposed DITTO—policies and practices for managing diversity, individualism and teamwork, technology, and organizational supports, which organizations can easily use to leverage the

uniqueness of Gen Z and support an increasingly diverse workforce. That said, the DITTO framework also serves a dual purpose: each of these mechanisms, while closely tied to the unique characteristics of Gen Z, also supports all workers and ultimately leads to improved well-being and productivity of the broader workforce. Thus, organizations employing the DITTO framework will have a competitive advantage over those that do not.

To better understand the importance of the DITTO framework, it is useful to clarify what might seem like contradictions among Gen Z workers' preferences. For instance, while Gen Zers may have some anxiety about working with others and prefer electronic communication methods, they also value social support from supervisors and coworkers. Thus, one way to enhance perceptions of organizational support for Gen Z workers is to promote electronic methods of communication. This will support Gen Zers' preferences in terms of communication methods, while at the same time supporting their need for social support. So these apparent contradictions are instead opportunities for organizations to leverage the uniqueness of Gen Z. Since everyone values social support, using innovative communication tools to increase interpersonal communication and support will help employees feel valued. These communication tools will also be useful in the transition to the "new normal" of working remotely.

This helps to illustrate how the individual components of the DITTO framework are complementary and mutually reinforcing. In this particular example, the "IT" and "O" components are symbiotic in nature. We argue that the DITTO framework represents horizontal alignment in the same way high-performance work systems represent horizontal alignment in the form of a mutually reinforcing set of HR policies and practices (Liu et al., 2007). Each component section of the DITTO model is tied to and supportive of other components. To the extent that organizations adopt or enhance policies and practices that represent each part of the DITTO model, the attraction, retention, and support of Gen Z workers should increase. As noted above, the more closely organizations tie these policies and practices to their employees' backgrounds and preferences, the more they are likely to attract and retain employees and help them develop firm-specific human capital. This should also improve productivity and enhance opportunities for competitive advantage. The appeal of this model is its elegance; it is a simple, straightforward, and memorable way for managers and organizations to leverage the uniqueness of Gen Z, while at the same time supporting their entire workforce and engaging in best practices in terms of human resource management.

6. Epilogue

There is little doubt that the ways of the world will remain unchanged after the pandemic. This includes how work is organized, how employees communicate with each other, and how businesses communicate with their partners. It is imperative, therefore, to adapt to these changes. One way to do so is to leverage the uniqueness of Gen Z workers. We posit that Gen Z workers can serve as exemplars in terms of coordinated work with team members who are dispersed geographically and communicate electronically in a virtual network environment. Gen Z workers have a unique experience when it comes to information and communication technology. Organizations should leverage such skills and opportunities that Gen Zers bring with them to organize work during the pandemic; and, in doing so, become an employer of choice by being in the vanguard, improve productivity, and enhance ties between firm diversity and strategy. Overall, the DITTO model will help companies to gain and sustain competitive advantage.

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Acheampong, N. A. A. (2021). Reward preferences of the youngest generation: Attracting, recruiting, and retaining Generation Z into public sector organizations. Compensation & Benefits Review, 53(2), 75-97.

Summary: The article focuses on how public sector organizations come up with strategies to attract and recruit Generation Z by understanding their reward preferences in both intrinsic and extrinsic. Most of the traditional public sector reward programs include extrinsic rewards like pension schemes, health insurance systems, and security of tenure and intrinsic rewards like career advancement, recognition for service, and commitment. The motivational value of rewards is not the same for all generations, therefore, the specific priority for organizational leaders and HR professionals is to find what extrinsic and intrinsic rewards are attractive to Generation Z cohort members. The study has meticulously analyzed Generation Z to know specific reward in reward preferences in kind of intrinsic and extrinsic, which strongly contribute to employment decisions. Ultimately, the study explores that intrinsic rewards are more motivational than extrinsic rewards to mostly motivate and retain Generation Z. Along with that, the study also found out that Generation Z desires to contribute to society and help others, which is a determinant result for public sector employment.

Relevance: The article is relevant by studying to understand the mindset of the Generation based on the factor of reward, additionally, the research focuses on knowing distinctive intrinsic and extrinsic organization attributes that influence employment decision

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Reward Preferences of the Youngest Generation: Attracting, Recruiting, and Retaining Generation Z into Public Sector Organizations

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Abstract

Generation Z is the youngest and newest entrants into the workforce. However, confusion about their characteristics, work values, and reward preferences hinders effort to attract, recruit, and retain this generational cohort into public sector organizations. Accordingly, this study investigates effective reward strategies for recruiting and retaining Generation Z into public sector organizations. I used an evidence-based research approach and an aggregative systematic review as the study methodology. The evidence curated from 32 studies reveals how the background and life experiences of Generation Z influence the importance they assign their work values, reward preferences, and how they prioritize rewards in terms of their employment decisions. Additionally, gender also influenced the importance Gen Z assigned to specific rewards. Overall, Gen Z's strong attractiveness to specific extrinsic and intrinsic rewards makes public sector organizations a likely employer of choice and offers managers a viable strategy for attracting, recruiting, and retaining the youngest generational workforce.

Keywords

Generation Z, public sector organizations, reward strategies, attraction, recruitment, retention, work values

Public sector organizations face critical human capital challenges—the tidal wave of employee retirement owing to aging and a worsening youth gap resulting from Millennials' disinterest in public employment.[1] In view of the above mentioned, there are growing concerns among public sector leaders about the diminishing role of young talents in public sector organizations, particularly the federal government.[2] According to the United States (US) Office of Personnel Management,[3] only 16% of the federal workforce is under 35 years as opposed to 45% above 50 years. In today's war for talents, public organizations struggle to compete with private sector companies that typically offer high salaries and flexible work schedules to their younger workforce.[4,6] Data from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics report[7]

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showed that the Millennial workforce composition in government was 25.9 compared to 37.8% in the private sector. Consequently, public sector organizations are confronted with retaining a considerably younger generational workforce (i.e., Millennials or Generation Y), whose job hopping activities present severe human capital challenges to the sector.[4,8]

Accordingly, in a bid to address the sector's current employment needs, public sector leaders have focused their attention on Generation Z (Gen Z), the newest and youngest generation of labor participants. In the United States, Gen Z accounts for about 27% (68 million) of the country's population. The current Gen Z workforce composition is between 5–10%.[9] An increasing number of these generational cohort members who have completed their education will enter the workforce in 2020.[9] Though there are differing views on the specific birth range of this generational cohort, most generational researchers agree Gen Z's birth years fall between 1995 and 2015.[10–14]

Characteristics of Generation Z

The Generation Z cohort (Gen Zers) is also known as "post-Millennials," "NextGen," "iGen," or "TrueGen." Gen Z's experiences of the post 9/11 era include terrorism, school shootings, and global pandemics. Those experiences coupled with the devastating effects of the great recession on their families have shaped their outlook on life and made them more embracing of change, adaptable, realistic, and highly driven.[11,15] Further, Gen Z is known to be the most racially and culturally diverse generational cohort in the United States.[16] Gen Zers are globally minded and have such a profound interest in social justice and environmental issues.[12,17–19]

Furthermore, post-Millennials are considered the "phygital" generation because being born into a digital era, they have greater access to technology, mobile phones, IPads, video games, and social media than previous generations.[11] Their ultratechnology and social media savviness are why Gen Z is known as the true digital natives.[18] Their overreliance on technology and social media for information has made Gen Zers more eager to learn and be creative and highly independent.[15,20] Gen Z's strong sense of independence has been attributed to their upbringing. They were raised by Generation X parents, who instilled in them the "do-it-yourself" mindset.[11] Further, Gen Z is considered more innovative and entrepreneurial minded than the previous generations because they live in an era of booming entrepreneurship. The entrepreneurial successes of Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg, Tesla's Elon Musk, and Amazon's Jeff Bezos are an inspiration.[21]

Multigenerational Workforce

The public-sector workforce is composed of four generations, namely, Silent Generation or Traditionalists (1925–1942), Baby Boomers (1943–1960), Generation X (1961–1981), and Generation Y (1982–2002).[22] The birth years and characteristics of the previous generational workforce are based on Strauss and Howe's[23] parameters of generational birth years. Table 1 summarizes the profile of the four previous generations.

To attract, recruit, and retain this new generational cohort into the multigenerational workforce, public organizations must understand the forces that drive their work values, workplace needs and expectations, and how their reward preferences may be different from those of the other generations in the public sector workforce.[25] Previous research has found a link between generational work values and the category of rewards to recruit and retain a generational workforce.[26,27] Work values are personal and professional goals people seek to realize in their work, hence directly impacting their work-related choices and behavior.[107]

Talent Management Challenges of Generation Z

Some authors are of the view that unlike the generations before them, the digital-centric Generation Z represents the most significant generational shift the workplace has ever

Table 1. Summary of Generational Characteristics and Reward Preferences.

Generation	Common characteristic	Value/reward preference
Traditionalists •World war II •Great depression	High work ethic, loyalty, patriotism, fiscal responsibility, trust in institutions and hierarchy, and task oriented	Job security, retirement benefits, health insurance, recognition, and career development
Baby boomer •Post-World War II •Financial boom •Civil rights movement •Vietnam war	Strong work ethic, materialism, power conscious, loyalty, diligence, self-discipline, optimism, goal-centric, and equal opportunity	Job security, fair system of remuneration, financial benefits, career development, promotion, and recognition
Generation X •Vietnam war •Downsizing •Internet revolution •Social unrest	High self-reliance, individualism, cynicism, money conscious, educated, and limited organizational loyalty	Good pay, work–life balance, recognition, good relationships in the workplace, and career development opportunities
Generation Y •End of cold war •Prosperity •Terrorism/violence •Rapid technological advancement	Idealism, social responsibility, self-confidence, creativity, collaboration, achievement-oriented, attention-seeking, challenges status quo and authority, and limited organizational commitment (job hopping)	Work–life balance, work–life flexibility, awards, certificates, monetary rewards, recognition, promotional opportunities, and coaching

Note. Engaging a multigenerational workforce: practical advice for government managers. IBM Center for The Business of Government. *Source*: Adapted from Hannam and Yordi.[24]

encountered.[12,28,29] However, Gen Z poses a challenge to organizational leaders and managers in terms of identifying their work values and reward preferences to enable human resources (HR) professionals and managers to devise new strategies and adjust old methods to recruit and retain them.[108] The difficulty, for managers, lies with the lack of consensus on the specific birth years of Gen Z, their characteristics, and work values as expressed in empirical literature.[30]

Some studies consider Generation Z to be a part of Generation Y and thus share the same characteristics, work values, and reward preferences of the latter.[12,31] On the other hand, some authors argue that the post-Millennials have unique characteristics and work values; therefore, organizations should develop targeted methods to recruit and retain them.[11,13,25] Some authors believe Gen Zers possess distinct characteristics such as digital technology savviness, adaptability, realism, diversity, and competitiveness, which set them apart from other generations.[11,15,32]

The evolving dynamics of today's work environment make it imperative for organizations to prioritize worker attributes' issues such as technology savviness, adaptability, and innovation capacity. Gen Z is entering the multigenerational workforce. Given their characteristics and values, the question that begs to ask is whether public sector organizations are likely to offer a better fit for the youngest generational workforce who may have different work motivations. Also, considering the catalytic role that this digital-centric workforce could play in public sector transformation, public sector organizations need to recruit talent from this generational cohort and retain them through responsive human resource management (HRM) policies.

Reward Systems

Reward systems are some of the most notable recruitment and retention mechanisms in talent management. Reward strategies are systems and policies that organizations employ to elicit

positive employee workplace attitudes required for enhanced employee job performance and retention.[33] Public sector organizations administer intrinsic and extrinsic rewards to motivate and induce attitudinal changes in individuals.[34] Intrinsic rewards, mostly intangible and psychological, are designed to elicit personal satisfaction from work.[35] On the other hand, extrinsic rewards are tangible rewards that organizations offer to induce specific outcomes or to realize specific goals.[34,35] Intrinsic rewards include meaningful and challenging work, autonomy, and contribution to society. Extrinsic rewards include elements such as fringe benefits, advancement opportunities, job security, and work conditions.[35]

In modern times, most organizations use total reward systems to attract, motivate, and retain young talents.[36,37] Total reward system is widely used by private sector organizations.[38] The private sector's total reward system consists of five major elements: remuneration, benefits, work–life balance, performance and recognition, and career development opportunities.[39,40] The public sector has not fully and widely adopted the total reward system because factors such as market demands, public accountability, high trade union membership, and legislation dictate the sector's reward program design and allocation.[35,38,41] Nevertheless, some elements of the total reward system, such as work–life balance, career advancement, recognition, are already being deployed by many public sector organizations.[38,39]

The traditional public sector reward program includes the following extrinsic rewards: pension schemes, health insurance systems, and security of tenure.[42] Plant[109] argued that public sector reward systems focus on intrinsic job attributes such as career advancement, fair treatment, employee engagement, and recognition for service and commitment, rather than financial benefits. The motivational value of rewards may not be the same for all generations.[43] Thus, the specific problem for organizational leaders and HR professionals is what extrinsic and intrinsic rewards are attractive to Generation Z cohort members. How effective would such a package be for attracting, recruiting, motivating, and retaining the emerging workforce?

A review of the literature on the attraction, recruitment, and retention of Generation Z is necessary to obtain a full and clear understanding of the topic and identify unanswered questions. However, there is a gap in empirical research on the issue of fitness, or lack of it, between the Gen Z cohort and public sector employment. The review of the state of the literature reveals Gen Z characteristics and work values to be the dominant interest among researchers (e.g., Addor[17]; Half[29]; Kirchmayer & Fratričová[44]; Meret et al.[45]; Su et al.[46]). To the best of my knowledge, no studies have investigated the reward preferences of Gen Z and how they influence the attraction, recruitment, and retention of the newest generation into public sector organizations.

The purpose of this study was to examine the reward preferences and effective strategies for attracting, recruiting, and retaining Gen Zers. Thus, the questions guiding this research inquiry are: What are the reward preferences of Gen Z and what effective strategies can public sector organizations deploy to attract, recruit, and retain the Generation Z cohort members? The investigation into the reward preferences of Gen Z also involves exploring how the importance they assign to their work values influences their employment decisions. This study consists of an introduction, methodology, results and analysis, and implications and conclusions. The methodology section features data collection and analysis processes. Next, the result section discusses the descriptive themes in the synthesis process. Then, the discussion section offers interpretations of the key findings. The final sections provide the implications and conclusions, as suggested by the study findings.

Theoretical Frame: Strauss and Howe Generational Cohort Theory (1991)

This theory, also known as the fourth turning theory, suggests that historical events, social and cultural backgrounds, and other personal life experiences shape each generation's peer personality.[47] Strauss and Howe[48] posited that shared values, beliefs, behaviors, and

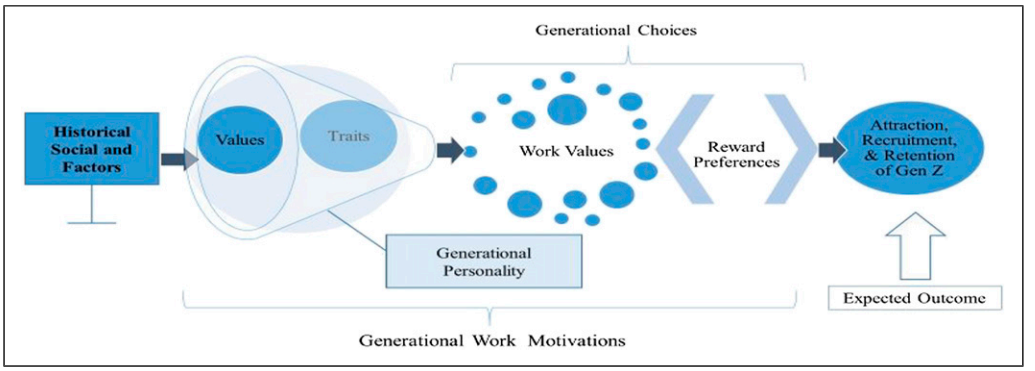


Figure 1. Theoretical framework.

membership characterize the generational persona (peer personality) of members in the same generation. They also assert that forces which shape each cohort are more dominant during an individual's childhood and adolescence and even provide a lens through which to interpret later life experiences.[25]

Ryder[49] has criticized Strauss and Howe's generational theory for positing cohort-based generalizations. Notwithstanding the criticisms, the academic and management literature widely cite Strauss and Howe's theory .[50,110] For instance, Brown Crowder utilized Strauss and Howe's[48] GCT to explain differences in generational work values in a multigenerational workplace. From a management perspective, Strauss and Howe's theory may help managers understand generational characteristics (traits) and values and how they influence each generation's work values and reward preferences.[51,52] Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between generational peer personality and their reward preferences.

The theoretical framework is vital in helping to answer the review question because it highlights how historical events and sociocultural contexts shape generational choices in terms of their work values and reward preferences. Generational personality guides and influences employer–employee interactions in terms of employees' work motivations (work values, work expectations, and needs) and how to meet those needs.[53] Also, this framework offers a theoretical lens into explaining and interpreting this study's results.

Methodology

I employed a systematic review, an evidence-based research framework, as the study design.[54] Khan, Kunz, Kleijnen, and Antes[55] observed that a review is systematic if it is "based on a clearly formulated question, identifies relevant studies, appraises their quality, and summarizes the evidence by the use of explicit methodology" (*p*. 2). I also utilized an aggregative review approach, which allowed adding up findings/results from multiple studies with similar data to address the research question.[56] The primary rationale for choosing a systematic review as the study methodology was that the rigor and transparency inherent in the review process contribute to the evidence's quality and dependability.[56]

Systematic Review Process

I followed the five-step SR process recommended by Khan et al.[55] The five significant steps are the following:

1. Formulating review question,
2. identifying relevant studies,
3. appraising the quality of studies,
4. summarizing the evidence gathered through synthesis, and
5. interpreting the review findings.

Identification of Relevant Evidence. I used ABI Inform, Business Source Complete, and

Scopus databases for the bibliographic search. I electronically retrieved the published studies from the University of Maryland Global Campus' library system. I queried Google and Google Scholar to locate both unpublished and published data. The studies retrieved were mainly peer-reviewed articles and some grey literature to avert publication bias.[57] To find articles, I constructed search statements based on the following keywords: "attracting," "recruiting," "retaining," "Generation Z," and "public sector organizations." The search terms used included synonyms and related terms of those keywords. Thus, to ensure a transparent, reproducible, and verifiable study search, I used a combination of key search terms, Boolean operators ("AND" and "OR"), the truncation symbol (*), and parentheses () to query the selected databases.[58] The following are examples of the search statements:

1. (recruit* OR attract* OR retain* OR hire* OR hiring) AND ("public sector*" OR "public service" OR "civil service" OR "civil servant" OR federal OR government)
2. "Reward strategies" OR incentives AND "Generation Z"
3. "Igeneration" OR "Gen* Z" AND "public sector" OR "federal jobs."

To identify relevant studies, I applied the inclusion and exclusion criteria such as time frame (2010–2019), language (English), study population (Gen Z), nature of the intervention (rewards/incentives), context (public sector organizations), and outcomes (attraction, recruitment, and retention of Gen Z).

The study search yielded 69,139 records. I applied the exclusion criteria which included English as publication language, publication date between 2010–2019 and attraction, recruitment, and retention as study outcomes. I removed a total of 65, 220 studies that did not meet the eligibility criteria at this phase. The remaining 3919 underwent a two-phase screening stage. For the initial screening, I applied the eligibility criteria to the selected studies' titles and abstracts and removed 3667 duplicate publications whose titles and abstracts were unrelated to the research question. The second screening phase focused on assessing the 225 identified articles on their relevance and appropriateness of their research designs to answer the review question. Further, I assessed the eligibility of the retrieved studies against this study's inclusion and exclusion criteria. The second screening phase resulted in the removal of 222 articles. After an exhaustive study selection process, I found 33 articles relevant and selected them for data extraction and quality appraisal. The selected studies included three studies which I identified through the snowball referencing technique.

Quality Appraisal of the Data Set. I employed the Rees model[59] for critiquing qualitative and quantitative research to assess the quality of the articles. This critical appraisal tool was appropriate because of its potential to balance the research designs' variances in the articles selected. The Rees model consists of the following criteria: (1) focus, (2) background, (3) aim/objectives, (4) study methodology or broad approach, (5) data collection method, (6) ethical considerations, (7) sample, (8) method of data analysis and presentation, (9) main findings, (10) conclusion and recommendations, (11) readability (overall strengths and limitations), and (12) application to practice. I supplemented the Rees quality appraisal model with Boaz and Ashby's[60] four quality dimensions to provide an exhaustive and comprehensive quality assessment that extended beyond determining the methodological soundness of the studies.[61] Further, I appraised the 33 selected studies using the following Boaz and Ashby's dimensions of quality screening questions. (1) Does the presentation of the study allow for appraisal and replication by other researchers? (2) Is the study well executed? (3) Do the study methods appropriately reflect the aims of the study? (4) Are the study's findings relevant to policy and practice? As depicted in Table 2, the quality assessment resulted in 21 high-quality ratings, eight (8) medium ratings, and four low ratings.

Table 2. Results of Quality Assessment Rating.

Rating	Quality assessment standard	Example of rated studies
High	21 studies met minimum of 11 Rees Criteria and 3 screening questions	Bejtkovský[72], Bryson et al.[104], Cho and Lewis[68], and Goh and Lee[76]
Medium	Eight (8) studies met minimum of 7–9 Rees criteria and 2-3 screening questions	Balan and Vreja[20], Singh and Dangmei[86], Fodor et al.[67], and Wiedmer[83]
Low	Three (3) studies met at least seven (7) Rees criteria and two (2) screening questions	Arar and Yüksel[79], Chilakuri and Mahanandia[105], Ozkan and Solmaz[80], and Pires[70]

An example of a study with a "low" rating is a methodologically weak study but, to some extent, addresses the review question. It is essential to mention that Montana and Petit's[111] article, which has a medium rating, was removed because its findings did not address the review question. The final sample of 32 articles comprised 19 empirical studies, three grey literature articles, and one unpublished study (obtained through internet search via Google Scholar). The sample also consisted of 19 studies that used a quantitative approach, 11 studies that used a qualitative approach, and two studies that used a mixed methods approach. Also, 10 of the 32 articles were public administration literature. There was a total of 215, 941 respondents in the included studies. The data extraction process revealed only four of the 32 included studies examined the influence of gender on the importance Gen Z places on specific rewards such as job security, work environment, and supervisor relations (see Results and Table 6 for details). The number of respondents in the four studies was 64,428, of whom 26,536 (41%) were females and 37,892 were males (59%).

Synthesis. This stage of the review process involves aggregating, integrating, and interpreting all the evidence relevant to answer the review question.[61] Following the critical appraisal, I conducted thematic coding to identify and extract themes and subthemes from the corpus of studies.[62] I adopted the first and second coding cycle process to generate initial thematic codes.[63] The first cycle coding resulted in six thematic concepts: salary, career advancement, work–life balance and flexible work, supervisor support, training and career development, and job security. A thorough examination of the result and discussion sections during the second cycle coding yielded four thematic codes, including mentoring, feedback system, the nature of work content, and employee autonomy.

Further, I used ATLAS.ti 8 qualitative software to identify more codes using line-by-line coding. The line-by-line coding, in which I applied the ten identified thematic codes, generated 30 descriptive codes. Using a pattern identification process that focused on the frequency of codes, I grouped 30 descriptive codes into ten final codes. In addition to frequency, two critical pattern identification characteristics I applied to the 30 codes were similarity (how similar codes were) and correspondence (how codes were related to other codes).[64] The pattern identification process also involved grouping high-frequency concepts that shared semantic and contextual similarities. Table 3 lists the extracted codes with their corresponding frequency counts arranged in numerical descending order. The table also gives the number of studies whose coded quotations were assigned a specific code.

To help generate descriptive themes, I applied correspondence and similarity to all the final codes. The code translation process involved rearranging and reclassifying the final codes. I subsumed some codes under others and even dropped others during the process. For instance, I subsumed thematic concepts such as training and skills development, mentoring, and career advancement as subthemes under career development. Additionally, I subsumed desire for a high or competitive salary, fringe benefits, work–life balance, and flexibility as subthemes under employee remuneration. This process yielded eight (8) descriptive themes. Table 4

Table 3. Frequency Count of Extracted Codes.

Code #	Code	Frequency	# of sources
1	Desire for a high or competitive salary	107	24
2	Value for career advancement opportunities	63	21
3	Desire for work–life balance and flexibility	63	20
4	Job security is important	56	18
5	Opportunities for training and career development	54	19
6	Desire for employee autonomy	52	17
7	Nature of work content and job satisfaction	47	17
8	Value for cash and noncash benefits	47	17
9	Value for a positive or good work environment	39	14
10	Technology and use of social media at work	35	9
11	Desire for positive coworker relations	34	11
12	Preference for good work conditions	32	11
13	Desire for positive supervisor relations	29	12
14	Public service motivation is important	26	6
15	Team building and collaboration important	24	13
16	Desire and opportunities for self-development	23	15
17	Mentoring opportunities	22	10
18	Organization's good reputation	21	6
19	Preference for community social responsibility	19	11
20	Recognition for job performance	16	8
21	Preference for open communication	13	8
22	Desire for financial security	12	7
23	Desire for cultural and racial diversity	9	5
24	Desire for participatory management style	7	3
25	Desire for career coaching	5	3
26	Desire for effective and instant feedback	5	5
27	In-person communication is important	5	4
28	Online recruitment strategies important for Gen Z	5	4
29	Preference for organic organizational structure	3	1
30	Presence of effective leadership	3	2

Table 4. Classifying Final Codes into Descriptive Themes.

Final Code	Descriptive Theme
Desire for a high or competitive salary Value for fringe benefits Desire for work–life balance and flexible work	Employee remuneration is an important work value for Gen Z
Job security is important	Job security influences Gen Zers' employment preference
Opportunities for training and career development	Career development helps attract and retain Gen Z
Desire for employee autonomy	Employee autonomy is of value to Gen Z
Value of a positive and good work environment	Positive work environment is important for Gen Z
Desire for positive coworker relationships	Positive coworker relations help retain Gen Z
Desire for positive supervisor relationship	Supervisor support is of value to Gen Z
Organization's good reputation	Good reputation of organizations helps attract and retain Gen Z

provides additional details on the classification process.

Results: Descriptive Themes

Table 5 presents the rewards Generation Z cohort members prefer and the importance these rewards are to attracting, recruiting, and retaining them. Table 6 shows the influence of gender in shaping Gen Z's value of specific rewards. Table 5 is sorted by intrinsic and extrinsic rewards and the importance Gen Z places on those rewards to their employment decisions. The critical/secondary category in the last column was based on weighting the results on the totality of rewards that are decisive or contributory factors in Gen Z's career choices.

Table 6 shows the gender-based comparison of the value male and female respondents in the study sample assign specific intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. I obtained the data for Tables 5 and 6 by assessing and aggregating the results of each article in the study sample during the data extraction and appraisal processes.

To ensure clarity, I have grouped the results of the descriptive themes under the extrinsic and intrinsic reward dimensions. The rationale for selecting the intrinsic/extrinsic category is that they specifically speak to factors that shape individual behavior or motivations.[42,65] More so, the intrinsic/extrinsic characterization reflects the nature of reward strategy used by the public sector.[35] Given the aggregative synthesis approach used in this study, I provided examples of included studies that supported specific themes and cited sources to support the results to create a preponderance of evidence relative to the themes being discussed.

Extrinsic Rewards: Gen Z Reward Preferences

Desire for High or Competitive Salary. Twenty-four (n = 24) of the 32 included studies examined the value of high salary to Gen Z. As shown in Table 5, the reviewed studies reported that high salary was an essential work value that played a role in their choice of employers. For example, Csiszárik Kocsír and Garia Fodor[66] attested that a high salary is the critical driver of Gen Z employment decisions. Further, 89% of study respondents (N = 1178) in the study by Fodor et al.[67], 60% of respondents (N = 156) in Iorgulescu's study (2016), and 59% of survey respondents (N = 111) in the study by Puiu[32] ranked high salary as a significant work characteristic. Results from Cho and Lewis'[68] study (N = 36, 926) revealed "higher entry salaries may both attract more high-quality job applicants and help retain new hires" (p. 19). On the question of the work motives that influence their sectoral choices, the study participants (N = 37,200) from 31 nations mentioned high salary is one of the work motives that influenced their choice of public sector employment.[65] The value the Generation Z cohort ascribes to high salary not only evokes the need for financial security—a desire resulting from the economic challenges their families encountered during the Great Depression.[69,70]

Value for Fringe Benefits. Seventeen (n = 17) studies from the review corpus examined fringe benefits and their impact on Gen Z's employment decisions. Fringe benefits are essential work values to Gen Z because they evoke a sense of financial security.[70,71] For example, the findings from Beijvoksy's[72] study indicated that Gen Z respondents (N = 182) highly valued financial bonuses for work done and ranked this type of fringe benefit as one of the most critical work values. Respondents from the reviewed studies stated fringe benefits such as education grants, healthcare insurance, paid leave, and retirement benefits contribute to their decision to choose an employer (e.g., Bejtvosky[67]; Fodor et al.[72]; Thibault-Landry et al.[93]). For instance, in Csiszárik Kocsír and Garia Fodor's[66] study, respondents stated that though fringe benefits "serve as great motivational factors,… they were not perceived as the most important ones" (p. 72). Iorgulescu[73] supported the view that while they are important to Gen Z, fringe benefits were the least important factors for selecting a full-time job.

Table 5. Gen Z Reward Preferences from Study Sample (N = 32).

Thematic concept	Type of reward	# of cited studies	Examples of supporting sources	Importance to attraction/ recruitment/retention
High salary	Extrinsic	24	Bryson et al.[104], Cho and Lewis[68], Csiszarik Kocsír and Garia[66], Fodor et al.[67], Gimbergsson and Lundberg[81], Heong[89], Iorgulescu[73], and Walczak[71]	Secondary
Fringe benefits	Extrinsic	17	Fodor et al.[67], Heong[89], Thibault-Landry et al.[93], Maoili[69], Puiu[32], and Walczak[71]	Secondary
Work–life balance and flexible work	Extrinsic	20	Arar and Yuksel[79], Bejtkovský[72], Bencsik et al.[84], Chillakuri and Mahanandi[105], and Moltz[65]	Secondary
Job security	Extrinsic	17	Georgellis et al.[78], Goh and Lee[76], Harris et al.[74], Heong (2017), Lewis and Frank[1], Maioli[69], Moltz[65], and Van de Wall et al.[77]	Secondary
Training and skills development	Intrinsic	19	Balan and Vreja[20], Cho and Lewis[68], Fodor and Jaeckel[82], Goh and Lee[76], Maioli[69], Wiedmer[83], and Zupan et al.[75]	Critical
Mentoring	Intrinsic	10	Bencsik et al.[84], Goh and Lee[76], Sanner Stiener and Vandemause[85], Scott et al.[106], and Wiedmer[83]	Secondary
Career advancement	Extrinsic	21	Csiszarik Koscir and Garia Fodor[66], Fodor et al.[67], Heong[89]; Moltz[65], Pires[70], Scott et al.[106], Van de Walle et al.[77], Walczak[71], and Zupan et al.[75]	Critical
Work environment	Extrinsic	14	Arar and Yuksel[79], Bryson et al.[104], Fodor et al.[67], Harris et al.[74], Heong[89], Maioli[69], and Thibault-Landry et al.[93]	Secondary
Employee autonomy	Intrinsic	17	Fodor and Jaeckel[82], Fodor et al.[67], Heong[89], Georgellis et al.[78], Rehman[88], Langbein and Stazyk[87], Van de Walle et al.[77], and Wiedmer[83]	Critical
Work content and job satisfaction	Intrinsic	17	Bejtkovský[72], Cho and Lewis[68], Heong[89], Georgellis et al.[78], Maoili[69], Rehman[88], Scott et al.[106], and Walczak[71]	Critical
Coworker relations	Intrinsic	11	Bencsik et al.[84], Fodor and Jaeckel[82], Fodor et al.[67], Gimbergsson and Lundberg[81], Harris et al.[74], Thibault-Landry et al.[93], and Zupan et al.[75]	Secondary
Supervisor support	Intrinsic	12	Arar and Yuksel[79], Fodor and Jaeckel[82], Fodor et al.[67], Gimbergsson and Lundberg[81], Harris et al.[74], Iorgulescu[73], Singh and Dangmei[86], Thibault-Landry et al.[93], and Wiedmer[83]	Critical
Community social responsibility	Intrinsic	11	Csiszarik Kocsir and Garia Fodor[66], Fodor and Jaeckel[82], Fodor et al.[67]; Maoili[69], Pires[70], Singh and Dangmei[86], Walczak[71], and Zupan et al.[75]	Secondary
Public service motivation	Intrinsic	5	Georgellis et al.[78], Heong[89], Harris et al.[74], Lewis and Frank[1], Moltz[65], and Van de Walle et al.[77]	

Table 6. Gender-Based Difference in Importance of Six Rewards.

			Importance	
Reward	Source	Sample size	Female	Male
Job security	Georgellis et al.[78]	*N* = 63,112	Higher	Lower
Work environment	Gimberggson and Lundberg[81]	*N* = 364	Higher	Lower
	Walczak[71]	*N* = 122	Higher	Lower
Work–life balance	Gimberggson and Lundberg[81]	Same as above	Higher	Lower
	Walczak[71]	Same as above	Higher	Lower
Community social responsibility	Gimberggson and Lundberg[81]	Same as above	Higher	Lower
Coworker and relations	Gimberggson and Lundberg[81]	Same as above	Higher	Lower
	Walczak[71]	Same as above		
	Zupan et al.[75]	*N* = 830		
Supervisor and support	Gimberggson and Lundberg[81]	Same as above	Higher	Lower
	Walczak[71]	Same as above	Higher	Lower

Note. Higher/lower denotes the difference in importance both gender assign to rewards

Desire for Work–Life Balance and Flexible Work. Twenty (n = 20) of the 32 included studies discussed Gen Z's preference for work–life balance and flexible work. Walczak[71] explained that the youngest generation's strong desire for work–life balance reflects their independent nature. For instance, Moltz[65] underscored the importance his study respondents (N = 37,200) attached to work–life balance and their choice of employer. Respondents (N = 1178) in the study by Csiszarik Koscir and Garia Fodor[66] and Pires'[70] study (N = 65) mentioned that their preference for work–life balance and flexible working schedules might influence their selection of a workplace. Also, respondents (N = 8) indicated that having greater flexibility and work–life balance informed their decision to pursue a civil service career.[74]

Value for Career Advancement Opportunities. Job promotional opportunities had a great deal of appeal among the study respondents. Twenty-one (n = 21) studies of the study sample indicated that rapid career advancement is significant to Gen Z job seekers and that job promotional opportunities constitute a top priority for selecting a workplace.[73] For example, study respondents (N = 122) in Walczak's[71] study gave prospective promotion the highest rank of 7 as an expected job characteristic. Csiszárik Kocsír and Garia Fodor[66] affirmed the commonly held view across the reviewed studies that the opportunity for promotion and professional development looms large in Gen Z's career choice consideration. Moreover, Gen Zers' value for career advancement seems to have a global and multicultural appeal, as presented in the studies by Zupan et al.[75] and Heong[89]. Zupan et al. attributed Gen Zers' strong desire for career advancement to their ambitious nature. Respondents (N = 71) in the study by Goh and Lee[76] share Maioli's[69] view that to attract, recruit, motivate, and retain Gen Z, it is essential to discuss their career pathways and career development opportunities that fit their interests and talents.

Job Security Influences Gen Zers' Employment Preference. Eighteen (n = 18) of the studies reviewed revealed that Generation Z found stable employment or career security very appealing. For example, survey participants (N = 505) in Heong's study ranked job security as a significant job characteristic. For instance, regarding the impact of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards on sectoral choices (private or public sector employment), respondents (N = 15,222) from 26 countries cited job security as one of the reasons they would opt for public employment.[77] Also, in Puiu's[32] study, 56% of respondents believe job stability is one of the top three reasons for choosing a job. Fifty-six

(56%) of Gen Z respondents (N = 400) in Maioli's study supported this view. Evidence from the reviewed studies indicated that Gen Zers were attracted to organizations that provided them stable jobs, and it might be a contributory factor for their decision to work for an organization (e.g., Iorgulescu[73]; Georgellis et al.[78]; Van de Walle et al.[77]).

Positive Work Environment is Important for Gen Z. Fourteen (n = 14) studies discussed Gen Z members' value for the social and physical work environment. In these reviewed studies, respondents considered a vibrant team culture, technology, social media, open workspace, and diversity as desirable workplace expectations (e.g., Arar & Yuksel[79]; Beijkovsky[72]; Maioli[69]). In the study by Ozkan and Solmaz[80], 74% of respondents (N = 276) believed a positive social environment in the workplace is a motivating force for the Gen Z workforce. Maioli[69] affirmed that "issues associated with organizational climate would be found among the factors that members of Generation Z evaluate when choosing a job" (p. 10). Surprisingly, the results revealed, except for career advancement opportunities, the other extrinsic rewards are contributory (secondary) factors to Gen Z's employment decisions especially (see Table 5).

Gender seems to influence the importance Gen Zers place on certain extrinsic rewards (see Table 6). For instance, the results from two reviewed studies showed female respondents assigned more significant value to work–life balance than their male counterparts (i.e., Gimberggson & Lundberg[81]; Walczak[71]). Female respondents (n = 229) ranked work–life balance higher than their male counterparts (n = 135).[81] Also, Georgellis et al.[78] reported that job security was positive and significant for female respondents (n = 25, 728). The authors stated that satisfaction with job security was higher for women more than men. Further, female respondents ranked work conditions higher than their male counterparts.[71,81] For instance, Walczak[71] revealed that while 40% of female respondents (n = 85) rated questions on work conditions at the highest value, more than 50% of male respondents (n = 37) assigned it an average ranking.

Intrinsic Rewards: Gen Z Reward Preferences

Opportunities for Training and Skills Development. The respondents in 19 of the 32 included studies ranked opportunities for training and skills development as significant to Gen Z and top priorities for selecting a workplace and, most importantly, remaining with their employers. For instance, Fodor and Jaeckel[82] attributed Gen Z's desire for career development to their internal motivation to learn. Further, 47% of the reviewed studies (n = 15) discussed the importance of self-development in the career development of Gen Zers (e.g., Bălan & Vreja[20]; Ozkan & Solmaz[80]; Wiedmer[83]). Also, 93% of the respondents (N = 112) in Walczak's[71] study considered self-development a critical work value and may sacrifice an employer who pays more for one who supports learning.

Gen Z Desires Mentoring Opportunities. Ten reviewed studies identified mentoring as an essential work value of Generation Z. Four of the ten studies extensively discussed Gen Z's desire for reverse mentoring where Gen Z shares their knowledge and skills on technology and social media with more senior employees at their potential workplaces.[69,83–85] For instance, Maioli[69] attested that organizations can effectively retain Gen Z if they offer multiple growth opportunities.

Employee Autonomy is of Value to Gen Z. As shown in Table 5, 17 studies examined how valuable job or employee autonomy is to the post-Millennials. Gen Zers' desire for freedom reflects their independence and desire to prove themselves.[83,86] Consequently, respondents in the reviewed studies ranked autonomy as one of their most essential work values. For example, Bejtvoksy[72] (N = 182) stated that the freedom to choose how to do their work and implement their own ideas was one of the critical five work values for Gen Z. Also, survey respondents (= 34,000) believe having

a voice in the workplace is vital to achieving success for the work they do and engendering positive work attitudes needed for their retention.[87] Thibault-Landry et al.[93] affirmed employee autonomy is one of the important individual/employee psychological needs whose fulfillment engendered positive work outcomes, such as employee engagement and commitment.

Nature of Work Content and Job Satisfaction. Gen Z does not only need the freedom to choose how and where they do their jobs but also perform diverse, meaningful, and challenging jobs that ensure job satisfaction. The findings from 17 of the study sample underscore this view. Accordingly, respondents in the reviewed studies consider the nature of work content ("work itself") and job satisfaction significant work values and intrinsic rewards that may influence their selection of a workplace and motivate them to stay with their employers. For instance, Walczak[71] reported that for more than 80% of his study respondents (N = 122), the type of work they will do and the satisfaction they will derive from their work are critical to them. The respondents (N = 568) in Rehman's[88] study believe that the satisfaction they get from their work makes them more committed to their employers. The author (Rehman) concluded that job satisfaction impacts retention of employees and the attraction of new talents.

Positive Coworker Relations Help Attract and Retain Gen Z. Concerning work relationships, 11 of the included studies discussed the role that positive relationships with workmates play in Gen Z' s decision to stay with their employers continually. Positive coworker relations are an essential work value for Gen Z members mainly because they value team building and collaboration.[81] Both Chinese (n = 281) and Slovenian respondents (549) in Zupan et al.'s[75] study rank friendly coworkers among their top six work values. Also, there is strong support for good coworker relations as a workplace expectation among the respondents (N = 364).[81] While Gen Z values good relationships with their coworkers, the evidence suggests coworker relations play a secondary role in Gen Z job seekers' evaluation of their career choices.

Supervisor Support is of Value to Gen Z. As shown in Table 5, 12 studies of this study sample examined the importance of positive managerial relations or supervisor support to Gen Zers' decision to stay with their employers. The findings from the reviewed studies indicate Generation Z responds positively to good supervisor relations. The findings suggest that Gen Zers are motivated by supervisor support behaviors, including constant and meaningful real-time feedback, recognition for performance, open communication, and participative management (e.g., Arar & Yuksel[79]; Pires[70]). For the Gen Z respondents, the supervisor's support is an essential workplace expectation that will help them develop personally and professionally (e.g., Iorgulescu[73]; Singh & Dangmei[86]; Thibault-Landry et al.[93]; Wiedmer[83]). In Harris et al.'s[74] study, respondents (N = 8) believed that positive managerial support was the most salient factor in their decision to work for an organization and stay with their employers. Thibault-Landry et al.[93] confirmed that supervisor–employee relation is one of the employees' pivotal psychological needs that must be met to motivate and retain employees.

Preference for Community Social Responsibility. The findings from 11 included studies showed that Gen Zers had a favorable perception of organizations that promoted community social responsibility (CSR) and would pursue employment with such organizations. Gen Z respondents from these studies considered CSR an essential work value (e.g., Bălan & Vreja[20]; Fodor et al.[67]; Moltz[65]; Puiu[32]; Zupan et al.[75]). Gimberggson and Lundberg attributed Gen Z's high CSR value to their altruistic nature and the need to contribute to society. The survey respondents (N = 1358) in the study by Fodor et al.[67] mentioned they prefer working with an organization "with a conscious CSR strategy and an environment-conscious way of thinking" (p. 27). Pires[70] affirmed that CSR is a significant motivator

for Gen Z. The author further reports 60% of Gen Z respondents want to work for organizations that have links with the community and help it.

Public Service Motivation is Important. Respondents in six (n = 6) of the study sample ranked public service as a significant work value which is crucial to their retention (see Table 5). For instance, with a mean of 3.84, respondents (N = 504) ranked PSM as one of their most crucial work characteristics.[89] Also, the all-female respondents (N = 8) in the study by Harris et al.[74] stated their public service maturation informed their decision to remain civil servants after their internship. Lewis and Frank[1] revealed that 29% of study respondents (N = 2609) who gave PSM a high rating preferred public employment than 24%, who gave it a low rating. Moltz[65] mentioned individuals' prosocial motivations might be critical in choosing public employment, enhancing their job satisfaction, and commitment to their employers.

Furthermore, gender seems to play a role in Gen Z' s value of intrinsic rewards such as CSR and work relationships (see Table 6). Also, the results showed that females had higher altruistic values (CSR) and preferred a workplace that supports CSR than males.[81] Additionally, the results show that female respondents valued good relationships with coworkers and their supervisors (characterized as social work values) more than their male counterparts.[75,81] For instance, there was a significant mean differential (0.22) for coworker relations and supervisor support between female (3.9) and male respondents (3.7).[81] Zupan et al.[75] revealed female Slovenian and Chinese respondents had a higher value for coworker relations than their male counterparts.

Taken altogether, the examination of the eight descriptive themes revealed that the study's respondents' evaluation of the importance of a reward is influenced by their life experiences, psychosocial characteristics (values, motivations, and needs), and gender. The results also suggest that Gen Z assigns varying degrees of importance to their extrinsic and intrinsic reward preferences. Additionally, the results show the relationship between the importance Gen Z place on their reward priorities and how those priorities lead to their predisposition to choose an employer and continue working for that employer. Gender was found to influence the value Gen Z placed on three intrinsic and three extrinsic rewards.

Discussion

This body of evidence indicates life's experiences and personal traits are significant determinants of Gen Z's work values and reward preferences. Consequently, Gen Zers' extrinsic and intrinsic work motivations are shaped by their personal experiences and those of their parents when growing up.[25,48] For this reason, activities along the entire HRM chain (recruitment, training, performance management, and compensation) require program design that is responsive to generational sensitivities. Employing a differentiated approach to reward allocation enables public sector managers to answer the question about what a generational workforce wants and why it wants what it wants.

Furthermore, gender seemed to influence the importance that Gen Z assigned to specific rewards, albeit limitedly with only four reviewed studies. Nevertheless, the role of gender in shaping Gen Z's reward preferences is consistent with previous research that found differences in male and female work value preferences.[90,91] The evidence also validates current research findings that females are more likely to opt for public employment because they assign more significant importance than males to altruistic values such as CSR and PSM.[1,77] This finding is insightful and clear because it reveals complexity in making design decisions about employee compensation packages for a new generational workforce. This key finding makes a case for why the most frequently used rewards are considered ineffective by intended targets because the rewards do not reflect their work values. A clear understanding of the gender-based difference in the importance the Gen Z

cohort assign their work values will help business leaders, especially, the HR function, to create work programs that address such differences.

The results preponderantly reveal Gen Z finds extrinsic rewards very appealing and are attracted to organizations that offer attractive extrinsic rewards. However, concerning retention, the weight of evidence suggests except for job promotional opportunities, extrinsic rewards may be secondary factors for retaining Gen Z. Gen Z's realistic attitude to life probably explains the higher premium they place on career promotional opportunities than the other extrinsic rewards.[15] Dool further explained that for Gen Z, a rapid career progression is akin to acquiring financial security. This finding is consistent with previous research that extrinsic rewards play ancillary role in Gen Z's career decisions (Kirchmayer & Fratričová[44]; Meret et al.[45]). The results offer insights into the effectiveness of extrinsic rewards to retain the Gen Z workforce in a multigenerational workplace. Extrinsic rewards as an attraction, recruitment, and retention strategy generate a different dynamic as far as Gen Z is concerned.

Fortunately for public sector organizations, those critical extrinsic elements of public sector reward program (i.e., high salary, career advancement opportunities, and job security), which make public employment attractive to job seekers, are also essential to Gen Z.[34,92] In light of the above, it is fair to state that Gen Z is more likely to choose public employment because specific extrinsic rewards public organizations offer align with their needs and workplace expectations.[1,77] In this case, managers should leverage Gen Z's strong attractiveness to extrinsic rewards to attract and recruit them. Cho and Lewis[68] underscored the importance of extrinsic rewards as a recruitment strategy for younger individuals. The authors argue that turnover is high among new and younger public sector employees because they are dissatisfied with extrinsic rewards. Cho and Lewis[68] further explained that career advancement is a vital retention strategy that should be deployed early in the younger workforce's career.

Public sector organizations should be hopeful about the study results that Gen Zers place greater importance on intrinsic rewards and consider them critical to their retention. The results also show that Gen Z is intrinsically motivated as they seem to have a higher value of intrinsic than extrinsic rewards to mostly motivate and retain them.[93] Intrinsic motivations such as satisfaction with the nature of work and public service motivations are known to be determinants of public sector preference.[42,78,94] Importantly, previous research has confirmed that intrinsic motivation, particularly PSM, is a predictor of people's desire to work in public sector organizations.[95] In this regard, one could reasonably argue that Gen Z is more likely to seek public employment because public organizations may meet their intrinsic needs.

Additionally, the results indicated that Gen Z's desire to contribute to society and help others, which are critical factors for working for an employer, are crucial determinants of public sector employment (Van de Walle et al., 2012). Although only six studies examined PSM, the evidence supports previous findings that being socially responsible and willing to serve others attest to a greater level of PSM and, consequently, a higher interest in public sector employment.[96] In other words, Gen Zers are motivated by public service or prosocial values, which are congruent with the mission and values of public sector organizations.[97] Accordingly, concerning the fitness of Gen Z to public sector employment, the body of evidence reveals the youngest generational workforce is more likely to find a good person–organization fit with public sector organizations because of the congruence of values between the former and the latter.[98]

Managerial Implications

These study findings offer public sector managers' insights into how they can effectively align Gen Zers' work values with their organizational reward systems. The findings will also help increase workplace diversity awareness and a differentiated reward

allocation approach that allows for tailoring talent management practices and policies to fit the characteristics, needs, and work-related preferences of each generational workforce.[99] In this regard, this study provides a blueprint for the recruitment and retention of Generation Z talent into the public sector. It is important to mention that implementing programs that use this blueprint at the organizational level must consider Strauss and Howe's generational cohort theory as guiding principles only, as allowing for flexibility around organization-specific challenges and risk factors.

Additionally, in recent times, conversations in the labor market about the cause of high turnover for younger talent have shifted from demand-side issues such as skill and education to person–organization fit (P-O fit). Admittedly, this perspective is more nuanced about how it broadens the discussion to include the employer's issues. P-O fit helps to match employee characteristics and expectations with employer job requirements in a way that fits. And according to Sutajaro,[100] it forms part of a strategy to improve productivity and reduce turnover. There is also a need for strategic engagement with higher learning institutions in academia to explore how public service motivation could be translated into orientation programs for Gen Zers while they are in school. This strategy would help address attitudinal red flags that undermine person–organization fit. These study findings provide an intellectual framework for the policy conversation on how best to achieve the goals of person–organization fit through demand-side reforms in the labor market.

Overall, this study's findings provide an evidence-based business case for managers to consider the allocation of rewards using Strauss and Howe's generational cohort theory as guiding principles. The results validate the key tenet of GCT that the historical and socioeconomic context individuals grow up in influenced their work motivations. Thus, the talent management decisions and actions of public sector leaders should reflect the lived experiences of Gen Z job seekers. Moreover, thinking about reward packages through this study's theoretical lens enables hiring managers and HR professionals to understand that being fully aware of generational experiences is pivotal to designing reward strategies commensurate with the needs and motivations of each generation in the public sector workforce.

Recommendations

A winning strategy for public sector leaders and managers to compete for younger generational talents in the labor market and retain them is to adopt a differentiated reward strategy. For instance, an organization could offer a spectrum of benefits that has mutually exclusive permutations to allow for choice. Moreover, managers should create work programs that address gender differences. For example, to attract and recruit Gen Z job seekers, especially female job seekers during college career fairs, public sector recruiters could deploy targeted messages that highlight the compatibility between Gen Z's values and the mission and goals of public sector organizations. Also, to retain Gen Z employees, paternity leave programs could be made available to male employees whose wives are also employed in the public sector, albeit not necessarily within the same organization. This strategy would contribute to building a culture of support for Gen Z civil servants who struggle with work–life conflict situations. The positivity of such cultural accommodations may have a strong appeal for Gen Z prospects.

The significant value Gen Z attaches to career development and career advancement opportunities in the workplace imposes substantial responsibilities on HR managers as far as recruitment and retention of Gen Z are concerned. HR managers should develop a portfolio of training and career development programs that includes job enrichment, job rotation, and secondments. Also, managers should support and offer online professional development courses available on massive open online course platforms such as Coursera. It is equally crucial that hiring managers frame public communication messages using platforms such as Instagram, Snapchat,

LinkedIn, Twitter, and YouTube to emphasize the availability and benefits of these programs in public sector HR recruitment campaigns Gen Z prospects.

For public sector organizations to optimize their chances of being the employer of choice for Generation Z, public sector leaders and managers should adopt an employer branding strategy focused on organizational cultural change. Job applicants are attracted to organizations they perceive to have cultures that fit their work values and needs.[101] Consequently, public sector organizations should create and maintain a work culture that promotes professional growth, entrepreneurship, autonomy, diversity, and inclusion.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

One of the recognizable limitations of my study is the scope of the topic. The focus on public sector organizations limited the potential insights that would otherwise have emanated from a broader spectrum of work settings, thereby impacting the study findings' transferability (generalizability). Further, demographic factors such as race, education, and socioeconomic status of generational cohort members can affect their work values and reward preferences.[102] Another limitation was the absence of a review team to undertake the systematic review process. Since I was the sole reviewer in this study, the lack of alternative perspectives that a review team could offer potentially creates selection bias (see Burns & Burns[103]). Selection bias could undermine the dependability (reliability) and confirmability (objectivity) of the findings. However, this systematic review process's rigor and transparency reduced the incidence of bias and helped reinforce this study's trustworthiness.

The possibility of other factors besides gender, having a moderating influence on how Gen Zers respond to extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, is an area this study did not sufficiently explore. This study limitation also opens opportunities for future scholarly inquiry. Future research should explore the impact of additional demographic factors on the work values and reward preferences of the Generation Z workforce. Further, the positive job market trends before the current public health crisis (coronavirus pandemic) and the high unemployment rate may have shaped the respondents' (Gen Z) work motivations. This study and the surveys in the study sample were conducted before the emergence of COVID-19 and the recession; hence, offered no perspective on how the volatility and uncertainty in today's job market impact Gen Z's career decisions. Future research should examine how the current situation may reshape the work motivations of Gen Z.

Conclusions

This study demonstrates how public sector leaders and managers can attract, recruit, and retain Generation Z cohort members through a differentiated reward allocation strategy. Through the theoretical lens of Strauss and Howe's generational cohort theory (1991), the study results provide a better understanding of relationships between Generation Z's experiences and their influence on their reward preferences and evaluation of their employment choices. As the results revealed, Gen Z's extrinsic and intrinsic reward preferences suggest that public sector organizations may be the employer of choice for the youngest generation.

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Notes

Articles with asterisk (*) are included in the sample of reviewed studies

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Ochis, K. (2024). Generation Z and "Quiet Quitting": Rethinking onboarding in an era of employee disengagement. *Multidisciplinary Business Review*, *17*(1), 83-97.

Summary: The article defines quiet quitting as a form of disengagement where employees limit their work effort to coordinate tasks without discretionary effort. The study has described the literature gap on Generation Z employees, particularly about disengagement and giving information on employee lifecycle curves. The lifecycle curve classifies Generation Z employees into specific phases of engagement, from enthusiasm at the beginning to disengagement and quiet quitting by the seventh or eighth month later. The topic of quiet quitting is considered a form of disengagement characteristic, which shares the similarity to the dimension neglect in the ELVN model, a framework for understanding employees' response to a decrease in job happiness. The research finds that current organizational practices lack a cohesive employee integration system, therefore, organizations need to implement efficient strategies to improve onboarding and integration practices in early phases of employment.

Relevance: The study is relevant to the topic by understanding the phenomenon of quiet quitting in Generation Z, which finally influences organizations in making changes in managerial action.

Place in the paper: Literature review

mbr Multidisciplinary Business Review

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Generation Z and "Quiet Quitting": Rethinking onboarding in an era of employee disengagement

Generación Z y el "abandono silencioso": repensar la incorporación en una era de desconexión de los empleados

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Abstract

Why are Generation Z employees quiet quitting? A potential answer is related to Generation Z disengagement. Quiet quitting is troublesome for companies with growing numbers of young recruits checking out emotionally from work. Literature about aggrieved company cultures discusses quiet quitting, the name Generation Z employees use for a form of disengagement. Nevertheless, there is a lack of empirical research on Generation Z disengagement. Moreover, there is a lack of qualitative research on quiet quitting and disengagement in general with existing recommendations originating from quantitative studies that do not examine the core nature of the phenomenon. The originality of the research stems from studying two interrelated issues: the characteristics of Generation Z disengagement and the characteristics of Generation Z employee integration frameworks that consider their employee lifecycle. This paper discusses quiet quitting as a form of Kahn's (1990) disengagement and a dimension of Generation Z's exit, voice, loyalty, neglect (EVLN) model characteristic. The study follows a qualitative methodology. Firstly, grounded theory is employed to extract data from Generation Z employees and their managers and compare perceptions of the former's disengagement and engagement. The research sample consisted of 75 participants. Secondly, unstructured observation was employed through a cohort longitudinal study of ten Generation Z employees at work over two years. The lifecycle of Generation Z employees is shown to be approximately one year. The research

Resumen

¿Por qué los empleados de la Generación Z renuncian silenciosamente? Una posible respuesta está relacionada con la desconexión de la Generación Z. Dejar de fumar silenciosamente es problemático para las empresas con un número creciente de empleados jóvenes que se retiran emocionalmente del trabajo. La renuncia silenciosa, el nombre que utilizan los empleados de la Generación Z como forma de desconexión, se analiza en la literatura sobre las culturas empresariales agraviadas. Sin embargo, faltan investigaciones empíricas sobre la desconexión de la Generación Z. Además, faltan investigaciones cualitativas sobre el abandono silencioso y la desconexión en general, con recomendaciones existentes provenientes de estudios cuantitativos que no examinan la naturaleza central del fenómeno. La originalidad de la investigación surge del estudio de dos cuestiones interrelacionadas: las características de la desvinculación de la Generación Z y las características del marco de integración de los empleados de la Generación Z que considera su ciclo de vida. El abandono silencioso se analiza en el artículo como una forma de desconexión de Kahn (1990) y una dimensión de la característica del modelo de Salida, Voz, Lealtad y Negligencia (EVLN) de la Generación Z. El estudio sigue una metodología cualitativa. Primero, se emplea la teoría fundamentada para extraer datos de los empleados de la Generación Z y sus gerentes y comparar las percepciones sobre la desconexión y el compromiso de los primeros. La muestra de la investigación estuvo compuesta por 75 participan-

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illustrates the Generation Z employee lifecycle curve and classifies the Generation Z employee engagement phases. Moreover, the study introduces a framework for integrating Generation Z within companies.

Keywords: Generation Z, employee disengagement, employee engagement, quiet quitting, employee retention; onboarding, EVLN

tes. Segundo, se empleó la observación no estructurada por medio de un estudio longitudinal de cohorte de diez empleados de la Generación Z en el trabajo durante dos años. Se ha descubierto que el ciclo de vida de los empleados de la Generación Z es de aproximadamente un año. La investigación ilustra la curva del ciclo de vida de los empleados de la Generación Z y clasifica las fases de compromiso de los empleados de esa generación. Además, el estudio presenta un marco para integrar a la Generación Z en las empresas.

Palabras clave: Generación Z, desvinculación de los empleados, compromiso de los empleados, renuncia silenciosa, retención de empleados, incorporación, EVLN.

Introduction

Generation Z, the youngest in the workforce (Dimock, 2019), is the generational group which is least engaged with their work and most suffering from stress and burnout (Pendell & Vander Helm, 2022). The latest employee trend that Generation Z have ascribed to is quiet quitting - classified in this paper as a form of disengagement. With over 50% of the global workforce being quiet quitters (Smith, 2022), the phenomenon is actively spreading (McGregor, 2022). Yikilmaz (2022) warns against the potential long-term consequences of disengagement that may devastate companies and employees.

Authors such as Hiltzik (2022) claim that quiet quitting is not a novel phenomenon. The paper ascribes to Kahn's (1990) definition of engagement, and consequently, quiet quitting is viewed as a phase of the fluctuating disengagement continuum. The paper circumscribed the generational group of Generation Z employees who utilize the terminology of quiet quitting for a particular moment of disengagement characteristic to their cohort. As such, the paper eschews a discourse on the novelty of the concept but engages with a concept characteristic of the studied cohort. Ultimately, quiet quitting is classified as both a phase of disengagement and is recognised as being aligned with the neglect dimension of the exit, voice, loyalty, neglect (EVLN) model and its two extensions, silence and incivility.

Adding to the pervasiveness of the great resignation, quiet quitting is an alternative to resigning and refers to being less psychologically involved at work and doing solely core tasks (Klotz & Bolino, 2022). Quiet quitters do not work overtime, do not attend non-mandatory meetings, and are not proactive (Klotz & Bolino, 2022). Quiet quitters limit their work effort to maintain personal work-life balance, preserve their well-being, and disconnect from a high-pressure work environment (Hare, 2022). Quiet quitting is a formalised name for workers' unwillingness to place discretionary effort at work (Mahand & Caldwell, 2023). It is often discussed as an organisation's inability to create a meaningful relationship with its employees (Zenger & Folkman, 2022).

In the context of the quiet quitting phenomenon, managers view Generation Z employee engagement as a priority (Fernandez et al., 2023). Nevertheless, managers prefer to work with older rather than younger workers (Munnell et al., 2006; Pitt-Catsouphes et al., 2007). Companies are apprehensive about their abilities to integrate younger generations of employees (Deloitte, 2020). Authors call for companies to redefine traditional practices to manage disengagement better (Klotz & Bolino, 2022; Mahand & Caldwell, 2023).

Quiet quitting appears to be related to the more significant phenomenon of disengagement (Johnson, 2023). Nevertheless, it ought to be remarked that there is a deficiency of empirical

research on employee engagement, which lacks evidence-based scholarship (Shuck & Wollard, 2010). This lacuna fostered a disjointed literature on employee engagement strategies (Shuck & Wollard, 2010) upon which predominant company recommendations were developed.

The study follows a qualitative methodology. Firstly, it uses grounded theory to extract data from Generation Z employees and their managers and compare perceptions of the former's disengagement and engagement. The non-random research sample consisted of 75 participants. This total included 30 Generation Z employees and 45 managers belonging to 42 companies across industries in Romania. Second, unstructured observation was employed through a cohort longitudinal study of ten Generation Z employees at work over two years in several departments of a medical resort.

The results show that Generation Z employees' lifecycle is approximately one year. Further, it classifies Generation Z employee engagement phases in isolates, bystanders, participants, activists, and diehards. It describes the behaviours and attitudes of Generation Z in each phase and illustrates their lifecycle curve. Shifts in Generation Z employee behaviours are noticeable in three-month increments. Specifically, it is argued that quiet quitting occurs between the seventh and eighth months and that managerial interventions cannot notably turn around the effects once the employee enters the quiet quitting phase.

Moreover, the study introduces a framework for integrating Generation Z within companies that is believed to better utilize the efficiency of Generation Z in the first six months and prolong the debut of their entering the quiet quitting phase. The framework has the potential to aid companies in improving employee welfare, rapidly integrating promising professionals through minimizing organizational disengagement.

Accordingly, the study addresses the literature gap on the sample of Generation Z employees, particularly regarding disengagement, and explains the employee lifecycle curve. It furthers the disjointed literature on theories of employee engagement by providing a nexus with the timely topic of quiet quitting, which is classified as a form of disengagement characteristic to Generation Z employees which is also aligned with the dimensions of neglect of the EVLN model. It uncovers the lifecycle of Generation Z employees and provides knowledge on this understudied cohort at work. The study is limited to Generation Z employees as they work in the context of employee disengagement within their lifecycle. It does not address disengagement in general or more extensive discussions on job satisfaction.

Employee Engagement

Theories of Employee Engagement

Kahn's (1990) ethnographic study focuses on how employees experienced themselves within their work and how work concepts influenced moments of engagement and disengagement. Kahn (1990) also highlights the existence of fluctuations in engagement. Engagement, thus, is not static: "In engagement people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances" (Khan, 1990, p. 694). As remarked by Ochis (2022), the contents of the concept of engagement have not developed since Khan's (1990) study with subsequent authors such as May et al. (2004), Rich et al. (2010), and Brown and Leigh (1996) focusing on quantitative approaches.

Engagement, closely linked with the concept of flow, is described by Csikszentmihalyi (1990) as a holistic sensation experienced when individuals act with complete involvement, blurring the boundaries between self and environment. This flow state involves a heightened focus on specific stimuli, with actions requiring minimal conscious control. Additionally, discussions about engagement often revolve around employee empowerment (Albrecht & Andreetta, 2011; Alagarsamy et al., 2020). Thomas and Velthouse (1990) introduced an empowerment model encompassing four psychological dimensions: meaningfulness, impact, competence, and choice.

In the context of job satisfaction, Hackman and Oldham (1975) posit it as a unidimensional construct resulting from individuals' assessments

of intrinsic and extrinsic factors in their organisational relationship. Research consistently links higher job satisfaction to constructive behaviours like organisational citizenship (Weikamp & Göritz, 2016), while lower job satisfaction tends to precede destructive behaviours (Lowery & Rusbult, 1986; Naus et al., 2007; Lu et al., 2016).

The EVLN Model

The exit, voice, loyalty, neglect (EVLN) model, initially conceptualised by Hirschman (1970) and Farrell (1983), serves as a framework for understanding employees' responses to declining job satisfaction. In such scenarios, individuals consciously choose to act with a specific goal: to address the underlying causes of their diminishing job satisfaction (Hirschman, 1970). This model posits four distinct behavioural responses, which are exit (E), voice (V), loyalty (L), and neglect (N). Exit entails quitting, resigning, transferring to another work unit, or contemplating leaving (Todor, 1980; Rusbult et al., 1988; Allen & Tüselmann, 2009). In contrast, voice encompasses employees' efforts to bring about change in an unsatisfactory situation rather than fleeing it, with potential manifestations ranging from formal complaints to constructive problem-solving (Turnley & Feldman, 1999; Allen, 2014; Luchak, 2003). Loyalty represents a passive response from employees who support the organisation by patiently waiting for business improvement (Rusbult et al., 1986; Hirschman, 1970; McShane, 2006). Employees in this category demonstrate allegiance to the organisation and anticipate positive changes over time. Neglect, like exit, constitutes a destructive response (Rusbult et al., 1988) and includes behaviours such as increased absenteeism, lateness, and errors at work, reflecting a disengagement from their roles (Rusbult et al., 1986; Hagedoorn et al., 1999). Naus et al. (2007) contend that if certain behaviours are absent from the EVLN model's suggested alternatives, additional responses can be introduced by extending the original model. For instance, Tucker and Turner (2011) adapt the EVLN model for young workers' safety behaviours, considering patience as an alternative.

Generation Z and the World of Work

Generational cohorts, defined by Ryder (1965), provide a valuable framework for comparing data across different groups. The concept of generations is multifaceted in the literature, encompassing life stage, kinship descent, cohort, and historical period (Kertzer, 1983). Work-related preferences, values, and behaviours are believed to be shaped by generational cohort membership and the associated generational experiences (Smola & Stutton, 2002; Meriac et al., 2010; Kupperschmidt, 2000).

Generation Z, born after 1997, is characterised by its tech-savvy nature, preference for immediate rewards, and aversion to discretionary effort (Ochis, 2022). These individuals resist traditional workplace hierarchies and often aspire to be part-time influencers (Tolani & Sao, 2020). Despite their preference for remote work, Generation Z employees exhibit lower productivity in remote settings (Statista Inc., 2023).

Generation Z employees are perceived as lacking the necessary preparation for their roles (Schrotch, 2019). Ochis (2022) identifies positive behaviours among Generation Z employees, including collaboration, expression, freshness, intelligence, and technological orientation. However, they also display negative behaviours such as eagerness, grandiosity, idleness, and aspiration, hindering their organisational progress. This generational cohort seeks fast results while disliking effort, routine, and commitment, creating a paradox (Ochis, 2022). Additionally, Generation Z employees often desire immediate rewards and freedom and have a tendency toward non-commitment, leading to distorted self-images and surprise at their evaluations (Bencsik & Machova, 2016).

Twenge's (2017) research aligns with present findings, highlighting Generation Z's avoidance of conflict and emotional fragility. Twenge (2017) attributes these traits to their primary mode of connection through virtual means. Tolbize (2008) emphasises the need for managers to tailor their approaches to different generational groups, including Generation Z, who prioritise job designs that incorporate safety needs. Such designs should encompass flexible work prac-

tices, reward and recognition systems, compensation, benefits, feedback-seeking behaviour, and volunteering opportunities to positively impact Generation Z employees (Aggarwal et al., 2020). In terms of engagement dimensions, Generation Z places significance on extrinsic and leisure rewards, consistent with findings from Twenge et al. (2010) and Landcaster and Stillman (2002). Regarding extrinsic rewards, financial compensation is essential for Generation Z employees who also desire leisure (Ochis, 2022).

Generation Z and the Quiet Quitting Phenomenon

Quiet quitting was first formalised by Mark Bolger (Buscaglia, 2022) to describe a type of work commitment that entails minimal effort. It debuted as a trend on social media platforms originating from a Generation Z employee who encouraged quiet quitting from work (Kilpatrick, 2022). It has since become an umbrella term used to call upon companies to change the workplace environment (Ellis & Yang, 2022). There is a discrepancy between sources on the exact definition of quiet quitting, with authors claiming that quiet quitting refers to either doing the bare minimum at work (Hetler, 2022) or not exceeding expectations (Mahand & Caldwell, 2023). Subsequently, some authors posit that quiet quitting is problematic for employees (Yikilmaz, 2022), while others support the set of ideas according to which quiet quitting is a natural response of employees to the ever-expanding workforce demands (Hopke, 2022).

Quiet quitting sparked ample controversy, with the authors warning against the psychological effects of quiet quitting (Hetler, 2022). Meanwhile, economists advocated that the phenomenon regulates itself due to market changes in the following economic cycles (Johnson, 2023). From a macro perspective, the reduction in working hours is perceived as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic circumstances and measures that persisted in subsequent years (Lee et al., 2018). Business and practitioner authors call for companies to modify traditional human resources practices (Klotz & Bolino, 2022) and establish a psychological contract with employees (Zenger & Folkman, 2022).

Authors tend to agree that there is a relationship of causation between quiet quitting and employers who have not honoured their employees' commitments (Cameron, 2012; Caldwell & Anderson, 2020; Zenger & Folkman, 2022). Survey results indicate that when employees feel underappreciated, they reciprocate with low personal commitment (Meyer, 2014). Managers are considered to have failed to engage, empower, and inspire employees with whom they work (Clifton & Harter, 2019). This evidence is supported by the more considerable literature on employee engagement (Kular et al., 2008; Saks & Gruman, 2014), empowerment (Zimmerman, 2000), and leadership (Burns, 2010; DePree, 2004). The consensus in the literature about quiet quitting appears to be that the phenomenon is not new (Harter, 2022). Quiet quitting echoes more significant discussions on empowerment (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990), organisational conflict and cooperation (Pondy, 1967), and work satisfaction (Mayo, 1947).

In the context of quiet quitting, where employees disengage from their roles while technically remaining part of the organisation, the EVLN model is particularly relevant. Quiet quitting aligns closely with the neglect response of the EVLN model, as it typically involves reducing effort and engagement without formally leaving the job. Quiet quitting is also aligned with two extensions of the EVLN model. Sabino et al. (2019) propose employees' silence as a potential expansion to the EVLN model. As an independent construct, employees' silence represents a deliberate, individual decision to withhold vital organisational information. It is worth noting that the concept of quiet quitting may be perceived under the silence category, as it does not involve voice dimensions. Dolev, Itzkovich, and Fisher-Shalem (2021) expanded the EVLN model with workplace incivility. Their study suggests that the intentionality of reaction is a crucial dimension, with underlying emotional processes playing a significant role in each EVLN response. This insight is relevant to Generation Z quitting because most employees in

this cohort perceive that they are not empowered at work and are even belittled (Ochis, 2022). Lee and Varon (2020) found that the relationship quality between leaders and employees, according to leader-member exchange, impacts how employees respond to situations of injustice in the workplace in the EVLN model. Specifically, they found that employees in high-quality relationships with their leaders are less likely to quit their jobs or engage in neglectful behaviour when faced with a dissatisfying situation. Instead, they are more likely to voice their concerns or remain loyal to the organisation. Further qualitative research is needed to understand quiet quitting and the characteristics of Generation Z, who have promoted the concept. This leads to research question 1: What are the characteristics of Generation Z disengagement?

Integration and Onboarding

From the early literature on employee integration, two organisational approaches to onboarding have been remarked upon, namely institutionalised and individualised socialisation (Jones, 1986). The former refers to a step-by-step approach, often including orientation and mentorship programmes. In the latter, the new employee is responsible for the knowledge they acquire. Institutionalised programs have been shown to impact the individual employee's success within the organisation (Weinstock, 2015; Lynch & Buckner-Hayden, 2010; Baker & Di Piro, 2019). Organisational integration programs aid new hires in learning about the business, including the daily functions and job responsibilities, but also about the organisation's culture and values (Pike, 2014). The integration of employees usually consists of several stages, such as pre-onboarding, orientation and organisational socialisation, probation period, assimilation, and follow-up (Stein & Christiansen, 2010). Learning about the culture, network development, career development, and strategy are essential to the organisational socialisation process (Stein & Christiansen, 2010). A notable addition in onboarding practices, mainly aimed at the younger generational groups, entails the new hire receiving not only an experienced organisational mentor but also a buddy. This refers to a younger employee at a similar level responsible for aiding the new hire within the organisation (Klinghoffer et al., 2019).

Furthermore, a stream of literature orientated toward younger generational groups considers the influence of gamified integration (Heimburger et al., 2019; Depura & Garg, 2012; Dale, 2014). Gamification in the workspace enhances non-gaming situations with game elements (Dale, 2014). Technologically integrated workspaces with up-to-date software, mobile applications and gamification appear to improve the success of employee integration (Depura & Garg, 2021). Previous research on the influence of gamified integration on employee engagement indicates that Generations Y and Z prefer gamified onboarding to non-gamified onboarding (Heimburger et al., 2019).

Scholars and writers in the popular and practitioner space write avidly about Generation Z and Y's alleged lack of motivation and work ethic (Terry, 2022; Dashevsky, 2020). Quiet quitters, for instance, refuse to perform with maximum dedication when their supervisor asks them to work at a high level (Smith, 2022). Business writers advise managers to incorporate the unique needs of employees (Klotz & Bolino, 2022). Yet, practical frameworks for managers to integrate Generation Z employees who are quiet quitters exhibit no prior empirical study. This gap leads to research question 2: What are the characteristics of a Generation Z employee integration framework?

Research Method

The study follows a qualitative methodology. Firstly, it employs grounded theory to extract data from Generation Z employees and their managers and compare perceptions of the former's disengagement and engagement. The research sample consisted of 75 participants. This total included 30 Generation Z employees and 45 managers belonging to 42 companies across industries in Romania. Secondly, it employs unstructured observation through a cohort longitudinal study of ten Generation Z employees at work over two years in several

departments of a medical resort. The latter phenomenological method was used to discover the Generation Z lifecycle, the quiet quitting curve, and the actions that characterise Generation Z's quiet quitting. The research design included the literature review, questionnaire design and testing, the semi-structured interview process, concomitantly the unstructured observation, triangulation of the data and gap analysis, and the development of the integration framework.

The total sample size for grounded research was 75 employees divided into two groups. The lower-level group consisted of 30 Generation Z employees. The higher-level group consisted of 45 managers. The sample size was achieved through theoretical saturation (Glasser & Strauss, 2017). The sample method was non-random. Both theoretical and exponential non-discriminative snowball sampling were used (Babbie, 1995; Miller & Crabtree, 1992).

The total sample size for the unstructured observation as a cohort longitudinal study was ten Generation Z employees. Participant observation provides a flexible environment where interactions are a natural part of participants' everyday lives (Agar, 1986). The unstructured observation followed an interpretive approach for arriving at thinking descriptions (Geertz, 2000). Structured observation was seen as the best way to understand the behaviour (Bogdewic, 1999) of quiet quitting and the Generation Z employee lifecycle, around which literature is scarce. The observation process was inductive and iterative (O'Reilly, 2009). The recorded content directly relates to engagement and disengagement concepts (Waldner et al., 2021). Data was collected using text-based notes through linear text-structuring and spatial structuring through physical decks and large displays (Waldner et al., 2021).

The phases of data analysis included bracketing and phenomenological reduction, delineating units of meaning, clustering to form units of significance, summarising, validating, modifying, and providing a composite summary (Hycner, 1999; Moustakas, 1994). The content was analysed through axial and selective coding and integrative diagramming through an inductive and deductive method (Martin, 2001; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

The validity and reliability of the research were ensured following Lincoln and Guba's (1985) trustworthiness categories, namely credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, which were used to verify the validity of qualitative methods. Prolonged engagement with participants (Brown et al., 2002; Jacelon & O'Dell, 2005; Morrow, 2005), triangulation of data from multiple sources (Brown et al., 2002; Jacelon & O'Dell, 2005), thick descriptions of data (Morrow, 2005), respondent validation of interview transcripts (Brown et al., 2002; Jacelon & O'Dell, 2005; Morrow, 2005), participant guidance of inquiry (Cooney, 2010) and use of participant words in the emerging theory (Cooney, 2010) ensured internal research validity.

Findings

Engagement Conditions and Determinants

Generation Z participants and managers were queried regarding workplace engagement and disengagement factors. Five thematical categories emerged for Generation Z participants from thirty-two units of meaning, while managers generated six thematical categories from thirty-three units of meaning. Recognised engagement conditions encompassed a positive atmosphere, collegiality, hierarchical transparency, and organised managerial actions, while determinants included personal competence, remuneration, praise, and training.

Disengagement Conditions and Determinants

Identified disengagement conditions included a stressful work environment, hostile atmosphere, being marginalised, and favouritism of older generational groups. Identified disengagement determinants include low wages, little decision-making power, and lack of support. The study indicates that emergent categories for Generation Z engagement and disengagement are congruent with the existing literature on engagement, which is discussed as personal

engagement, flow, empowerment, enrichment, and burnout.

Evaluation of Employee Engagement by Managers

Managers were asked to describe how they evaluate employee engagement. From thirty-one units of significance, with the most prominent being results, surveys, and questions employees ask about assigned tasks, four categories were generated: achievement-based, behaviour-based, identity-based, and process-based.

Process of Integrating a Young Hire

Managers were asked to describe the process of integrating a young hire with little or no prior experience into the workforce. Four categories were generated: process, choice, competence, and meaningfulness from twenty-eight units of significance, with prominent ones being exposure to the workflow and assigning an experienced employee to guide a young employee. The integration system does not appear sufficiently standardised.

Methods for Empowering Young Employees

Managers were asked to describe how they empower and support young hires. From twenty-seven units of significance, with prominent ones being to give young hires verbal appreciation and decision-making power over their work, five thematical categories were generated: choice, competence, extrinsic rewards, impact, and meaningfulness.

The Employee Lifecycle Curve

The employee lifecycle, comprising stages such as attraction, recruitment, onboarding, development, retention, and separation (Kwon & Park, 2019), serves as a framework for understanding the phases of an employee's interaction with their employer. Observations of Generation Z employees indicate a significantly shorter employee lifecycle, averaging around one year, in contrast to older generational groups like Boomers, who traditionally remained with their employers until retirement (Fry, 2019). Within this year, Generation Z employee engagement experiences fluctuations, displaying an overall downward trend leading to quiet quitting and disengagement.

Generation Z employee engagement can be classified into five distinct types, adapted from Kellerman's follower typology (2008): Activists, diehards, participants, bystanders, and isolates. Activists are highly invested and engaged, while diehards exhibit unwavering dedication. Participants are fully engaged with dedication, while bystanders are engaged but deliberately remain neutral. Isolates are entirely disengaged, showing indifference towards their leaders (Kellerman, 2008).

Quiet quitting behaviours in Generation Z employees encompass three strategies: ego-oriented, image-oriented, and achievement-oriented. These strategies parallel those observed in Millennial employees when managing intergenerational tensions with Boomers (Urick et al., 2017) and align with the extended EVLN model of silence and neglect. Ego-oriented strategies involve withdrawal and the protection of personal needs. Image-oriented strategies entail visibility when the manager is present and selective information management to justify low proactivity. Achievement-oriented strategies encompass proficient performance and adaptability in communication style (Urick et al., 2017).

Figure 1 illustrates behavioural shifts in Generation Z employees occurring approximately every three months within this one year. Recruits initially start as activists, characterised by enthusiasm but limited job knowledge. As they become more familiar with their roles over the next three months, their dedication peaks, transitioning between activists and participants. By the sixth month, the downward trend continues, moving towards bystander status. The onset of quiet quitting typically happens between the seventh and eighth month, prompting intervention from the employer or manager in the ninth month. However, Generation Z employees are actively seeking alternative employment at this time. By the end of the twelfth month, they often reach the point of isolation, accompanied by requests for a raise to adjust their engage-

Figure 1. The employee lifecycle curve



Source: Author's own elaboration.

ment levels for the subsequent period. Despite efforts to address quiet quitting through interventions like workload redistribution, job redesign, bonuses, and flexible work practices, these measures have proven ineffective in significantly altering the employee lifecycle. While they may temporarily delay the shift to bystander status, they do not succeed in converting employees into activists or substantially prolonging their tenure.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study qualitatively investigates Generation Z employee engagement, revealing a distinct pattern in their employment lifecycle characterised by a markedly shorter tenure, with notable shifts in behaviours occurring in three-month intervals (see Figure 1). The study suggests that quiet quitting manifests between the seventh and eighth months of employment. After entering this phase, managerial interventions are unlikely to reverse its effects. Consequently, a strategic focus on enhancing organisational integration during the activist and diehard phases of Generation Z employees and extending the participant phase is recommended.

The findings regarding research question 1 align with the insights on burnout presented by Maslach et al. (2001), which is considered an extreme form of disengagement. Burnout is associated with various job withdrawal behaviours, including absenteeism, intention to leave, and turnover, and is characterised by exhaustion, cynicism, detachment from the job, and a sense of ineffectiveness (Maslach et al., 2001). Similarly, employees experiencing quiet quitting tend to influence their colleagues, resulting in clusters of Generation Z employees exhibiting this behaviour.

A noteworthy contribution to the literature is the observation that Generation Z employees in the quiet quitting phase draw inspiration and guidance from social media influencers who promote this disengagement behaviour. This admiration for influencers aligns with previous generational trends of admiring famous individuals (Wyatt, 1993), but Generation Z's preference for influencers, considered more authentic and reliable (Senft, 2013), distinguishes their behaviour. Influencers, often micro-celebrities from social media (Khamis et al., 2016), play a significant role in advocating quiet quitting and job turnover. For instance, the study's observations indicate that Generation Z employees frequently respond to requests for overtime by claiming they can only stay for a brief period, a response recommended by influencers promoting quiet quitting.

Despite the general preference for employee retention in organisations (Cloutier et al., 2015), this study's findings challenge the feasibility of retaining Generation Z employees. Contrary to prior research on high-quality leader-member exchange (LMX) relationships, which suggests reduced exit and neglect behaviours and increased loyalty behaviours (Jessup & Varon, 2020), the results indicate a discrepancy within the Generation Z cohort.

Regarding research question 2, current organisational practices lack a cohesive employee integration system, resulting in disjointed interventions. A proposed integrated approach, detailed in Table 1, combines previous research on employee integration with the present findings and Generation Z engagement dimensions. Managerial efforts to counter the quiet quitting phase have shown limited effectiveness in extending employee tenure. To enhance Gen-

Table 1. Generation Z employee integration stages

Stages	Actions		Engagement Dimension
Pre-onboarding	Offer realistic job descriptions; Top management greeting		Intrinsic rewards; Social rewards
Onboarding	Orientation	Receive employee handbook information materials; tour departments; explain expectations; job description; present expectations.	Empowerment: Social rewards
Probation period	Organisational socialisation	Culture, network development, career development, strategy	
	Employee undertakes level-appropriate skills.		Empowerment; Choice; Personal engagement
	Employee partakes in meetings.		
Integration	In-depth training: Employee receives more responsibilities; Similar financial and workload to more experienced employees;		Empowerment; enrichment and external rewards
Evaluation	Reports of managers, self-evaluations; questionnaires, surveys; KPIs; results, evaluation meetings		Competence; Stress levels
Assimilation	Career development; Variation of work; Becoming a buddy for new hire		Enrichment, job design, social rewards
Follow-up	Continuous follow-up, sensemaking, expectations management; periodic check-ins		Empowerment

Source: Author's own elaboration.

eration Z engagement, the study recommends proactively extending the time before this phase and expediting integration processes. A more resource-efficient strategy entails improving onboarding and integration practices to extend the participant phase of Generation Z employees while leveraging their enthusiasm during the activist and diehard phases.

Pre-onboarding involves the period from recruitment to onboarding (Dharmasiri et al., 2014). During this phase, Generation Z employees assess intrinsic rewards and perceived job fit based on realistic job descriptions. Unrealistic descriptions can lead to disillusionment (Dharmasiri et al., 2014). Onboarding encompasses orientation and organisational socialisation (Mroz et al., 2019). Employees receive handbooks and learn about rights, obligations, work expectations, workflow, and company departments. They are paired with experienced mentors and buddies (Klinghoffer et al., 2019), fostering empowerment and social rewards. The probation period allows employees to undertake tasks, contribute to meetings, and exercise choice. Integration continues with in-depth training, more responsibilities, and similar rewards to experienced peers, promoting enrichment and external rewards.

Evaluation reviews progress, intervenes in job descriptions, and adjusts workloads, combining yearly and periodic assessments covering technical skills, company knowledge, and soft skills. Various tools like reports, results, surveys, questionnaires, and performance reviews are employed, with formal and informal methods, such as daily check-ins and participative meetings. Evaluation enhances competence and stress management.

After assimilation, job enrichment offers more variety and autonomy while maintaining mentorship. Assimilated employees may become buddies for newcomers. Engagement dimensions at this stage include job redesign, enrichment, and social rewards. Continuous periodic check-ins ensure clarity for hires.

Overall, the study contributes to knowledge in four main ways. Firstly, it furthers the disjointed literature on theories of employee engagement by providing a nexus with the timely topic of quiet quitting. Secondly, it uncovers the lifecycle of Generation Z employees and provides knowledge on this under studied cohort at work. Thirdly, it attempts to explain the Generation Z employee lifecycle curve. Fourthly, it proposes a

framework for onboarding young recruits considering their tendency towards rapid turnover and provides practical mechanisms for managerial interventions.

Further research is necessary to gain a deeper understanding of employee disengagement among Generation Z. Longitudinal studies that track the engagement levels of Generation Z employees over time could help identify the critical points at which disengagement occurs and inform the development of effective onboarding and integration frameworks. Lastly, research that explores the role of organisational culture and leadership in fostering employee engagement could help managers create a workplace environment that promotes employee well-being and productivity.

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Source 31 (Not Scholarly)

Citation:

Dewar, J. (2023, December 18). A guide to recruiting Gen Z | LinkedIn. Linked In. https://www.linkedin.com/business/talent/blog/talent-acquisition/guide-to-recruiting-gen-z

Summary: The internet article discusses how organizations and recruiters change the talent strategy got Generation Z. The article lists the distinctive characteristics, challenges, and opportunities that are different from the previous generation. The article gives a general explanation of Generation Z with some unique factors impact to Generation Z trait. Generation Z is well-known for these factors, technology, risk-averse, independent, competitive, and open-minded. Then, the author lists and explains the important practices for recruiting Generation Z talents, which are offering career-growth opportunities; providing work flexibility; offering competitive compensation and benefits; focusing on skills-based hiring; prioritizing diversity, equity, and inclusion; and highlighting your company culture and values. The most crucial act is the promise of recruiters to retain Generation Z talents.

Relevance: The internet article shows relevance to the topic due to mentioning the update of management practices in organizations to target to Generation Z workforce. The appearance of this kind of topic on the LinkedIn site also proves the awareness of corporations to adapt to the entering of the young workforce.

Place in the paper: Literature review

Talent Blog

Hiring Gen Z

A Guide to Recruiting Gen Z



Jen Dewar
December 18, 2023



everywhere is how to attract and retain Gen Z.

Gen Z has unique characteristics, challenges, and opportunities that set it apart from previous generations. It's crucial that talent acquisition teams understand and adapt to those distinctions as this young generation continues to enter the workforce.



What is Gen Z?

Gen Z, also known as Generation Z and Zoomers, is the generation born between 1997 and 2012.

Cat Ward shares, "Theirs is a generation molded by transformative forces, including a global pandemic, a racial reckoning, political gridlock, climate crisis, and the rise of artificial intelligence." Gen Z is also the first generation to grow up entirely in the digital age.

For example, Gen Z is:

- **Tech-savvy.** Gen Z are digital natives who grew up with the internet, smartphones, and social media. They're typically tech-savvy and highly connected.
- **Risk-averse.** Many Gen Z workers were **children at the height of the Great Recession** and getting started in the workforce during the COVID-19 pandemic. These periods of major economic turmoil may have **affected them or their families**, leading them to be more risk-averse.
- **Independent.** The internet has provided Gen Zers with access to thousands of years of collective knowledge, making them more accustomed to searching the internet for answers rather than asking for advice.
- **Competitive.** Growing up in a recession and seeing their parents struggle made Gen Z more competitive when it comes to achieving their career goals. They're willing to work hard to realize **career growth**, but they want to be recognized and feel valued for that hard work.
- **Open-minded.** Significant political and cultural milestones have shaped Gen Z, including gay marriage legalization in dozens of countries and the Black Lives Matter movement. Growing up in a diverse and interconnected global society has helped shape Gen Z as a very open-minded group.

Best practices for recruiting Gen Z talent

Gen Z will make up **27% of the workforce** in OECD countries by 2025, increasing further as they continue to reach working age and Boomers continue to retire. It's important to understand the recruiting strategies that

As LinkedIn senior recruiter **Madison Vitug wrote** of her generation: "We are unwilling to compromise our career vision to fit into a work model that doesn't work for us."

1. Offer career-growth opportunities

Career growth trumps compensation for many Gen Z workers, setting them apart from older generations. A LinkedIn survey found that 40% of Gen Z candidates would be willing to switch jobs and take a 2% to 5% **pay cut for a stronger chance to grow in the role**. And **Gen Z is 47% more likely than Gen X** to prioritize opportunities to advance within the company and 45% more likely to prioritize opportunities to develop new skills.

Investing in employee career growth can help you attract Gen Z workers — **and retain them**. Learn about your Gen Z employees' career goals, **map them to career paths** and development opportunities, provide mentorship, and offer career progression when it's due. These practices can help you **build an employer brand** that Gen Z job seekers flock to.

2. Provide work flexibility

Gen Z is the most likely to leave — or consider leaving — a company that doesn't offer a flexible work policy (**72% of Gen Z said this** compared to 69% of Millennials, 53% of Gen X, and 59% of Boomers). What's more, 32% of Gen Z workers would be willing to take a 2% to 5% **pay cut for a hybrid work schedule** and 38% would take a pay cut for better work-life balance.

You can both **attract and retain Gen Z talent** by offering flexible work options like remote work, a **four-day workweek**, and flex hours. Enabling your team members to choose when and where they work can encourage better work-life balance, as well as greater productivity and creativity.

3. Offer competitive compensation and benefits

Compensation isn't always the most important consideration when evaluating job opportunities, but it does matter. **Gen Z workers are the most likely to feel underpaid**: Over half (57%) think they earn less than they deserve.

Competitive compensation can help you attract the youngest generation of workers — so long as their other needs are met. When asked which benefits they would most like their employers to focus on, **44% of employees rank retirement benefits** and 39% rank flexible work arrangements as top priorities. These findings were consistent across all generations, though Gen Z employees ranked managing emotional health among their top three concerns.

A comprehensive, competitive compensation package will appeal to the most job seekers and help you engage Gen Z talent.

4. Focus on skills-based hiring

Gen Z doesn't have as much work experience as older generations, but they make up for it with a strong desire to learn new skills. More than three-quarters (76%) of **Gen Z employees believe learning is the key to a successful career** and they **spend 12% more time on LinkedIn Learning** building hard skills compared with the average learner.

Evaluating candidates on their skills, rather than past work experience or education, opens the door for more Gen Z workers. In fact, **skills-based hiring increases candidate pools for Gen Z** workers by more than 10x. And don't worry about trading quality for quantity: Employers who find talent using skills are **60% more likely** to make a successful hire than those who don't rely on skills as part of their recruiting process.

Employers who champion **diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)** will not only attract Gen Z talent, they'll cultivate a work environment that helps retain them. **Three-quarters of Gen Z workers (74%)** say it's important for them to work at a company that prioritizes DEI. This extends beyond the typical emphasis on gender and race/ethnicity to also include gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, age, religion, and **military status**.

Emphasize your commitment to DEI in the workplace, within your **employer branding** materials, and throughout your hiring process so employees and candidates understand your expectations, initiatives, and progress. There's one caveat: Be authentic. It probably won't take more than a quick internet search for candidates to uncover the truth about the state of DEI at your organization.

6. Highlight your company culture and values

Gen Z wants more than a job; they want to find opportunities that support their goals and passions. For example, 80% of Gen Zers would leave their roles to seek **better alignment with their values**. And 74% say it's important for them to work at a company whose **policies and practices align with their personal beliefs**.

Help candidates understand your company values and the things that make your culture unique. For example, does your company pride itself for having a culture of feedback and recognition? Is your company a leader in sustainability? Does your team work to further a social cause or provide a public benefit? **Showcasing any of these commitments** can be a compelling way to attract Gen Z candidates — but only if they're an accurate reflection of your company.

Final thoughts: Deliver on your promises to retain Gen Z talent

candidates about what it's like to work at your organization. You must deliver on promises made during the hiring process, from career growth and Total Rewards to DEI and social responsibility commitments. Top talent will always be difficult to come by and it's in your best interest to hold on to the people you've worked so hard to recruit.

Topics: Recruiting tips Hiring Gen Z

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Source 32 (Not Scholarly)

Citation:

Ocana, N. A. (2023, October 3). *How Gen Z will change leadership in the workplace*. https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/how-gen-z-change-leadership-workplace-nicky-acuna-ocana/

Summary: The internet article is the opinion of the author about how Generation Z will change leadership workplace. The opinion expresses the author's belief that Generation Z should not be considered as an obstacle for the previous generation. The intervention of this young generation pushes businesses forward priority of diversity, work-life balance, and breaking the established norms. Tradition management may no longer fit this generation, and many corporates refuse to change. The article emphasizes the need to understand Generation Z's expectations and know their impact and values. Ultimately, the change of leaders is meaningful in this setting, which will be good for creating a workplace environment with fresh air and being able to maximize the productivity of all employees for the company's performance.

Relevance: The article is relevant to the topic by indicating the importance of Generation Z's contribution to the workspace nowadays and in the future, which is reasonable for corporations to change management and communication practices.

Place in the paper: Literature review

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How Gen Z will change leadership in the workplace

Nicky Acuna Ocana
Regional Managing Director, UK, Europe & US at Ambition - Professional Services Recruitment | SIA...

October 3, 2023

Every new generation entering the workforce throws the rule book out the window. There's outcry by existing workers about the youth of today and their lack of respect. But over time the world adjusts, change happens and a new way of working is developed.

Gen Z are no different.

On the surface they aren't just throwing out the rule book, they're ripping it up, shredding it then setting the remains on fire. But what if the working world needed that shake up? What if they're pushing us down the road of change which we need to travel down? What if they're finishing the fight we've been having for years?

There's no doubt that Gen Z will change the workplace and as part of that they'll change the idea of leadership and management. If you let it, then those changes will be for the best and will push businesses forward prioritising diversity, inclusion, work life balance and breaking the established norms. But to keep the best Gen Z talent and to nurture them into tomorrow's leaders, current leaders will need to change their style and embrace the change.

Traditional management

When we think about traditional management and leadership styles, we think of school.

Someone telling you what to do, when to do it and being reprimanded if you dare disagree. There are clear rules and you're expected to toe the line.

Over time the lines have softened, there's more opportunity for collaboration and feedback… but only when asked. For many organisations there's still a top-down hierarchy with established ways of working that go back years.

Unlike previous generations, Gen Z don't have any qualms about challenging the status quo. For some this will be seen as disrespectful and disruptive. It's these organisations that will resist change. Let us tell you something, change is coming. **Gen Z's will make up 27% of the workforce by 2025**. They can't be avoided, ignored or pushed out. Instead we need to understand their expectations, ideals and aspirations so we can harness their energy and use it for the greater good.

Gen Z's expectations

Understanding how Gen Z will change leadership in the workplace comes down to understanding what they expect from a job. Unlike previous generations, Gen Z don't live to work, it's very much the opposite. They don't see a job as core to their identity, instead they see it as a facilitator for the rest of their lives. That attitude makes them far less likely to put up with a job that's in opposition to their values or aspirations.

Impact and value

Gen Z workers embody a strong sense of purpose. That means they need to understand where they fit in and how their work makes a difference. It also means that they want to do meaningful work. **96% of Gen Z employees state it's important for them to feel valued at work**. For leaders this is a move away from expecting employees to complete whatever work is necessary because it's their job, to looking at the why around tasks and their importance.

Diversity and inclusion

Across job seekers there's been an increase in the importance of diversity and inclusion. But for Gen Z it's an essential, with **73% claiming they would leave a company** if their practices were not ethical and 58% would leave due to political differences. Standing up for what they believe in and being unwilling to compromise on their beliefs has the potential to create a challenging working environment for leaders.

Flexible working

Gen Z are the first generation to grow up immersed in technology. They don't remember dial-up internet, 4 channels on the TV, or landline phones. Their lives are intertwined with technology and it's how they live. That

means they don't see an issue with remote or flexible working. The technology exists so why shouldn't they utilise it?

Many faced important educational milestones during Covid times using technology so why should work be any different? For them, it's a hill to die on, with **90% more likely to redesign work towards remote working** when finding a new job. Leaders will need to rethink their expectations and justifications to engage with Gen Z over when, where and how they work.

Personal priorities

Mental health, workload, and personal development are all areas that concern Gen Z. But they see them as business issues, not things for them to cope with on their own. **28% of Gen Z workers say that they struggle with their mental health** because of their boss.

Gen Z workers see management as their champions in the workplace, and that it's their job to protect and support them, quite a turnaround from the traditional role of leaders.

That view requires leaders to be proactive about supporting their younger employees and managing up to ensure the right working conditions are in place.

Change or be changed

With Gen Z establishing themselves in the workforce, change will happen. This is a generation that have grown up in a period of extreme disruption - Brexit, covid, a potential recession, high inflation and interest rates. Their view of the world is different from previous generations and if encouraged in the right way, that can be a valuable asset.

Leaders need to recognise that and understand that they can choose to change their approach or be dragged kicking and screaming into the new way of working.

If they choose to change then they can nurture Gen Z to become great leaders themselves, who stand up for what they believe in and take action.

How do leaders need to change?

- Encourage Gen Z to voice their opinions in an appropriate way
- Become more assertive themselves and challenge the status quo
- Focus of embedding diversity and inclusion in every aspect of the business
- Adapt communication style, methods and frequency to individual team members
- Provide ownership of specific pieces of work and more responsibility earlier
- Create a positive culture that celebrates achievement and encourages flexibility

- Compensate fairly and generously
- Manage upwards to protect employees from unrealistic and unreasonable expectations.

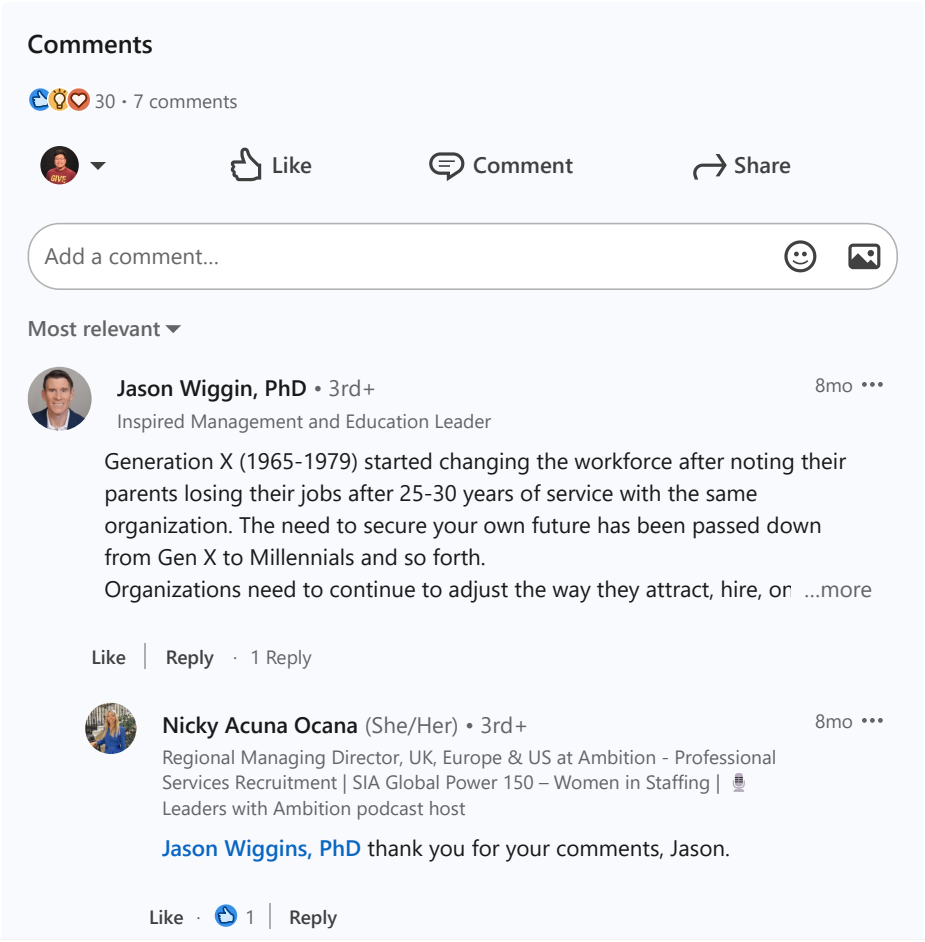
Instead of painting Gen Z as the naughty kids who've come in and upset everyone, there's a real opportunity for leaders to harness their passion, energy and fight.

But for that to happen workplaces need to adapt and leaders need to change. Ditching the leadership styles they saw as junior employees and becoming more inclusive, more collaborative and more open to new ideas.

When you look at the ideals that Gen Z bring to the workplace they aren't unrealistic, in fact they're what we've been talking about for the past few years. These new workers could be the answer to changing leadership for good. Breaking down those walls and creating new rules for how workplaces operate.

There's no doubt that change on that scale is uncomfortable and intimidating but if leaders manage the situation properly and use their experience to guide the conversations, there's a chance that the change will be for the better, for everyone.

Report this article



Source 33 (Not Scholarly)

Citation:

Merriman, M., & Oaktem, C. (2022, December 6). *Why Gen Z matters and what boards should know*. EY. Retrieved September 10, 2024, from https://www.ey.com/en_us/board-matters/why-gen-z-matters-and-what-boards-should-know

Summary: The internet article talks about the matter of Generation Z joining the workforce and how this generation already makes an impact on companies. At first, the writers mention what makes Gen Z noteworthy and the unique Generation Z behaviors and traits. The article meticulously explains the impacts made by this generation on companies in the aspects of technology and processes, communication and input, trust, way of working, diversity, and inclusion. The writers believe the task of the board director is overseeing and developing for long-term value, and the topic Generation Z should be an element that the board of directors should execute the organization better in talent management, digital transformation, and leadership.

Relevance: The article is relevant to the topic by proving the crucial role of Generation Z in the labor market right now and upcoming year.

Place in the paper: Literature review



EY Building a better working world

EY Center for Board Matters

Why Gen Z matters and what boards should know

As companies contend with global economic uncertainty, there is an underlying generational shift taking place that will impact companies in every aspect of their business. True digital natives, the members of Generation Z (Gen Z) are perhaps the most influential generational cohort in history, and many businesses are unprepared to meet the high expectations they are bringing both as employees and as consumers.

Gen Z, born between roughly 1997 and 2007, is coming of age at a time when we are all experiencing more change than ever. But while we are all feeling that acceleration of change, Gen Z has normalized it, and is propelling radical shifts that will influence a wide range of outcomes. We are all feeling Gen Z's impact (even if we are unaware of it!), which is prompting preceding generations to understand and adopt new ways of thinking. For example, consider the ways in which today's parents and grandparents are learning from the younger members of the family and changing approaches to purchasing, technology and social media.

While corporate board agendas have never been more crowded, it is important for boards to understand the influence of Gen Z, what drives this growing segment of the population, and how their behaviors are already inciting great shifts for the future of their companies.

In brief

- Gen Z is already reshaping consumer and employee trends. Boards need to understand how this generation is having an impact and what questions to ask now.
- This generation sees and interacts with the world much differently, and its influence can help older generations consider new ways of thinking.
- Boards should understand how Gen Z is already impacting board priorities such as digital transformation, ESG, and CEO succession planning.

What makes Gen Z noteworthy?

Starting with basic demographics, we define Gen Z as those born between 1997 and 2007, making them roughly 15 to 25 years old today. This covers more than 46 million Americans (14% of the population). If you count Generation Alpha, which follows Gen Z, the youth total adds up to almost 30% of the US population. Globally, they are an even bigger cohort, representing over 40% of the world's population.

What makes this generation noteworthy is less their size than their intimate knowledge of the world — thanks to digital access at such a young age. They have lived through one existential crisis after another (e.g., 9/11, the Great Recession, school shootings, political turmoil, global pandemic, war), and they have had immediate unfiltered access to the world around them through it all.

How this generation of digital natives see the world and interact with it is quite different from those currently in business leadership roles. While the differences manifest in a variety of ways, Gen Z is noteworthy because its members demonstrate three unique behaviors.

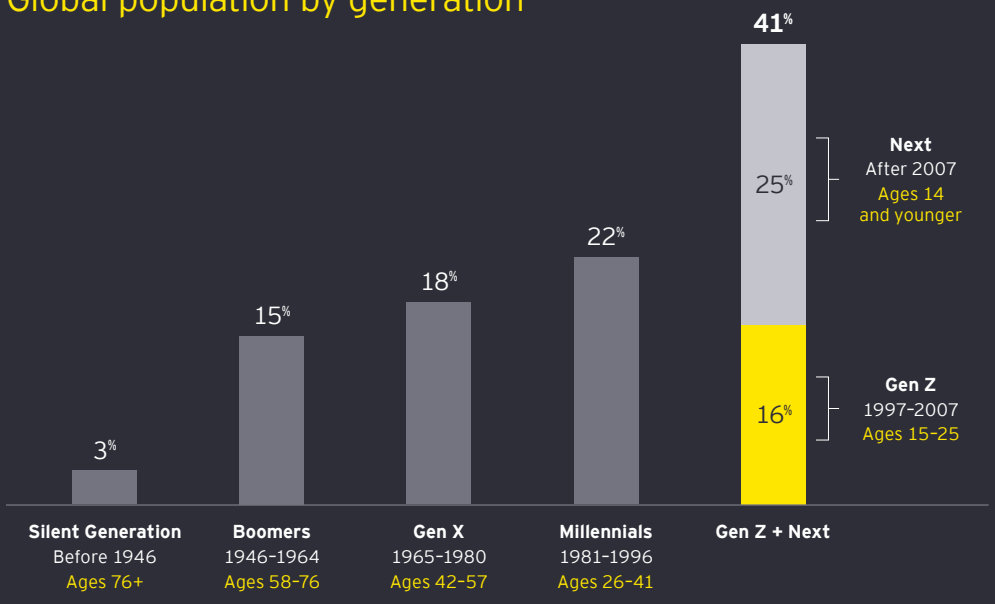
1

Combining physical and virtual realities

While past generations make strong distinctions between physical and virtual realities, Gen Z intuitively live in both realms without a sense of silos. Their virtual digital identity is fully intertwined with their daily life. This applies to how they work, shop and socialize. Indeed, their virtual lives are lived through social media and gaming, but also increasingly through education and work. For Gen Z, virtual relationships formed via a screen are real relationships.

Much of Gen Z's mental and social health lies in their ability to freely connect (not necessarily in person) with others and maintain healthy relationships with friends, family and colleagues. Gen Z's reliance on digital channels to interact, meet and connect with others is completely natural for them. To them, technology is not exciting or innovative. It is their way of life. If email was the default communication for Gen X and texting the go-to for millennials, Gen Z's primary communication channel is social media. They recognize some of the negatives of social media, but still very much value its ability to help them create real, meaningful connections.

Global population by generation



Source: UN Population Division, World Population Prospects, July 1, 2020

> "What makes this generation noteworthy is less their size than their intimate knowledge of the world — thanks to digital access at such a young age. They have lived through one existential crisis after another.

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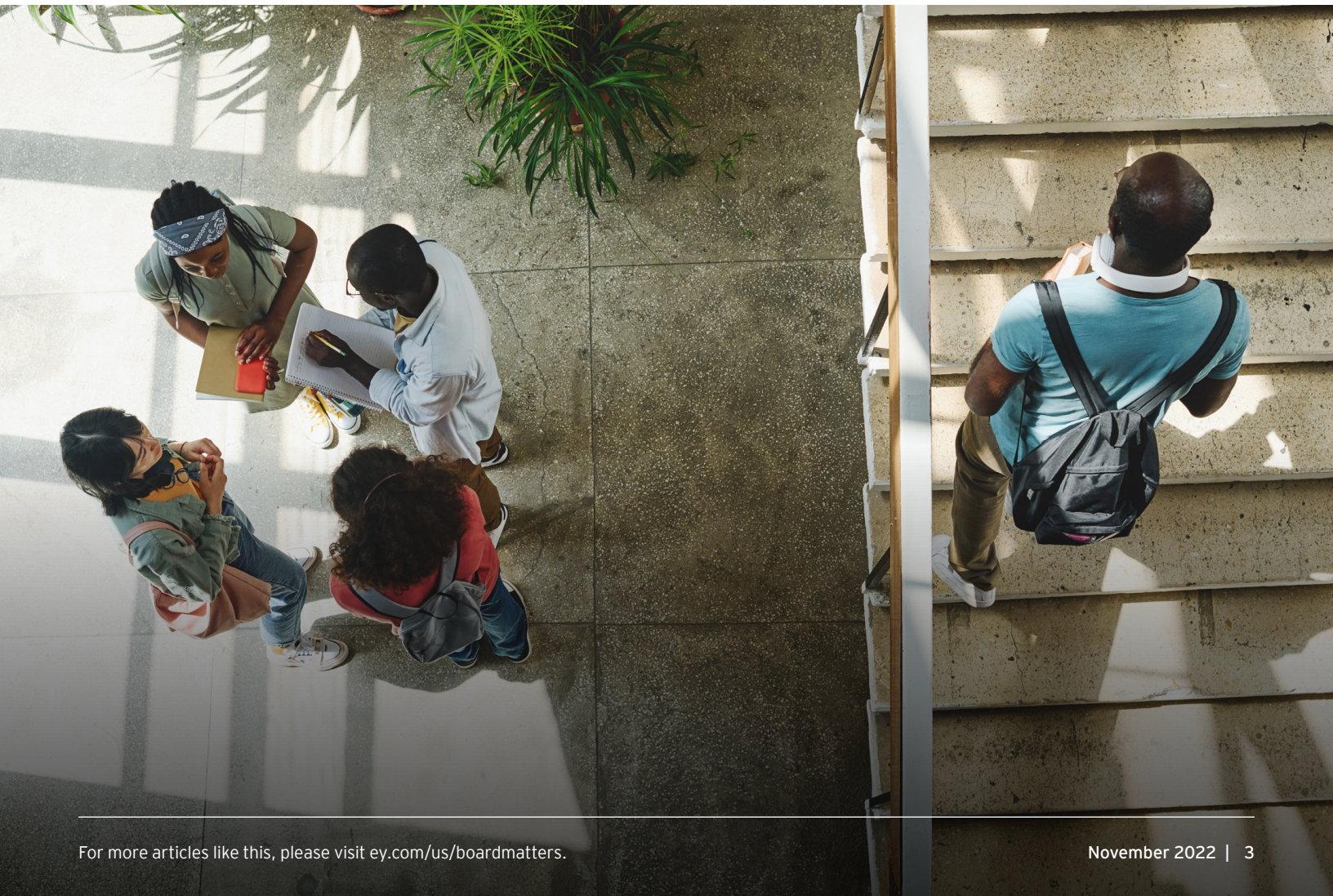
Seeking authenticity through transparency

Gen Z also prioritizes and craves authenticity. After an era of fake news and filtered photos projecting the "perfect life," Gen Z is over it. They want truth, and they want it now. Authenticity ranks as Gen Z's most important value, with 92% saying being true to oneself was very or extremely important. This ranked ahead of spending time on things that will help their future, being independent, changing the world, and being rich or famous. They feel it is difficult to accomplish anything else if not first true to themselves.
For Gen Z, authenticity comes from transparency and openness. Born into a society where scandal, social injustice and inequities have become commonplace, Gen Z is largely untrusting of people, institutions and the world around them. About two-thirds of Gen Z in five countries surveyed agreed that you "can't be too careful in dealing with people." Being open and candid with this generation will be key to earning their trust in the long term as consumers and employees.

3

Taking a pragmatic approach to wellness and mental health

Stress, anxiety and depression were already increasing at alarming rates among Gen Z pre-pandemic, and now are reaching crisis levels. In fact, 42% of Gen Z said they were usually or always depressed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Gen Z has been raised in a time when there is an open dialogue around mental health. They have overcome the stigma around mental health that still plagues older generations, because to them it is a matter of survival, not a luxury or quest for self-actualization. Gen Z is self-aware and looks for support more than prior generations. Because many within their generation are consumed with stress and the motivation to succeed, they can have a hard time "turning off" and will seek outlets to decompress and rejuvenate.





How Gen Z is already impacting companies

Whether viewed as future consumers or employees (or both), the noteworthy aspects of Gen Z behaviors and expectations discussed above are impacting companies today in critical ways.

- **Technology and processes.** Where Gen Z differs from past generations is in their ability to connect instantly and disseminate information globally, influencing all at an exceedingly fast rate. Because Gen Z is inherently wired in, their mindset adapts at the speed of technology. As a result, cultural shifts happen faster, speed is a necessity and change is a constant.

  Gen Z has neither tolerance for broken technology or inefficient processes, nor will members of this generation forgive clunky processes and digital ineptitudes. Older generations remember the 100-page manual that came with the first computer they ever opened, while Gen Z came up in a world where all they had to do was take the phone out of the box and turn it on — the rest happened flawlessly. They will expect intuitive, seamless technology in all aspects of their daily lives.

- **Communication and input.** Proactive transparency is a basic expectation of brands they shop with and employers they may start careers with. They will be increasingly critical of companies that are not proactively open and honest about their sourcing, supply chain and manufacturing processes, or actions to improve social issues, in addition to labor practices and employee policies. Accountability will need to be a theme statement for every company moving forward — Gen Z will hold companies to a higher standard than previous generations did. What millennials and Gen X aspired to from a sustainability and environmental, social and governance (ESG) standpoint, Gen Z will demand and require.

- **Trust is the new loyalty.** For Gen Z, loyalty is a foreign concept. Just because they have been a longtime consumer or employee does not guarantee their continued involvement. With previous generations, businesses focused on building allegiance through loyalty programs offering incentives, discounts or special perks. But loyalty as we once knew it is dead. Trust is the new basis for loyalty, and it is a far tougher nut to crack. Gen Z is more passionate and knowledgeable about the world around them, allowing their moral compass to guide their purchases. They are intentional in their spending, looking to simplify their lives while focusing on real outcomes, and are employing greater scrutiny on the companies they buy from when they do make purchases.

- **Ways of working.** Their proclivity to digital tools is following Gen Z into the workplace, where they will expect that their ideas, creativity and productivity will be valued, regardless of the hours spent sitting behind a physical desk. The emergence of the hybrid work life may very well be enacting the end of the traditional 9-to-5 workday, as Gen Z demands fluidity in their "always on" lifestyle. Organizations must recognize that an individual's proclivity to digital collaboration and teaming will be as important — and possibly even more — as individual productivity.

- **Diversity and inclusion.** Perhaps the most important thing to understand about Gen Z is that their greatest source of stress and worry is others being treated badly because of their gender, race, sex, etc. This ranks higher than stressing about getting a good job or paying for college. Gen Z wants to empower everyone to live out loud as their authentic, true selves. We are beginning to see a shift from a "me" society to a "we" society, looking out for the collective good of all.

> "What millennials and Gen X aspired to from a sustainability and environmental, social and governance (ESG) standpoint, Gen Z will demand and require.

Implications for board oversight and discussions

Boards are tasked with overseeing and steering their companies for longer-term value creation for shareholders and stakeholders. With the changes underway and being driven by Gen Z, they are becoming part of the conversation in the boardroom. While Gen Z is not necessarily a topic on the board agenda in and of itself except in some consumer-focused companies, they are (and should be) showing up in topics that are on the board agenda, including the following:

- **Talent management.** Even as management teams and boards debate what the workplace will look like for their company — in office, virtual or hybrid — they may be missing the bigger point. The go-to preferences of current management (typically Gen X and older millennials) may not align with the preferences current and future employees. A one-size-fits-all work approach fits none. Businesses will not win if they try to command Gen Z since having some level of control is something they value and expect.

  Instead, understanding and enabling Gen Z to exercise individual values and preferences will be key for employers to tap their potential. This may mean allowing employees to have a choice in when and where they need to work to best fit their lives. Organizations can focus on team dynamics and collaboration as winning factors in attracting and retaining the Gen Z workforce instead of managing the details of location. Additional attractors will be health and wellbeing resources with transparent communication to help them find the flexibility and balance they need.

- **Digital transformation and technology.** Management teams are constantly looking at how they can deliver on consumers' ever-changing expectations. Across industries, companies around the globe are recognizing the rise in Gen Z and finding new and innovative ways to deliver on their innate and growing expectation for ease and immediacy. But it is not a one-and-done scenario. Companies must institute a culture of constant innovation using digital solutions to keep pace with the societal changes that are impacting their future business. Boards can help management teams prioritize technology investment and iterative efforts with an eye toward the future. Because expecting your customers or employees to do today's tasks, let alone tomorrow's, with dated tools and concepts will lead to frustration, anger and disengagement and is a fast way to become irrelevant as a business.

- **CEO succession and executive leadership.** Finding a CEO who can manage today's five-generation workforce is no easy task for a board. However, as the employee composition within companies shifts with boomers and older Gen X retiring, what the board seeks in a successful CEO will need to account for the needs of the growing segment of the workforce. Finding a sense of purpose is no longer something that's done solely outside of work for Gen Z, but through their work. The tone at the top and management approach will need to reflect this desire for purpose — that purpose out-prioritizes profit. Gen Z employees want to feel trusted, respected and recognized and will follow authentic leaders who lead by example. What could you accomplish if you harnessed Gen Z's savvy for entrepreneurial side gigs at work in your organization? A CEO who watches, listens and brings Gen Z to the table to truly understand the needs and wants of this influential generation will be the leader they strive to work for, and will see the most creativity and productivity as a result.

- **ESG.** While institutional investors and regulators have been a driver of ESG concerns and opportunities on the board agenda, Gen Z as stakeholders are becoming more vocal. Boards can minimize blind spots by developing a true understanding of Gen Z's wants and needs. Climate impact is a critical issue for this cohort. They don't just care about the planet; they are proactive and vocal in their will to save it. As boards consider public commitments and efforts of their companies, understanding expectations and how management is communicating with Gen Z employees and consumers is critical. Gen Z also prioritizes inclusion and social justice and expects to hold companies accountable as employers and product providers. They will speak up for those who don't have a voice and stand up to corporations that they perceive as unfair, unjust or unethical. It is important to note that because of the desire for authenticity mentioned above, Gen Z will look beyond marketing campaigns and press releases and hold companies accountable for real, meaningful changes.

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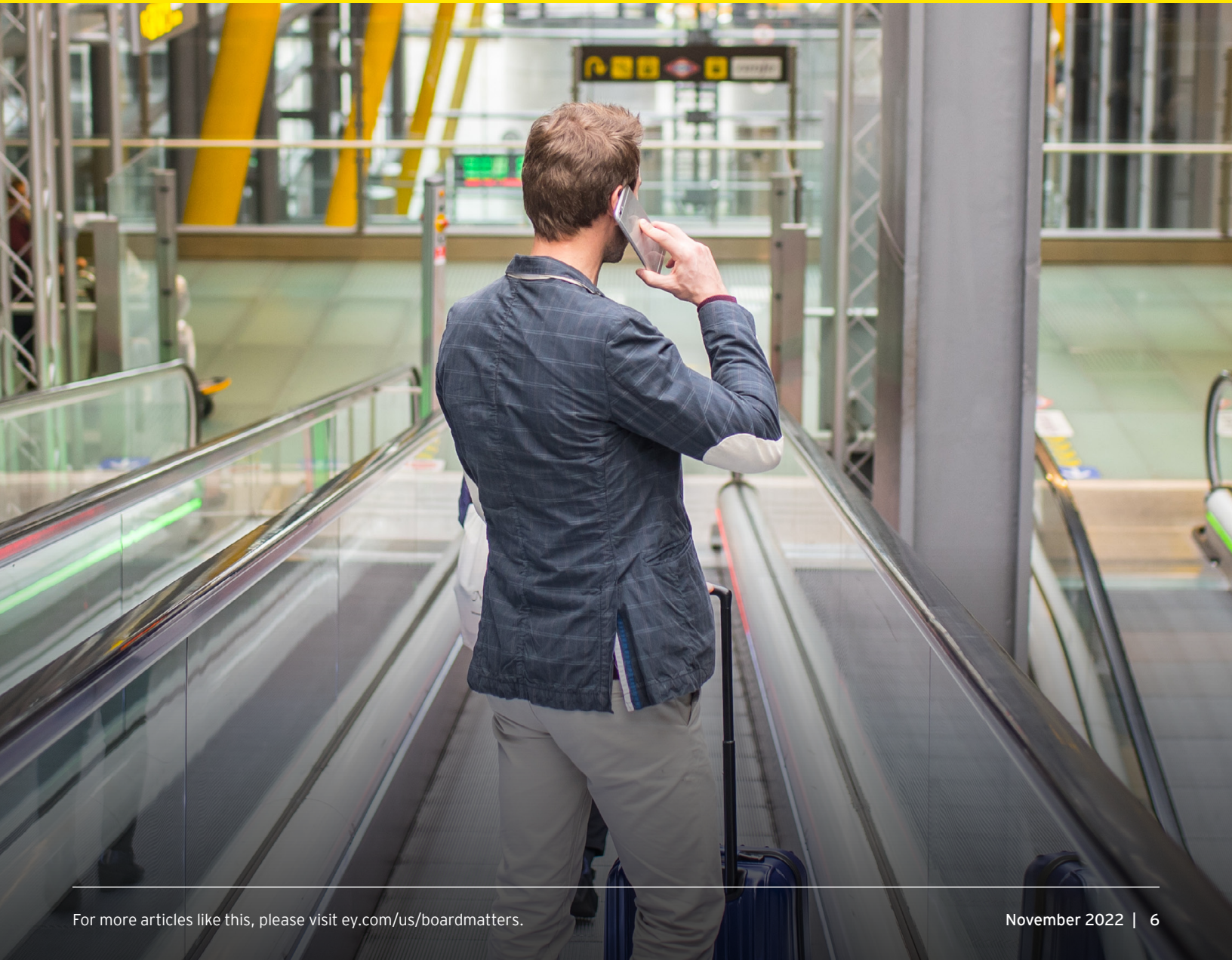
A CEO who watches, listens and brings Gen Z to the table to truly understand the needs and wants of this influential generation will be the leader they strive to work for, and will see the most creativity and productivity as a result.



Going forward

The COVID-19 pandemic has reshaped the way we all live, work and do business, although exactly what that means in terms of the longer term is not clear yet. However, what is clear is the tectonic shift underway among generations. For Gen Z, many of the changes we have seen accelerate during the pandemic are providing an opportunity for disproportionate influence. Digitalization, sustainability and equality have long been on their radar. While many people were fighting to catch up over the past two years, Gen Z leaped forward, strengthening their belief in a better, fairer, greener future and increasingly holding themselves, society and businesses accountable when it comes to building it.

Understanding how Gen Z are going to show up, what they are going to be looking for in the businesses they shop with and buy from, the companies they work for and the life they choose for themselves is critical to how companies prepare for what is coming next. Whether the topic is innovation, product development, supply chain, CEO and C-suite skills, or anything else, Gen Z's considerable influence is set to expand.



Questions for the board to consider

- How is the company measuring and making progress on building trust with Gen Z customers and employees? Is the company adapting how it thinks about loyalty and traditional measures?
- How is the board gleaning insight into attitudes and behaviors of Gen Z employees and customers? What information is shared on retention, employee experience, turnover by generation?
- How is management gaining insight into the changing expectations of purchase decision-makers (B2B or B2C)? What does tailoring to different generational cohorts mean for the business?
- Is the company delivering individualization (rather than personalization) that matches Gen Z's specific needs? How is the marketing and engagement of Gen Z being done differently than marketing to prior or other generations?
- Have the company's ESG policies and approach taken into account the perspective of Gen Z employees and customers?
- Are there technology investments and initiatives that would be accelerated when Gen Z needs and expectations are considered? How is capital allocation for digital transformation being prioritized in light of demographic trends?
- What assumptions about future consumers or employees is management making as part of longer-term growth strategy? How might the increasing footprint of Gen Z impact these assumptions?
- How is management thinking about building customer and employee experiences across multichannel processes and journeys? What does the entire end-to-end experiential journey entail, from the perspective of the digitally native Gen Z?

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Source 34 (Scholarly)

Citation:

Thomas, K. J., & Akdere, M. (2013). Social Media as Collaborative Media in Workplace Learning. Human Resource Development Review, 12(3), 329-344.

Summary: The article focuses on the role of social media in workplace learning and knowledge management. According to the author, Human Resource Development has full responsibility for utilizing social media in the workplace with the intention of learning and performance improvement. The author expresses the idea of naming "collaborative media" instead of social media because it is helpful for Human Resource Development to foster learning, increase productivity, and manage knowledge. The study highlights the use of collaborative media to capture, store, and disseminate knowledge, turning it into a valuable organizational asset. The article also mentions the concept of "informal learning" by using collaborative media tools, which can be known as experiential learning which employees have a chance to learn on-demand through interaction with peers. However, the idea of collaborative media still has some challenges, including technological barriers, resistance from organizational leadership, and cultural factors that may limit knowledge sharing.

Relevance: The article topic is related to social media, which has a strong meaning with Generation Z in daily life. Along with that, the discussion of utilizing social media in the workplace for performing knowledge sharing internally between peers is a change in management and communication practices based on what Generation Z looking for.

Place in the paper: Literature review

Check for updates

Theory and Conceptual Article

Social Media as Collaborative Media in Workplace Learning

Human Resource Development Review
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Abstract

As a result of rapid changes in technology, much is discussed about the use of social media in branding, marketing, and in general corporate communications. The intensity with which social media tools—blogs, wikis, Twitter, instant messaging (IM) and Facebook, among others—have proliferated is staggering. Increasingly important is the role of social media tools as a way to enhance and advance workplace learning and knowledge management. To more accurately describe the purposes for which social media tools are utilized within organizations, we propose the term *collaborative media*. The clarity brought by this term serves to help HRD professionals within organizations adopt collaborative media tools as a workplace learning and knowledge management strategy and to attain organizational support for such tools at the highest level and capacity. Also discussed is the need for future research by HRD scholars that facilitates the role of collaborative media tools in workplace learning and knowledge management.

Keywords

social media, collaborative media, workplace learning, knowledge management

This article takes the position that Human Resource Development (HRD) has the ownership and should champion full responsibility for utilizing social media for the purposes of workplace learning and performance improvement. As organizations become more reliant on ever-changing and ever-expanding social media tools to help their members learn and share knowledge, it is imperative that HRD professionals and scholars position and utilize these tools differently in the organization. Considering that social media tools lend themselves to multiple functionalities including both organizational and personal purposes, we argue that these tools should instead be termed *collaborative media* for

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HRD purposes because they can and should be used in organizational settings to foster learning, increase productivity, and manage knowledge.

When viewed in the context of knowledge management, collaborative media have legitimate and purposeful value in the context of HRD. HRD professionals are well positioned to design and implement ways to integrate collaborative media tools throughout the organization. Furthermore, HRD professionals can utilize a system of knowledge management to ensure that the organizational knowledge that is created and shared via collaborative media is captured and stored. Once the capacity to collect, archive, and distribute organizational knowledge is achieved, the true potential and value of collaborative media for the purpose of HRD goals and objectives can be realized (Thomas & Akdere, 2011).

With HRD leading initiatives to implement collaborative media tools, there are several opportunities for future research and practice. First, HRD scholars should assume responsibility to design studies that demonstrate the actual degree to which collaborative media are used for problem solving and knowledge sharing. Second, both HRD professionals and scholars need to design solutions that maximize the learning and collaboration that are possible via collaborative media. Finally, future research is needed to examine the perceptions and experiences of both employees and leaders within organizations to validate the utility of collaborative media tools and to identify best practices for the implementation and integration of these tools in organizational efforts for learning and continuous improvement.

It may be argued that the use of collaborative media tools presents multiple challenges in today's global organizations. Some of these issues include attracting and retaining technologically savvy employees versus those less technologically inclined. Also, firms must learn to properly utilize these tools for the purpose of achieving organizational goals. Furthermore, as organizations become more global in nature, their capacity to work across geographic and time boundaries and to thoroughly leverage global talent will depend heavily on their ability to utilize and incorporate collaborative media tools into their core HRD processes and functions. Consequently, such implications to the practice of HRD warrant further explanation and exploration. Specifically, this conceptual article (a) proposes the term *collaborative media* to illustrate how HRD professionals and scholars can champion the implementation of social media tools by gaining the support of organizational leaders and management, (b) demonstrates how organizations may use collaborative media tools to facilitate knowledge management and learning processes in the workplace, and (c) explores the role that HRD professionals and scholars play in ensuring the effective implementation of these tools for the purpose of workplace learning.

Background: Collaborative Media as Learning Tools in the Workplace

Pervasive in both our personal lives and in our workplaces, the use of technology is ubiquitous. With the latest developments in technology, both organizations and their

members have started to increasingly use various technologies in the workplace. Some of these technologies facilitate communication and collaboration in various ways and forms. These technologies are formally defined as *social media*, which are "a set of technologies and channels targeted at forming and enabling a potentially massive community of participants to productively collaborate" (Bradley, 2010, n.p.). Social media—the world of blogs, wikis, Twitter, instant messaging (IM) and Facebook—are not strictly social in purpose; corporations and other large organizations have begun to utilize social media not only as tools for increased communications with customers and for broader branding efforts but also as a means to improve learning within their organizations (Huang, Yang, Huang, & Hsiao, 2010). A survey of 400 companies demonstrated that "a full 94 percent of organizations maintained or increased their investment in online communities for customers, employees, and partners versus 2008" (Palmer, 2009, p. 6). Institutions of higher education, for example, have embraced these tools for their marketing and public relations purposes. According to the consulting firm McKinsey & Company, "69 percent of executives [of companies that have implemented a social media strategy] report that their companies have gained measurable business benefits, including better access to knowledge and higher revenue" (Henneman, 2010, p. 4).

Though various social media tools are seen primarily as a means to communicate and exchange information, we have just begun to explore their potential as learning tools. Consequently, we have been unable to identify a significant amount of literature surrounding the use of social media as a means to foster informal learning and the acceptance of social media as a set of tools that contributes to and enhances workplace learning. The term *collaborative media*, thus, is proposed to illustrate how social media can be best implemented and accepted as a successful alternative for sustaining and increasing organizational knowledge through workplace learning. Jacobs and Park (2009) define *workplace learning* as "the process used by individuals when engaged in training programs, education and development courses, or some type of experiential learning activity for the purpose of acquiring the competence necessary to meet current and future work requirements" (p. 134). *Training* has traditionally been viewed as a series of planned events that provide learners with specific job skills and that "assumes that organizations can analyze a task, process or function to discover an optimal means of performing it, document that optimal method, and then prescribe the required skills or expertise that a learner must master to perform the task" (Marsick & Volpe, 1999, p. 2). Training, however, tends to be singularly focused on a specific skill set intended for a specific task or set of tasks.

Because collaborative media tools are asynchronous and mobile in nature, we argue that they best lend themselves to informal learning. Marsick and Volpe (1999) define *informal learning* "as learning that is predominantly unstructured, experiential, and noninstitutional that happens as employees carry out their daily work [and that] is a result of people's choices, preferences, and intentions" (p. 1). That is, because learning that takes place anytime and anywhere requires tools and approaches that are available anytime and anywhere, informal learning and collaborative media

tools complement and support each other quite effectively. Such a flexible and learner-centered approach can prove advantageous to both the learner and the organization. According to Marsick and Volpe (1999),

> When organizations make available to employees the means to pull information and knowledge into the workplace at the exact time they need it, learners can potentially gain control of their own learning. Learning is then maximized throughout the organization and can be used to improve the capability of less experienced, less knowledgeable employees to enhance overall organizational effectiveness. (p. 3)

Additionally, because our focus is on purposeful learning in which the learner consciously participates and of which the learner is fully aware, informal learning is the most appropriate approach for utilizing collaborative media tools for workplace learning.

Collaborative media, then, can enable the organization's members to interact with each other unconventionally and more rapidly, eliminating the traditional time and space restrictions. Collaborative media "is about *participation* . . . most often it takes the form of communicating, connecting, and collaborating with anyone anywhere, anytime" (Jue, Alcade-Marr, & Kassotakis, 2009, p. 4). Bingahm and Conner (2010) call this phenomenon *new social learning*, and note that "it reframes social media from a marketing strategy to a strategy that encourages knowledge transfer and connects people in a way consistent with how we naturally interact" (p. 6). By using collaborative media tools, members of an organization can communicate frequently and easily, sharing their knowledge and improving their individual and collective performance. For example, Sabre Holdings, the company that owns Travelocity and other travel reservation systems, has created an informal online learning community called SabreTown (Galagan, 2009, p. 27). With over 10,000 employees in 59 countries, management at Sabre felt that connecting them was critical to sharing the knowledge that each employee had developed regarding their global travel business. A system was created in which employees create a profile that details their expertise. Fellow employees can than ask questions that are directed by Sabre's social networking software to all employees that have the expertise required for that respective question. An online dialogue follows until a satisfactory answer has been provided and the issue is resolved (Ward & Goodman, 2009). This simple question-and-answer protocol is prevalent in many organizations that utilize collaborative media.

Similarly, various government agencies have begun using collaboriative media to leverage its potential for informal learning opportunities. The U.S. government, for example, has created GovLoop, a collaborative media netowrk "that has 25,000 members, 4,000 blogs, and 1,500 discussions" (Smith, 2010, p. 24) ongoing at any one time. A recent survey from the Human Capital Institute shows that 66% of all government agencies currently use some form of collaborative media and that collaborative media "tools within governmental agencies are used most effectively for knowledge

sharing and informal learning" (Smith, 2010, p. 24). Additional examples from other fields detail how collaborative media is being used to promote learning. The travel industry is using collaborative media to focus on training customer service representatives (Hyland, 2009); the restaurant industry is using it to share learning among employees (Palmer, 2009); health care is using collaborative media to create communities of learning and to socialize those nurses that are new to the field (Skiba, 2008); and accounting firms Delloite and KPMG "are using Facebook to create new networks for recent hires . . . and experimenting with social media so new hires can network with peers around the globe" to learn more about their respective organizations (Meister, 2008, n.p.). As evident, many organizations are already utilizing collaborative media for the purposes of learning and knowledge sharing to some extent. Once such knowledge is generated, the next challenge for the organization will be to determine how to collect, manage, and share that information for the purposes of knowledge management and, subsequently, for further workplace learning.

Knowledge Management and Workplace Learning

In recent years, the role of knowledge management in the organizational process has become more evident. "Organizations increasingly recognize the value of creative, right-brained thinking, even in traditionally analytical occupations and in work previously thought of as routine" (Githens, 2007, p. 253). To fully utilize any or all of the information generated through informal learning via collaborative media, that information must be captured, stored, and placed in some form by which it can be readily retrieved, accessed, and shared by other members of the organization. Ipe (2003) argues that utilizing "knowledge is only possible when people can share the knowledge they have and build upon the knowledge of others" (p. 341). A primary function of learning within an organization is the sharing of existing knowledge and the creation of new knowledge (Cho, Cho, & McLean, 2009). For the purposes of this article, *knowledge management* refers to "the capture, consolidation, dissemination and reuse of knowledge and the translation of new best practices to tangible programmable processes to be automated through IT where possible" (Kazi, Puttonen, Sulkusalmi, Valikangas, & Hannus, 2002, p. 159). The ability for an organization to leverage the aggregate knowledge of its individual members is not simply a preferred outcome of the learning process; it is necessary to the survival of the organization. Additionally, with the advance of the information age, knowledge has become perishable, thus forcing members of organizations to learn quickly and continuously (Henderson & Provo, 2006). According to Wellman (2009),

> Today, more than ever, an organization's competitiveness depends on what it knows, how well it uses what it knows, how fast it can adapt what it knows to the rapidly changing environment, and how quickly it can acquire new knowledge. Those organizations that learn and apply learning more efficiently have the opportunity to reap greater rewards in productivity, speed, and profitability. (p. 5)

Furthermore, Deeds (2003) agrees that "firms that are effective in acquiring knowledge will be able to create and sustain a competitive advantage in the knowledge-based economy . . . those that are not will have difficulty maintaining their competitive position" (p. 38). However, what is not presented here is the human component of knowledge in that the organization's ability to achieve what Wellman (2009) is arguing will significantly depend on the organization's members' capacity and willingness to share and to learn from that new knowledge. Viewing knowledge management within the technology context, Akdere (2009) argues that "while such technologies unarguably will contribute to the enhancement of organizational ability and the increase of organizational capacity to generate and catalog information, they will not necessarily contribute to knowledge creation and formulation in the organization" (p. 351).

In the context of viewing collaborative media as learning tools, it then becomes critical that organizations create some form of system to manage the knowledge created by their members. To emphasize this point, Marsick and Watkins (2001) view "learning at the organizational level as that which is embedded in systems, policies, procedures, work processes and information systems, organizational mental models, schema, and knowledge embedded in products and services" (p. 32). Learning is much more effective if a system is put into place by which knowledge can be captured, shared, and understood. Cho et al. (2009) offer that the tools necessary to gain organizational commitment to ensure successful knowledge management efforts are directly related to HRD in the form of "challenging work, collaboration and teamwork, work culture, communication, concern from people and training and development" (p. 268). This way, HRD is uniquely positioned to play an important role in the implementation and continued success of an organization's knowledge management efforts.

Collaborative media tools "are focused on communication, collaboration, interactivity, and creating value through the sharing of ideas and making use of the collective knowledge of web community" (Skiba, 2008, p. 370). Accordingly, collaborative media tools can be leveraged to produce, collect, retain, and disseminate the knowledge created through them. Already, "large storage capacities, database management tools, and search engines enable organization to store, search, and retrieve more information than ever imagined possible" (Wellman, 2009, p. 16). Organizations utilizing collaborative media tools for workplace learning will be best served by creating and implementing a knowledge management system to best utilize their organizational expertise.

Much has been written about *why* knowledge management is important to organizations, but more research is needed on *how* organizations in general and HRD professionals in particular can best go about setting up policies and procedures to ensure that the knowledge gained through learning is captured and shared (Ipe, 2003). As Bennett (2009) notes, knowledge management serves to leverage information related to performance improvement and learning; therefore, it is critical to the field of HRD. According to Handzic (2004), "the central task of those concerned with knowledge management is to determine ways to better cultivate, nurture, and exploit knowledge at different levels and in different contexts" (p. 4). He proposes four different ways by which

organizations can use technology to support knowledge processes. First, organizations must build repositories for the knowledge created through social media. Tweets and instant message conversations can be tagged by topic and stored in a searchable database, blog posts can be archived, and a wiki site containing vast amounts of data and information can be created on an organization's intranet. Second, the organization can promote collaboration and virtual socialization. By allowing for and supporting the use of social media in the workplace, a firm can encourage its members to share ideas, look to each other for information, and to work collaboratively on projects and to solve problems. Third, a firm can facilitate knowledge search and discovery. Once a knowledge management system is put into place, members of the organization will become accustomed to looking for answers in the knowledge databases created by various forms of collaborative media as well as to their peers. As it is put to use, that knowledge will continue to grow and be refined. Last, an organization must stimulate creativity, innovation, and complex problem solving to remain competitive. Within a culture of innovation and creative thinking, collaborative media tools can become critical methods to share and document ideas and information.

With the advance of technology, collaborative media tools are becoming more widely used and commonly available while newer, more efficient, and user-friendly ones flood the marketplace. For example, Kapp (2006) offers that the use of instant messaging (IM) to ask and answer questions and the subsequent cataloguing of the knowledge gained from such a process can be hugely helpful for the growing of expertise inside an organization. At the Mayo Clinic, radiologists use a Twitter-like microsharing tool to share an X-rays and solicit diagnosis opinions from other physicians (Bingham & Conner, 2010). This capture and sharing of collective organizational knowledge through IM or microsharing demonstrate how collaborative media can be leveraged to increase organizational expertise through informal learning. Considered by Kapp (2006) as learning that "occurs any time two or more people exchange ideas, test concepts or think through processes" (p. 4), informal learning in these cases happens in the context of a specific purpose and with a medium (i.e., collaborative media) chosen by the employees; this learning is both spontaneous and controlled by the learner(s). Organizations can benefit from such informal learning if they "develop a process to capture and disseminate the informal learning that occurs" (Kane, Robinson-Combre, & Berge, 2010, p. 67) through collaborative media. Kane and colleagues (2010) explain further that organizations that succeed in capturing informal learning can control that knowledge by ensuring that it is accurate and can also reinforce for employees the idea that their knowledge is valuable. In this context, collaborative media tools may be applied to various Training and Development efforts as well as Organization Development interventions. For example, Conley and Zheng (2009) offer that HRD professionals can leverage their expertise in training and development to identify the needs of employees surrounding the organization's knowledge management efforts; to provide employees with the training and resources necessary to utilize technologies and systems related to knowledge management; and to ensure the employees stay continually engaged in the organization's knowledge management

efforts. Similarly, Piotrowski (2012) argues that collaborative media "provides an online medium to maintain and foster social capital with others and staying connected" (pp. 79-80), which is crucial in successful implementation and completion of OD interventions. Furthermore, they would present untraditional venues of collaboration for all organizations members. If properly implemented, knowledge management systems created through collaborative media tools can help ensure the sustainability and competitiveness of the organization.

Challenges to Using Collaborative Media as Learning Tools

Leveraging collaborative media for learning or for any reason is not as simple as obtaining the technology, integrating it to the organizational processes, and introducing it to the organizational members. Jue et al. (2009) astutely question "Once we invite participation, how do we guide the effort so that it is most productive? How do we combat organizational fears? How do we engage those leaders who may be skeptical about changing their behaviors?" (p. 3). Not all organizations embrace or foster an organizational environment and culture that supports collaboration, learning, or new technologies in general.

The use of collaborative media tools—particularly for workplace learning—is predicated largely on the assumption that all organizations want their members to freely share information so that the members can learn and grow. We can also generally assume that an organization encourages collaboration among its members. However, organizations may have what Wegner, McDermott, and Snyder (2002) refer to as an *antilearning culture*:

> An organizational culture may discourage learning, reflection, and knowledge sharing—for instance, by putting value exclusively on individual tasks and performance. Often, policies and infrastructure also discourage participation. In such organizations, communities of practice are easily marginalized. (p. 156)

We can then assume that in such organizations, the use of collaborative media as learning tools or for any purpose would not be encouraged or supported. If such an organization is focused solely on individual production and achievement, collaborative media might be viewed as only serving to detract from one's goals. The counter to this version of an antilearning culture is described by Bingham and Conner (2010), who offer several ways to address resistance to using newer technologies for knowledge sharing. Such technologies eliminate physical boundaries within organizations, serve to cultivate an organization's culture and build its identity, and helps build trust while reinforcing the organization's values.

Such a culture is achieved by the support and usage of open, collaborative, and trusting relationships from leaders and managers within the organizations and which "recognizes the efforts of employees and, in turn, motivates them to learn" (Beamish,

2008, p. 70). However, any anxiety that the leaders of an organization may have about the merits of collaboration and knowledge sharing may be compounded by their general lack of understanding of technology or of collaborative media tools.

Even though they are being used for knowledge sharing and knowledge management, collaborative media tools may still present a bit of a mystery to many leaders and managers within those organizations. A 2008 survey of 441 Information Technology (IT) leaders from the United States "found that 59 percent of the respondents considered a lack of understanding to be the primary impediment to implementing social media technologies" (Bingham, 2009, p. 61). Thus the largest obstacle faced by those organizations that wish to use collaborative media for learning is fear of the unknown concerning exactly how such tools will be used. Many IT managers do not fully understand collaborative media tools or their potential utility for workplace learning. Even if the culture of the organization is one that does welcome collaboration or that has already implemented a knowledge management system, any trepidation involving new or unproven technologies may prevent collaborative media tools from ever being implemented.

Though some employees will indeed need to be trained on new technologies and their applicability to their jobs, the reality is that most of them—particularly younger generations—are already using collaborative media tools on a regular basis. According to a survey conducted by Lenhart, Purcell, Smith, and Zickuhr (2010), "As of September 2009, 93% of American teens between the ages of 12 and 17 went online, a number that has remained stable since November 2006 [and] 74% of adults use the internet" (p. 5). Additionally, of teens aged 12 to 17, 73% used an online social networking site, compared to 47% of online adults (Lenhart et al., 2010). Thus the present and future U.S. workforce is already widely using collaborative media tools. Therefore, many more employees may be very well skilled in and knowledgeable of such tools than organizations tend to assume.

As Leslie and Landon (2007) argue when discussing the adoption of technology for learning, "if you can't beat them, help them." That is, if employees are already using social media tools at home and at work for their personal purposes, the organization can leverage this existing skill set to enable the employees to use collaborative media for knowledge management and workplace learning. However, it should be noted here that the organization must carefully develop, design, implement, and assess systems integrating collaborative media tools within the organization that will result in effective knowledge management and purposeful learning.

Collaborative Media for Workplace Learning: The Role of HRD

Organizational leaders and managers may emphasize the word *social* in social media and fear that the tools will be used purely for nonproductive, non-work- related activities. However, when using these tools, the importance of the contexts of *work* versus *personal* cannot be overlooked. Already, employees have drawn a distinction

between social media tools by using Facebook for personal matters and LinkedIn for professional matters, for instance. Therefore, to prevent such misunderstanding or misconceptions, the term *collaborative media* has been proposed to describe any social media tool used for productive work-related endeavors and efforts, specifically within the context of workplace learning. By changing the term *social media* to one that more accurately describes the intended purpose of these tools, it is more likely that organizational leaders and managers will consider the implementation of these tools to foster informal learning among organizational members.

If the tools are accurately framed as those used for collaboration on projects, the quick retrieval of information to assist with a problem, or the broadcasting of pertinent organizational knowledge, such leaders will be more apt to view collaborative media as useful and necessary tools supporting organizational objectives and goals rather than a means for distraction and decreased productivity. In this regard, HRD professionals and scholars need to better understand how collaborative media tools can enhance and advance learning in the workplace to achieve user acceptance of collaborative media technologies. Conley and Zheng (2009) argue that it is the responsibility of HRD professionals to stay abreast of trends in technology so that organizations are in the best position to take advantage of the latest tools and processes involving the use of technology.

While some organizations have embraced collaborative media, others have difficulty trusting that their members will know how to use the related tools or that they will use them for productive purposes (Chatenier, Verstegen, Biemans, Mulder, & Omta, 2009; Sadler-Smith, Gardiner, Badger, Chaston, & Stubberfield, 2000). Still others argue that those organizations that do *not* embrace collaborative media are bound to lose any competitive advantage they might have. Jue et al. (2009) view collaborative media tools as a way to survive in a rapidly changing global market:

> If leaders are committed to gaining and sustaining competitive advantage, they will need to rely upon engaged and committed employees and partners. In this volatile environment, the emerging phenomenon of social media can create an extraordinary opportunity for savvy leaders and organizations to achieve this advantage. (p. 2)

Similarly, Karie Willyerd, the Chief Learning Officer for Sun Microsystems, explains the importance of collaborative media and informal learning and considers the utilization of these tools as a way to not fall behind:

> One of the things that has happened is that we have focused so much on the 10 percent [formal learning] that we abdicated the 70 percent [informal learning]. If the learning organization doesn't get into that 70 percent and use social media, they're going to get left behind. They're going to become irrelevant because people are going to be able to post and share knowledge with one another without the learning function. It's a call to action for learning to become really involved in social media in order to facilitate and enable informal learning.

> And that's a really exciting place for the learning profession to be because what you are capturing, then, is the performance of an organization. (Bingham, 2009, p. 57)

Aside from maintaining an organization's competitive advantage in the marketplace, the use of collaborative media has become critical in attracting and retaining global talent because of their involvement and experience with collaborative media in their personal lives. As jobs become less permanent and workers become more mobile, organizations that utilize technology to cultivate transferable skills will attract the best and the brightest employees (Szabó & Négyesi, 2005). Therefore, we argue that to draw such an employee base, organizations must use collaborative media and related technologies.

Additionally, those familiar and comfortable with collaborative media tools are aware that problems—particularly in larger organizations—have become too broad and complex for any one person or, in some cases, any one team to solve; collaborative media tools must be implemented to overcome these issues of size and scope (Bingham, 2009). Keeping strategies for managing organizational knowledge in mind, HRD professionals can ensure that organizations select tools that are appropriate for achieving a desired organizational objective (Bennett, 2009). Collaborative media tools serve, then, not only to create a culture that is attractive to talent, but also practical for problem solving.

As organizations become more global, workforces become even more dispersed, and supervisor–employee relationships become increasingly less local, collaborative media tools will become more valuable not just for their ease of use for accessibility purposes but also because they will allow employees to work more effectively and efficiently (Bente, Rüggenberg, Krämer, Eschenburg, 2008; Crouse, Doyle, & Young, 2011). As the emphasis on an organization's technology infrastructure shifts from a focus on the collection and sharing of knowledge to the enabling of personal connections among employees, HRD professionals will be called on to facilitate the efficient flow of knowledge throughout their organizations (Conley & Zheng, 2009). Shepherd (2008) argues that collaborative media tools are not just highly effective tools for communication, but that they also have "relevance for informal learning because [they] encourage the sharing of expertise from a bottom-up perspective, without the need for managerial intervention" (p. 29). Senge (1990) notes that managers *want* more local control and more autonomous employees, as larger organizations have gotten unwieldy and difficult to control. Collaborative media tools, in this regard, would help managers to empower their employees to seek answers for themselves and to create relationships with other members of the organization for the purposes of problem solving and sharing knowledge.

To date, little research has been conducted concerning the viability of collaborative media for use as a learning tool within organizations. As a result, there is scant literature dealing with the combined topics of workplace learning and collaborative media. However, the use of collaborative media tools for learning continues to expand (Ardichvili, 2003; Bingham, 2010; Brown, Murphy, & Wade, 2006; Downey, Wentling,

Wentling, & Wadsworth, 2005; Gill, 2010; Hernes, 2000; Kubo, Saka, & Pan, 2001; Lowe & Holton III, 2005; Weinstein & Shuck, 2011). As we continue to utilize collaborative media in the workplace, more data will become available from which findings about the effectiveness and impact of these tools on workplace learning in general, and HRD functions in particular, can be studied. Further research is needed to examine the perceptions and experiences of both employees and leaders and managers in organizations where collaborative media tools are used for workplace learning to validate the utility of those tools and to identify best practices.

As noted earlier, resistance to collaborative media manifests because leaders and managers are generally not aware that such tools will be put to constructive and effective use by their employees. If we accept the adage "if you can't measure it, you can't manage it" (Garvin, 1993, p. 70), then we must design studies that demonstrate the degree to which collaborative media are used for problem solving, collaboration on projects, and for the expedient dissemination of organizational knowledge and that could serve to allay such concerns as well as provide information around various uses for collaborative media tools. This research is particularly important for HRD's functions involving knowledge management and workplace learning.

Conclusion

Collaborative media and its related technologies are becoming an ever-growing part of our lives, both at home and at work. As more people become more knowledgeable of collaborative media tools, it may be argued that these tools will be more easily implemented for workplace learning purposes. As discussed earlier, collaborative media are indeed currently being used as learning tools by many organizations and that their implementation in the workplace for multiple purposes will only continue to increase. By viewing collaborative media through the lens of *informal learning*, we argue the benefits of these tools to HRD functions: they are learner-focused, accessible to learners anytime and anyplace, and are utilized primarily when the learner has a tangible and immediate need for useful information. Because of this instantaneous applicability, learning that occurs through collaborative media tends to be retained more easily and shared more readily. However, HRD professionals and scholars have yet to explore and study this workplace phenomenon to the extent and depth needed to help eliminate leaders' and managers' concerns about collaborative media tools in the workplace.

From an HRD perspective, collaborative media training materials produced for collaborative media tools should be designed and developed with maximum utility and usability in mind. Furthermore, to obtain and sustain competitive advantage, organizations would be best served to employ a system of knowledge management to optimally collect, store, and disseminate the knowledge created through the use of collaborative media tools. Given that these tools can be effective for workplace learning, their consideration as such warrants further understanding and exploration. Considering HRD's learning paradigm and HRD's role within the organization to foster and promote an organizational environment that supports learning, the need to implement collaborative media tools to facilitate all workplace learning-related activities in the organization becomes vital.

This conceptual article aimed to explore how collaborative media can be integrated within the organization for the purpose of workplace learning. We propose the term *collaborative media* to help HRD professionals become champions of the integration of innovative technologies through collaborative media. As Bingham and Conner (2010) note, new technologies allow for an organization to be better connected while raising its cumulative IQ; organizations must be willing to evolve along with that technology. Since collaborative media are new to our practice and our research, HRD professionals need to identify the potential contribution of collaborative media tools and to understand their implications to HRD processes, functions, and practices. Future empirical research is needed to study both the variables and constructs associated with this phenomenon to inform HRD professionals who may already be facing challenges utilizing collaborative media in the workplace.

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Source 35 (Scholarly)

Citation:

Janssen, D., & Carradini, S. (2021). Generation Z workplace communication habits and expectations. *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication*, *64*(2), 137-153.

Summary: The main theme in this article is about Generation Z growing up in the era of significant technological advancements in communication, however, there is not much research to analyze the communication preferences of this generation in the context technological working environment. The article researched to understand Generation Z's habits in using smart technology, social media, and voice communication for personal communication, moreover, the study wants to know what Generation Z wonders about the current workplace communication environment. Lastly, the study explores how the person Generation Z's communication habits conflict with their workplace. According to the results of conducting research, Generation Z tends to adapt to current workplace traditions by using email or other formal communication platforms, which leads to slow innovation in workplace communication. The study wants employers to react to the negative generational stereotypes and make new regulations for communication policies to adapt the current and future-looking technology use.

Relevance: The article provides research to understand the personal communication habits of Generation Z and compare how their personal communication relevance to workplace communication policies. This shows relevance to the topic, which incentivizes organizations to make communication changes in the workplace.

Place in the paper: Literature review

Research Article

Generation Z Workplace Communication Habits and Expectations

—Dawn Janssen and Stephen Carradini

***Abstract*—Background:** *People born between 1995 and 2012, referred to as Generation Z, grew up alongside significant technological advancements in communication. This cohort's oldest members are now entering the workforce.* **Literature review:** *Although the merits of generational research have been questioned, Generation Z's personal communication preferences and habits demonstrate unprecedented technological experiences and expectations in the workplace.* **Research questions:** *1. What are Generation Z's current habits in using smart technology, social media, and voice communication for personal communication? 2. How does the current workplace communication environment appear through the lens of Generation Z? 3. Do the personal communication habits of Generation Z conflict with current workplaces?* **Methodology:** *The study reports on a 207-participant exploratory survey and 6 interviews with Generation Z members in January–March 2020. The survey included multiple choice and open-ended questions regarding respondents' personal and workplace communication habits and expectations. The interviews allowed further investigation of survey responses.* **Results:** *Working Generation Z respondents hold unexpected attitudes and behaviors, including awareness of the negatives of technology use, differences in personal preferences and professional behaviors, self-regulation of technology use, and concern for boundaries between personal and work life.* **Conclusion:** *Generation Z's ability to adapt to current workplace norms may slow changes in workplace communication. Their awareness of disruptive communication habits could make positive changes to workplace communication in the future. Employers should resist negative generational stereotypes and develop new communication policies to reflect current and future-looking technology use. This study was completed prior to COVID-19 and does not include pandemic-related workplace technology changes.*

Index Terms*—Generation Z, policy, smart technology, social media, workplace.*

An always-on, always-available technology environment has dramatically changed the communication methods and expectations of young people, particularly those in Generation Z. Generation Z is defined as people born between 1995 and 2012 (currently ages 9–26). This study looks specifically at the older members of Generation Z, currently between ages 20 and 26 years old, to examine how Generation Z's personal communication habits and expectations may impact their expectations of business communication. Their habits and expectations may ultimately change business communication, creating a need for employers and teachers to understand emerging technological communication practices and expectations that come with this young cohort.

This article investigates how Generation Z's personal communication habits impact their expectations of workplace communication. In particular, the article examines Generation Z's expectations of business communication in light of personal technology use trends depicted in the literature: an increase in use of personal smartphones and smart devices, a rise in social media use, and a sharp decrease in voice phone call and email use. After conducting an exploratory survey and follow-up interviews, we found that respondents who are now 20–26 reported differences in personal preferences and professional behaviors (including adopting media that they do not use personally for professional use, such as email), an awareness of the negative aspects of technology use for productivity and focus, frequent self-regulation of technology use, and the concern for boundaries between personal and work life that technology can encroach on.

These findings can help employers resist negative stereotypes of young workers' technology and communication habits, while helping prepare

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Practitioner Takeaway

- Respondents report unexpected attitudes and behaviors regarding technology, including awareness of negatives of technology use, differences in personal preferences and professional behaviors, self-regulation of technology use, and concern for boundaries between personal and work life.
- Generation Z's ability to adapt to current workplace norms may slow progress of changing workplace communication. However, their awareness of negative, disruptive communication habits could lead to positive changes in workplace communication over time.

workplaces for the realities of communicating with young, technologically-adept workers. These findings from young people already in the workforce can also help educators assess where their pedagogies are effective and ineffective in preparing young people for communication via technology in the workforce.

Literature Review

Generation Z has grown up when the majority of Americans have access to a mobile phone or smartphone. A 2019 Pew Research Center report on the demographics of mobile device ownership in the US stated that more than 96% of adults, 18 years old or older, own a cell phone, and 81% of adults own a smartphone. When looking specifically at younger adults aged 18–29, the figures increase to 99% with a cell phone and 96% with a smartphone [1]. The growth of smartphone use has affected all Americans, but has had a more pronounced impact on Generation Z.

Academic and industry research views Generation Z as a generation of "digital natives." Prensky, trying to explain the different learning behaviors and communication methods of students correlated with the introduction of technology, defined this new generation of students as "'native speakers' of the digital language of computers, video games and the internet" [2, p. 1]. Some researchers disagree with Prensky, arguing that students do not have radically different learning styles and are more influenced by teaching approaches than early exposure to technology [3]. Most researchers do agree that changing technology has had an impact on the communication habits of every generation. It was apparent in 2001—six years before the first iPhone came to market in June 2007—that digital technology was going to have a profound impact on Generation Z, whose oldest members were only five to six years old at the time. Although we do not lean heavily on the digital native theory, we do believe that individuals of this cohort will bring unique technological experiences and expectations with them to the workforce. This fact is especially true when looking at the role that smart technology plays in the personal and professional lives of Generation Z.

The heavy use of smart technology is a defining feature of 18- to 24-year-olds. In a 2018 study by Pew Research Center, 26% of Americans reported being online almost constantly [4]. However, 39% of adults in the 18–29 age range reported being online almost constantly [4]. When looking at 13- to 17-year-olds, the number reported increases again: 45% of teens reported that they are online "almost constantly" [5]. This increase in the use of technology as age brackets get younger shows a trend that younger people spend more time online. Turner shows that some Americans in Generation Z have an emotional bond to continuous online access, unlike previous generations; some Generation Z members view giving up their online connection as punishment [6]. When posing the question "Do people know how to exist without smart technologies?" in a recent study of Generation Z members, researchers found the answer to be "no" [7]. In a different study, one teen interviewed reported their mobile device use as "from the moment I wake up, I will use it … every day, every hour" [8, p. 6]. These studies show that heavy smartphone use is a distinct part of Generation Z's life experience.

Amid the heavy use of smart technologies, texting and instant messaging appear to play a big role in how Generation Z communicates with friends and family. The role of texting and instant messaging has been studied extensively regarding members of the generation prior to Generation Z, the Millennials. (Previous research often combines these two generational groups to look at commonalities between Generation Z and Millennials.) Members of Generation Z feel comfortable with texting and IM as their primary platforms for communication with friends: 73% of Generation Z and Millennials would choose texting

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or messaging over voice capabilities [9], [10]. In a recent study on the use of texting by generation, Generation Z reported the highest volume of texts and the greatest preference for text versus call of all generational groups [11]. This research shows that Generation Z prefers online, mobile, and textual communication over voice communication.

The increase in online communication seems to indicate that members of Generation Z do not perceive a hard separation between online relationships and in-person relationships. Justina Sharp, a 21-year-old college student, stated in a 2019 *Wall Street Journal* article that "interacting digitally is still 'in real life"' [12]. Frith agrees, stating that "the divide between the digital and physical never truly existed" [13]. In a study on the use of Snapchat, participants reported that communicating via Snapchat was similar to their "mundane, everyday" conversations in physical spaces [14, p. 1663]. This finding suggests that mundane technological interactions are at least augmenting face-to-face communication, prompting worries that young people are losing

> the nuances and art of conversation, and lack of face-to-face communication will potentially inhibit their development of skills to connect socially and in person. [6, p. 109]

Some research suggests that because members of Generation Z are comfortable communicating using technology, they may be ineffective in resolving conflicts or solving complex problems that may be better suited to in-person communication [15], [16]. As more members of Generation Z enter the workforce, it will become more evident whether the lack of distinction between online and in-person relationships will cause problems in workplace communication, as these early studies suggest. Research on young professionals' opinions about these matters will help further knowledge on this topic.

Another area of ongoing research concerns unique behaviors when multitasking, a trend 18- to 24-year-olds began in their personal lives and academic work [17]. Although older generations have multitasked, researchers have noted a broader range of multitasking behaviors in members of Generation Z, including differences in combinations of tasks and the act of task-switching versus simultaneously multitasking [18]. Members of Generation Z often exhibit task-switching behavior, switching tasks within one device or even within one platform, such as Instagram [18]. Some researchers say that the multitasking

> environment is "organic" to the new generation and has minimum implications for their work performance. Gen Zers can focus on their jobs quite effectively while also checking their mobile devices. [19]

Whether Generation Z's multitasking behavior will have positive or negative implications for the workplace remains to be seen, as more members of Generation Z enter the workforce. Some early academic research and trade reports offer theories about how Generation Z will impact the workforce and shape new patterns of behavior. Methods and platforms for communication in the workplace may change to fit members of Generation Z. Email is not a preferred way for Generation Z to communicate, nor do members of Generation Z prefer to make traditional phone calls. Nearly two out of three young people in a study reported that they "do not like or only somewhat like talking on the phone" [10, p. 63]. Members of Generation Z commonly connect by message via platforms such as Snapchat instead of email, or a video chat platform such as FaceTime instead of a phone call [10]. Professors are looking for new ways to communicate with Generation Z students, such as social media or instant messaging [20].

This new communication style is sometimes seen as a negative, as college instructors reported receiving short, text-like email messages. Similarly, students prefer to reply to phone calls by texting because they are uncomfortable with small talk and would rather not "waste time talking" [21, p. 6]. Given this changing communication style, some researchers are concerned about how prepared this generation will be for the transition from a school environment with rules and constraints around smartphone use to the workplace as adult technology users with unlimited access [8]. Ongoing research investigating the experiences of Generation Z members in the workforce is needed to confirm or refute these concerns.

Past research has resulted in mixed findings regarding generational differences in employee communication. Differences between generations included not just different communication behavior but also a difference in perceptions of that behavior. For example, one study observed different behaviors between a Baby Boomer and a Millennial in a meeting. The Baby Boomer participant was annoyed that her Millennial coworker was looking

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at her smartphone during a meeting. The Baby Boomer perceived the behavior as rude. The Millennial believed she was being productive by researching the meeting topic on her phone [22]. Yet despite observed differences, this study found that "differences in behavioral attitudes are not significant among the generational cohorts" [22, p. 256] and that the concept of generations leads to negative stereotypes instead of good management.

Although a large amount of previous research suggests that Generation Z is a group with distinct characteristics, the broad category of people born in a particular time period necessarily includes a diverse group of individuals with unique characteristics. Individuals of any group can differ from overall trends of the group in any circumstance. This fact is particularly true for Generation Z, as its members are the most educated and diverse generation yet [16]. However, studying this group remains important and relevant to a variety of business concerns, as the literature shows.

One business unit concerned with Generation Z is the human resources office. The expectation of always-on, on-demand information is a concern within the HR community, as traditional HR activities will need to radically change to recruit, manage, and develop Generation Z workers [16], [23]. The generation that grew up with instant access to information as consumers expects that their experience as employees will match that consumer experience [24], [25]. Members of Generation Z are viewed as technologically adept, independent workers who value long-term professional development. They are seen as expecting to manage their career goals with well-defined short-term goals and easily available, continuous evaluations [26], [27]. Generation Z workers are reported to have an unrealistic and idealistic picture of the work environment, requiring employers to manage Generation Z's workplace expectations [16].

Yet the expectations of always-on, always-available information have downsides: workers struggle with boundaries between personal and work life in these conditions [28]. Others have noted that potential business weaknesses of Generation Z members are short attention spans and a lack of soft skills, such as written and spoken communication [15], [21], [23]. To address this perceived gap, companies are investing in writing and basic business etiquette courses for Generation Z workers, with some efforts beginning as early as freshman year in college [21], [25]. Considered skilled multitaskers, members of this generation are perceived as not content to do repetitive tasks, easily bored, and quickly unmotivated [29].

One of the positive views of this generation in the workplace regards their technological experience. Because almost all members of Generation Z have had smart technology available in their personal lives, some researchers expect that navigating applications like Slack or HR methods like "hot-desking" (where a desk or workstation is shared by multiple office workers as opposed to each worker having an individual workspace) will be easy for this generation [30]. Research suggests that organizations should play to this generation's strengths of being quick, efficient, and able to switch tasks; further, they should provide new workers with job rotation programs and high-value work [29]. Appreciating how members of this age cohort understand their workplace's technological and communicative norms will help with Generation Z's transition into the workforce.

This literature review has covered current trends explaining how Generation Z engages with technology—including communicative technology, such as instant messaging and texting—and how that engagement differs from that of previous generations. The research also shows that the uniquely heavy use of smart technology by Generation Z is expected to impact future communication in the workplace. Although research has examined Generation Z's personal habits and attitudes, it has not analyzed their experiences and attitudes regarding potential differences between personal habits and professional expectations of technologies and communication platforms in the workplace.

Research Questions

This study explored potential differences between the personal habits and professional expectations of 20- to 26-year-old professionals. We sought what current and future workplace communication looks like through the lens of Generation Z, and whether they are experiencing conflict between personal and workplace habits and behaviors. Because members of Generation Z are so new to the workplace, it is important to study their workplace experiences and the ways that their expectations of technology may affect communication in their workplace. We investigated the opinions of respondents in this age group directly through an exploratory survey and interviews. Exploratory research allows the

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development of insights about emerging topics with a limited number of respondents that can then inform future, more detailed work in an area. Our overarching research question concerns how Generation Z's personal communication habits impact their expectations of workplace communication. This central research question will be examined by exploring several subquestions.

RQ1. What are Generation Z's current habits in using smart technology, social media, and voice communication for personal communication?

RQ2. How does the current workplace communication environment appear through the lens of Generation Z?

RQ3. Do the personal communication habits of Generation Z conflict with the communication habits of the current workplace?

Research Methodology

This project uses exploratory surveying and semistructured interviewing to investigate the opinions of 18- to 24-year-olds on this emerging topic of Generation Z workplace communication expectations. The first phase of the project included a survey with multiple-choice and open-ended questions. The second phase of the project consisted of semistructured interviews as validity checks and further elucidation of concepts from the survey results. This research methodology was selected because it allowed us to explore a currently under researched topic with wide-ranging questions of multiple types. The multiple-choice survey questions revealed trends regarding communication technology, communication platforms, and demographics. The open-ended survey questions and interviews let us build on the answers to those multiple-choice questions to secure a deeper understanding of the results than the multiple-choice questions alone could provide. This study received Institutional Review Board approval as exempt (Arizona State University Study 00011215).

Survey Recruitment We recruited survey participants via social media in several ways. We reached out to alumni and young professional groups through LinkedIn, and we posted an ad on a university's student homepage. To screen potential participants, we asked for demographic information, including age, year of graduation, college or university attended, and current job title. These demographic questions helped validate that the participant met the demographic target group before collecting the rest of the survey data. Respondents not meeting the age criteria (18–24) or not currently working full or part time were identified as outside the bounds of the survey and were screened out by the survey tool. Survey respondents had the opportunity to enter their contact information, logged and stored separately from the data, for a drawing to win one two $50 Amazon gift cards.

Survey Procedure We conducted the survey using the Qualtrics online survey tool. The survey asked both multiple choice and open-ended questions to identify some key communication habits and behaviors of Generation Z in their personal and professional activities. The survey explored the three questions of the study by asking multiple questions concerning the three research questions. These questions are stated in the discussion section and included in the Appendix in the supplementary material. We collected survey data from January 28 to February 28, 2020.

Survey Response We received 377 full and partial (uncompleted) survey responses. After filtering responses for age, work status, and completion, we found 207 valid responses. The average response rate for each question varied based on the survey logic and respondent participation.

Participant Demographics Survey and interview respondents varied in age from 18 to 24 at the time of the survey and interviews (born between 1995 and 2001). The gender of the participants was not requested as the scope of the study did not include examining gender variations in the habits and behavior of Generation Z participants. Many of the respondents were part-time or full-time students, given the young age bracket of respondents we sought and our recruitment through a university website. However, recruitment for the study required participants to be employed part or full time. The responses were validated for this criterion in the survey screening questions.

The industries that the respondents worked in varied, with 11 professional categories represented: service/retail, teacher/educator, administrative /manager/analyst/engineer, communication/ creative/marketing, sales/account manager, IT/technical, researcher/lab, intern/student worker, police/military/first responder, healthcare/social worker, and customer service. Workplace conditions vary widely in these fields, so this study provides a broad overview of trends as opposed to industry-specific recommendations.

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Each industry and each workplace within those industries will respond to technological conditions in specific ways. The goal of this study was to look for trends in the opinions of respondents in relation to their workplace experiences. Other trends may appear in specific industries, but the trends that we report on are ones that managers of all industries should consider. Respondents represented 37 different universities from disparate geographical locations within the US.

Survey Analysis Methods We analyzed data from the multiple choice survey responses using the Qualtrics survey tool. The raw data from the Qualtrics tool were exported in CSV files for additional analysis. Analysis consisted of reading, coding, and analyzing the open-ended responses to determine common themes. Using Saldaña's descriptive coding methodology [31], the first author categorized the open-ended questions into a number of common, non-predetermined themes. Given the key research questions that focused on participant attitudes and beliefs, a values coding method was used for further analysis to categorize the common feelings or attitudes reported in each open-ended question [31]. We then indexed and tallied these themes to determine the percentage of the participants who answered the question using each theme.

Interview Participant Recruitment We recruited interview participants via LinkedIn young alumni groups and an announcement on a university's student site. Interested participants took a short screening survey administered through Qualtrics. This survey included screening for age requirements (18–24) and verifying current employment experience. Interview participants received a $25 Amazon gift card for their participation in the study.

Interview Procedure The first author contacted potential interview participants via a separate email. People who responded to that email were asked to complete a screening survey. The first author then selected six respondents, aiming to interview respondents diverse in age within the 18–24 bracket and diverse in employment industry. The first author conducted interviews from February 15 through March 3, 2020, via Zoom videoconference calls. At the time of scheduling, the first author emailed a consent form to each participant with the interview invitation. The interviews lasted one hour, with the first 5–10 min used to confirm the participant's consent and explain the interview process. The remaining time consisted of the participant's responses to the interview questions. The first author employed a semistructured model, using the interview protocol questions as a guideline for the conversation, while asking additional questions to expand on ideas as needed.

Interview Analysis Methods We recorded and reviewed the interviews in their entirety. Zoom provided a transcript of each interview. The first author reviewed the transcripts, corrected inaccuracies in the transcriptions, and coded the interviews using descriptive themes. We did not apply themes from the survey analysis to the interview analysis. We started anew both times to eliminate preconceived notions.

We categorized the themes that we found in the interviews using research subquestions [31]. Further analysis identified subthemes within the overall themes regarding participants' feelings. For example, the descriptive theme of participants' decreasing technology use was further coded to note a subtheme of "feeling that being always online is unhealthy." Each theme and subtheme included example quotations from the interviews and a brief analysis of the meaning of each theme/subtheme, including underlying feelings driving the themes. We then summarized the narratives for each theme for reporting purposes and matched corresponding themes from the survey with themes from the interviews.

The interviews provided in-depth information and narrative examples directly from members of Generation Z, supplementing and supporting the survey answers to the research questions.

Results

Current Habits of Generation Z The first research subquestion examined was: What are Generation Z's current habits in using smart technology, social media, and voice communication for personal communication? We first explored this question in the survey by asking specific questions that considered the daily usage habits of Generation Z.

Preferred Method of Communication After confirming that the respondents owned a smartphone (99% of this question's 196 respondents reported having a smartphone), we asked the survey question: "How do you most often communicate with friends from your phone?" The

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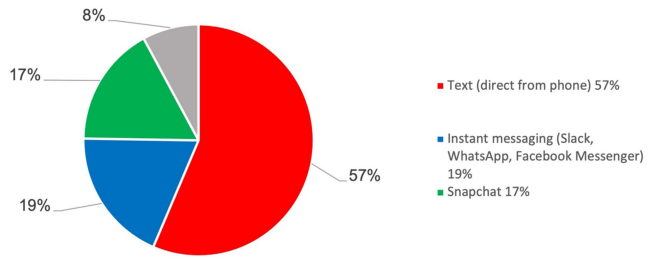


Fig. 1. Method of most frequent communication with friends.

purpose of this question was to see what communication methods were most often used in respondents' personal lives. Texting was the most preferred method of communication for Generation Z, with more than 57% ($n = 114$) of respondents selecting "text (direct from phone)" as their primary means of communication (see Fig. 1). The qualifier "direct from phone" appeared because many applications, such as Snapchat and Instagram, offer texting or instant messaging applications within the app.

Instant messaging and Snapchat followed texting, with these two representing a combined 36% ($n = 71$) of responses. These top three responses accounted for 93% ($n = 185$) of the responses, showing the strong preference of these Generation Z respondents for texting, instant messaging, and Snapchat communication versus traditional phone calls. Most of the interview participants preferred texting over other forms of communication as well. Voice calls and email were rarely chosen as primary methods in the survey, with only 2% ($n = 3$) of the respondents reporting that voice calls were their preferred method of communication. No respondents stated that email was their most preferred method. One of the interview participants even called phone calls outdated, stating, "I don't really answer calls. … I feel like, it's just a little bit more outdated. So, I don't really go out of my way to answer calls."

Workplace Communication through the Lens of Generation Z We examined the second research subquestion—How does the current workplace communication environment appear via the lens of Generation Z?—by a series of multiple choice questions in the survey, as well as open-ended questions in both the survey and interviews. We completed research collection for this study only weeks prior to the outbreak of COVID–19, so these findings do not reflect conditions in the pandemic or post-pandemic workplace.

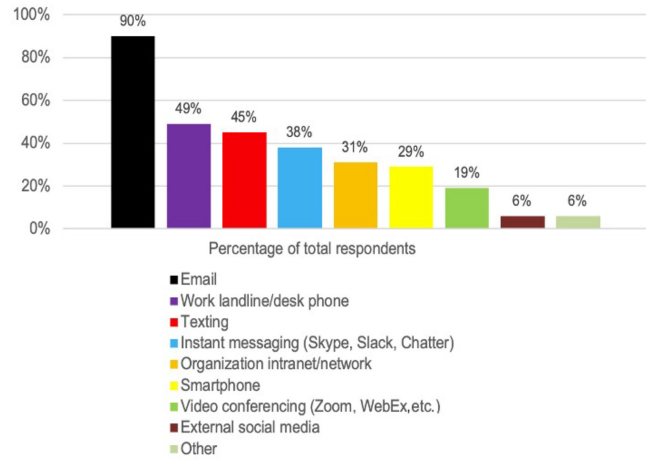


Fig. 2. Communication platforms used at work.

Workplace Communication Tools One question in the survey asked, "What communication platforms are used at work?" For this question, the participants were allowed to select as many answers as applied. Participants could also provide other responses if they used platforms that were not listed.

Email was the most selected communication platform, with 90% ($n = 160$) of the respondents using email (see Fig. 2). A traditional landline or desk phone was the second-most selected option at 49% ($n = 86$), followed by texting at 45% ($n = 79$), instant messaging at 38% ($n = 68$), and organization intranet/network at 31% ($n = 54$) of respondents. The data show that although Generation Z may prefer other methods of communication in their personal lives, email is still their most commonly used communication platform in the workplace.

The first author asked interview participants about their email usage habits because the survey indicated that email is a common tool for professional, but not personal, use. Interviewees expressed that although they use email for work, they would prefer to text. However, interviewees seemed to be resigned to using email for work purposes. Statements from the participants such as "[I use email] only for work purposes," and "usually I just use email … if I have to communicate with co-workers" back the assumption that email is a necessary but not preferred communication tool for Generation Z.

During the interviews, we discovered the habit and acceptability of Generation Z respondents bringing personal devices into the workplace for work use.

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Although the use of personal phones was expected from the literature and documented in the survey, the use of personal laptops and iPads was not anticipated. Several of the interviewees discussed using their own laptop or iPad. A communication professional said that their workplace provided desktops, but they preferred to use their own laptop "because I'm more comfortable with it in terms of design." Although tools were provided at work, many of the Generation Z interviewees preferred to use their personal devices. They considered personal devices more convenient, comfortable, and accessible. Though some workplaces and industries do not have bring-your-own-device policies, the majority of interview respondents said that they were able to bring their own devices to their workplaces.

Smartphone Use in the Workplace Further survey questions explored how, when, and why members of Generation Z used their personal phone in the workplace. A question in the survey asked, "Are there times during the workday when you do not have access to your phone?" In total, 33% ($n = 64$) responded that there were times during the day when they did not have access to their phone. However, the majority ($n = 130$, 67%), indicated that they did have access to their phone during the entire workday. We will discuss respondents who did have access to their phone throughout the day first, and then discuss those who did not have access at some point during the day.

Respondents with Access to Phone During the Workday Respondents that did have access to their phone during the day were asked, "Are there times during the workday when you decide not to use your phone?" A large percentage (86%, $n = 162$) answered "yes." There were times during the workday when a large majority of respondents decided not to use their phone (see Fig. 3).

The 86% ($n = 162$) of respondents who selected "yes" were asked to describe why they chose not to use their phone at work. Two main themes emerged: a need to focus on work and not be distracted ($n = 99$, 61%) and a feeling that being on their phone during work was not professional ($n = 37$, 23%). Other reasons noted in the responses included low battery or technology issues, using other technology such as a laptop, and needing time away from technology to relax.

To Focus on Work or Limit Distractions: For the first theme, "to focus on work and not be distracted," key words and phrases coded from survey responses included "limiting distraction" or "stay productive." One respondent stated, "[I] focus on work. Get things done efficiently. Limit distractions." Another person responded, "To avoid distraction and stay productive on the task at hand." These respondents indicated that using a personal phone was overly distracting, so they made the conscious choice not to use a personal phone when they wanted to focus on their work.

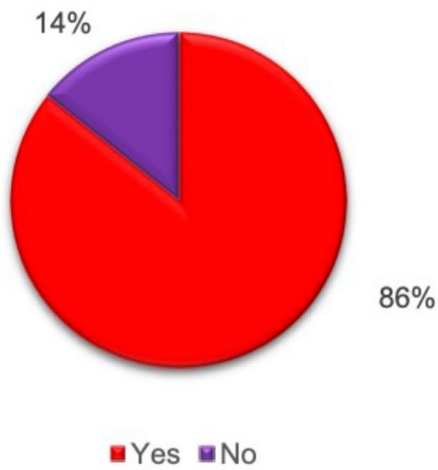


Fig. 3. Are there times during the workday when you decide not to use your phone?

Respondents also described putting aside the phone for job activities that included a sense of urgency or required unusual focus. Respondents described needing to meet a deadline, such as one who said, "Working … to meet a deadline for a deliverable for a client." "Times that I really need to get something done," stated another participant. One person mentioned that they chose not to use their phone "when I'm doing research."

To Appear Professional: In total, 23% (n = 37) of survey participants noted that they chose to avoid using a personal phone at work because they felt it was unprofessional. Most of the responses regarding this theme stated only that they felt that using a smartphone in the workplace was "unprofessional," with little further explanation. One respondent described why.

> I feel that it is unprofessional to use your phone during the workday for activities that are unrelated to work. It is easy to become distracted on a smartphone and lose focus during the workday.

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In this quote, the professionalism concept is tied to the previous theme of focusing on work and avoiding distractions.

We found that the majority of the Generation Z respondents who had phone access felt the need to focus on work (sometimes urgent work) and avoid the distraction of using their phone. Smaller percentages avoided personal phone use to appear professional.

Respondents Reporting Not Having Access to Phone at Times In contrast, those who reported not having access to their phone at times during the day were asked an opened-ended follow-up question: "Describe when you do not have access to your phone? What times of day? What activities are you doing?" Fifty-three percent ($n = 31$) of these respondents mentioned "completing job tasks" as a time when they did not have access to their phone. These responses did not indicate that phone use was specifically prohibited by policy, but that certain tasks were not conducive to phone use. "I'm usually serving food or helping my team in the preparation of food," described one respondent in the service industry. Another respondent explained, "I could technically access my phone [during work], but there is no time, and customers are staring at me." This respondent reported that use of the phone was not specifically prohibited but that they chose to not use it, so as to focus on the demands of the workplace.

A few of the respondents worked in educational settings and described times during the day, such as teaching or interacting with children, as times when they did not have access to their phone: "Whenever I am instructing but not always when I'm on the clock." As these examples illustrate, jobs in service or education settings expect a level of personal interaction that discourages personal smartphone use while interacting with other people in the workplace. Thus, some respondents chose to make their phone inaccessible during certain work activities, despite not being required to do so by official policy.

However, some respondents did report a specific policy of the employer prohibiting personal smartphone use. This trend represented 47% ($n = 27$) of the respondents who indicated that there were times during the workday that they did not have access to their phones. The key words "not allowed" or "I do not have access" were often included in these responses. Examples where phones were not allowed by policy came from respondents that worked within the service, healthcare, or technical trades industries. Respondents that worked in the technical, healthcare, or first responder fields described not being able to use their personal phones due to privacy or safety concerns. "I do not have access to my phone during field work in areas with sensitive equipment. The time of day varies due to variation in need of my assistance," explained one survey participant who works in a trade industry. A respondent that works at an educational institution listed concerns about violating federal law: "During shift, phones are not allowed because of FERPA violation possibilities." (FERPA stands for the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, which regulates the confidentiality of student educational records.) As these examples show, some workplaces—particularly in service, healthcare, technical, and educational environments—prohibit phone use by policy, sometimes to meet federal privacy or safety regulations.

Subsequent open-ended questions in the survey asked the participants how they felt when they were prohibited from physical access to their phones at work. A number of themes reflected this response, ranging from feeling "nothing or fine" to "focused or busy." The most common feeling discovered was surprisingly "nothing or fine," as 47% ($n = 23$) of the respondents noted that they feel fine about not having access to their smartphone. One survey respondent stated, "Nothing much as I am busy doing my work." Another responded, "Normal, doesn't make a difference."

The next most-noted responses were feelings of anxiety or fear of missing out ($n = 18$, 21%). One person noted, "I feel nervous if I know that I am expecting a message or call." In the interviews, most of the interviewees expressed the need to check their phone if it vibrated and reported anxiety over a fear of missing something important if they didn't check. One of the respondents noted,

> I'll be working on homework or at work. And then my phone will vibrate and then it's like, 'Oh, I should text; I should look at my phone and see what notification I had.'

The majority of those who did not have access to their phones due to task requirements or federal rules reported that they felt fine with these requirements, but a smaller group of respondents felt anxiety or a fear of missing out when away from their phone.

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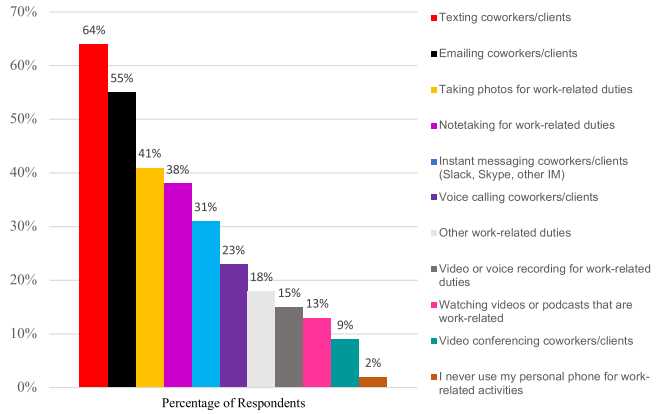


Fig. 4. Work activities using a personal smartphone.

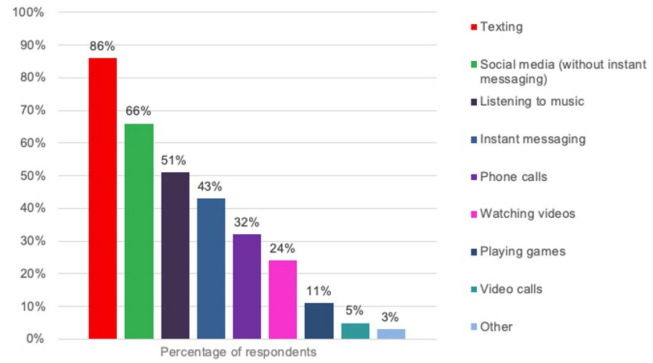


Fig. 5. Nonwork activities where respondents used personal phones at work.

Conflict Between Work and Personal Activities
The third research subquestion explored was, "Do the personal communication habits of Generation Z conflict with current workplace expectations?" First, we explore the overlap that exists between personal and work activities being completed with personal smartphones. Second, we review how often respondents engaged in personal activities on their smartphones in the workplace. Finally, we explore what has surprised or frustrated Generation Z about technology in the workplace.

Using Personal Smartphone for Work Activities
When asked whether respondents used personal smartphones during the day for work activities, 48% ($n = 88$) responded "yes" and 52% ($n = 94$) responded "no." If the respondent used a personal phone for work activities, the respondent was asked to select the activities done on the personal phone.

Sixty-four percent ($n = 56$) of survey respondents selected texting co-workers and clients, showing again that Generation Z respondents prefer texting as a way to communicate (see Fig. 4). In total, 55% ($n = 48$) selected emailing co-workers and clients. This finding indicates that emailing is still a required communication method in the workplace, as the earlier data suggested.

The third most-selected activity was taking photos for work-related duties, with 41% ($n = 36$) of those who use their phones for work reporting this activity. Other activities that were noted by the respondents included posting social media content, searching for a product to help a customer, researching, and scheduling work shifts.

The interviews showed a definite overlap between personal and work activities. The most frequent examples were use of a personal smartphone for work calls and use of personal technology, such as laptops, for remote work. Many of the interview participants, particularly those in sales and communication roles, described using their personal devices in the workplace. A communication manager interviewee described using their personal phone to check job-related social media posts. Another participant described using the same phone for work and personal reasons, with a resulting conflict:

> I do have them all on the same phone, which gets a little confusing sometimes. Because I'll get a call thinking it's for work and it's actually for school. And it's just, it's all over the place.

A positive aspect of the blending of work and personal use centered on working remotely. One of the participants described the ability to conduct a remote internship because of technology while living out of the country with family. "Technology has been a really big part of my life and also a really positive one," this respondent noted.

Using Personal Smartphone At Work for Non-Work-Related Activities Although respondents reported using their personal smartphones for work, 84% ($n = 152$) reported using their smartphones at work for things that were not work related (see Fig. 5). The most reported personal activities occurring in the workplace included texting (reported by 86%, $n = 130$), social media without instant messaging (66%, $n = 101$), and listening to music (51%, $n = 78$) (see Fig. 5). Texting, again, was the most common activity reported, showing an overlap between Generation Z's personal and workplace communication.

Acceptability of Smartphone Use With an overwhelming majority (84%, $n = 152$) of the survey

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respondents reporting that they use their smartphone for personal activities at work, the participants were then asked if they perceived the workplace as accepting personal use of their phones. More than 73% ($n = 132$) of the survey respondents perceived that their employer viewed such use as acceptable. Although members of Generation Z have grown up with computer and mobile devices as part of their lives, they seemed to be genuinely surprised at the amount of time that people used personal smartphones in the workplace. Responses included, "I was a little surprised to see how common it is," "everyone is always on their phone," and "people use it way too much." The respondents' answers seemed to reveal an underlying judgement or frustration, with words like "always," "too much," "prevalent," and even "sneak." "Sneak" was mentioned in the context of a restaurant worker saying, "Almost every employee is constantly hiding in the back of the restaurant to sneak onto their phone. Every customer is always on their phone too."

Twenty-seven percent ($n = 47$) of the respondents did not feel that their employer approved of personal phone use in the workplace. Previous research suggested that the majority of Generation Z members were using their smartphones in the workplace even when it was considered an unacceptable practice. Based on this assumption, those who did not feel that it was acceptable in their workplaces were asked, "How do you feel about using your phone at work for personal things, knowing it is not acceptable?"

The assumption that respondents were using their phones even though doing so was not acceptable was proven to be reasonable. Only 11 respondents out of 47 reported that they did not use their personal phone because it was unacceptable. Of the few who did limit their personal phone use due to perceived unacceptability, one respondent stated, "I don't do it. I don't want to lose my job!" Another respondent at first stated, "I don't do it. The risk outweighs the reward," but this same respondent continued by acknowledging that "Sometimes I'll check it if something important is happening, but usually I silence it and leave it alone." This comment shows the sometimes-conflicting feelings of respondents between following workplace rules and wanting to use their devices for personal communication.

Other responses regarding how respondents feel about not using their personal phones at work were split between feeling indifferent to the rules and having negative feelings about using their phones. Respondents stated feelings such as "don't care because I still get all my work done plus more" and "I don't get paid enough to not use my phone in the workplace." Examples like these comprise 39% ($n = 19$) of the responses. These responses show blatant disregard and even anger toward rules banning phone use in the workplace. Negative emotions such as "feeling bad or uncomfortable" were described by 36% ($n = 18$) of the respondents, with one person even stating "I feel like I am committing a crime …."

Most respondents reported that their personal phone use was deemed acceptable by their workplaces, although a minority suggested that personal phone use was not acceptable. These latter responses suggested that although some respondents respected these rules, others rejected them outright or felt uncomfortable while ignoring them.

Awareness of Negative Impacts of Technology Requiring Self-Regulation (Needing a Break)

Respondents also noted frustrations about technology use in the workplace. These frustrations focused on perceived negative aspects of technology (including technology being distracting), lack of boundaries, and overdependence. The Generation Z respondents surveyed described technology as distracting because it caused themselves and others in the workplace to not focus. This attitude was stated throughout answers to many of the survey questions.

Inappropriate use in the workplace was both a surprise and a frustration for respondents. One survey respondent noted that "people use technology … in a way that distracts them so they are not performing at the level they should be." Participants also mentioned "how frequent[ly] people are on their phones and not working," "the amount of time people are on their phone, even though it is prohibited," and "people who abuse it … such as [using] social media or other non-work related sites."

Other respondents described technology as influencing themselves negatively. Survey respondents called technology "addictive" and "extremely distractive," while feeling "overdependent" and experiencing "lack of boundaries" when using technology. These findings were supported by the interviews, with interviewees expressing attempts to decrease use of technology or "take a break" from technology. All of those

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interviewed for this study ($n = 6$) gave examples of trying to limit use, decrease use, or delete applications. One interviewee described deleting apps such as games or certain social media sites because they wanted to cut down use.

Regarding lack of boundaries, participants expressed that their employer expected them to be accessible 24/7, and they felt that they could never "fully leave work." Overdependence ties to this lack of boundaries, as respondents expressed being unable to disconnect. Respondents reported that sometimes "technology overpowers our life" and that they were frustrated by "how much I have to rely on it."

Limitations This study examined how communication habits of Generation Z respondents impact their expectations of workplace communication. It has some limitations.

The survey and the interviews revealed the viewpoints of a highly educated, technologically savvy, and ambitious group of older members of Generation Z. One limitation of this study concerns the contested nature of using "generations" as a meaningful marker for study. A generation is a capacious frame that includes highly diverse populations [22]. Still, we felt that it was a useful frame to investigate due to the continued interest in generations as shorthand for users of particular age groups [10] and the real need for research on new entrants into the workplace [29]. We could have investigated 18- to 24-year-olds without using the Generation Z frame, but not using the term would have been conspicuous because of the term's common use in describing this contemporary age bracket.

This point-in-time study should be supplemented with longitudinal work to further investigate how members of this population integrate into the workforce and potentially change it. Not having known a life without smart technology has shaped our respondents' viewpoints, attitudes, and habits. People born from 1995 to 2012 have never known a world without personal smart technology, but they are self-aware of both the challenges and opportunities facing their generation. Generation Z will bring their particular expectations and experiences to the workplace, and that background will ultimately shape the future of work. Following their experiences over time could prove enlightening.

This study is also limited by investigating only the viewpoints of 18- to 24-year-olds and not those of their coworkers. Adding more people to the study could result in a wider view of workplace norms and potential changes to those norms in a variety of fields. For instance, Generation Z's ability to adapt to current workplace norms may slow the progress of change in workplace communication habits. However, over time, they could make positive changes to workplace communication. Those changes may include more immediate communication via texting and instant messaging instead of email communication. Further studies should pursue in-depth use of texting in the workplace. This rise in texting may indicate a decline in email in the future. More research over a longer period of time could determine the accuracy of these potential trends.

Other limitations of the study include the lack of generalizability as a result of our methods. Although we did conduct a survey, the respondent pool size and investigative scope of the survey best situate this article as an indicator of possible trends to investigate further. We chose interviews to support the survey results instead of surveys to support interview results. Putting the interviews first may have changed the types of questions we used in the interviews. This is a potential area of development for future research.

A final limitation is in reference to the technological and societal changes of 2020. Data collection concluded mere days before COVID-19 emerged prominently in the US. Respondents' frustrations around inappropriate technology use indicated interest in a return to more personal and focused interaction via technology, such as videoconferencing and live chat meetings. Further studies of how Generation Z respondents react to videoconferencing and live chats after heavy use of both during the COVID-19 pandemic should be conducted.

Discussion

Communication Habits and Behaviors of Generation Z in the Workplace The members of Generation Z in this study represent a mobile and technologically sophisticated group. With more than 99% of Generation Z members owning a personal smartphone [1], it is no surprise that the use of personal devices has affected their habits and attitudes regarding technology. The results of our study revealed some unique habits, behaviors,

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and attitudes of Generation Z respondents concerning workplace communication. These findings can help companies prepare more effectively for incoming young workers by pushing back on unhelpful stereotypes in the workplace. These findings can also help teachers prepare students effectively for the workplace.

Acceptability of Personal Smartphone Use Many Generation Z respondents were surprised by the amount of personal smartphone use in the workplace. A majority of those surveyed (67%, $n = 130$) reported having access to their phone throughout the workday. Even among the 33% ($n = 64$) that reported not having access to their phones, just under half ($n = 30$, about 15% of the total surveyed) were officially prohibited by a specific organization's policy. The rest felt that their job duties, such as working with children or customers, prohibited them from using their phones. The Generation Z respondents expected less personal smartphone use in the workplace than they were met with, as they reported being surprised at their co-workers' unregulated smartphone use. Thus, researchers' concerns about how prepared this generation will be when transitioning from a school environment with rules around smartphone use to the workplace [8] seemed to be unfounded in this study. If many companies do not state or enforce smartphone use policies, then teachers should adapt to this reality and prepare students for a workplace of smartphone use.

Inappropriate and Unprofessional Use Although Generation Z respondents were surprised at how acceptable personal smartphone use was in the workplace, they also expressed much frustration at what they viewed as inappropriate and unprofessional use of smartphones on the job. They were surprised at the frequency, locations, and times that co-workers, managers, and even clients were using their phones. They also noted their own habits of looking at their phone at times that they felt were inappropriate, such as when working with other people. Much current research views Generation Z members as unaware of business etiquette [21] and having poor in-person communication skills [6]. Generation Z respondents in this study did not fit this narrative. Instead, respondents expressed frustration at what they believed was unprofessional behavior by others in the workplace, who they believed were looking at their smartphones too frequently, as well as at inappropriate times and places. Furthermore, the literature suggests that Generation Z workers have an unrealistic and idealistic picture of the work environment [15], [23]. The Generation Z respondents' genuine surprise at what they considered "inappropriate" supports the viewpoint that respondents' expectations of what professionalism looks like are perhaps unrealistic and idealistic.

In response to their perceptions of inappropriate use, Generation Z respondents self-regulated their smartphone use behaviors. They did not want to use their smartphones inappropriately and appear unprofessional in the workplace. This finding pushes back on negative stereotypes [22] about members of Generation Z by suggesting that the generation with the most technology use in their educational development is more keenly aware of how technology interacts with professional life than others expect.

Companies that maintain smartphone use policies should ensure that policy enforcement is uniform across age brackets. Companies that do not maintain smartphone use policies should consider that incoming young workers are being trained and socialized into expectations of professionalism regarding smartphone use at work that are not being met by their workplaces. Although each workplace develops its own culture and etiquette, Generation Z respondents felt that their expectations of professional behavior were not being met by their co-workers. This could lead to interpersonal tension or confusion over time.

Awareness of Negative Impacts of Technology Requiring Self-Regulation (Needing a Break) Much research investigates the perceived negative impacts of technology use among young people, such as deficient critical thinking and problem-solving skills [25], as well as gaps in written and spoken communication [21]. Yet Generation Z respondents in this study were keenly aware of the perceived negative impacts of technology.

Research has also found negative perceptions by older generations of smartphone use by younger generations [15]. Generation Z respondents were aware of these negative perceptions. Many indicated that they were actively trying to mitigate the negative impacts and negative perceptions by limiting their time on smartphones in both their personal and professional lives. The respondents noted personally "taking breaks" from technology. Professionally, many respondents noted choosing not to use their phones when they were meeting

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with clients, working with co-workers, or focusing intently on a work task. Respondents considered phone use at these times, among others, as unprofessional smartphone use in the workplace. Again, employers should resist negative stereotypes of young workers [22].

Teachers should also consider some students' awareness of the effects of technology use when developing plans for teaching with technology. This is a topic that some, but not all, students are aware of. Teaching to this concern could be helpful to students by supporting and enhancing existing knowledge in some students, while introducing other students to the concepts.

As noted, Generation Z respondents were aware of both the positive and negative effects that technology has had on their lives. They appreciate the positives but expressed a need to mitigate some of the negatives by taking breaks from technology. Many mentioned that they wanted to take a break from or decrease their use of their smartphone. Much research has examined the theory that Generation Z does not perceive a hard separation between online relationships and in-person relationships [12]. Research also suggests that being always online negatively affects in-person communication [15], [16]. However, little research has investigated how members of Generation Z actually feel about these theories.

Contrary to some research, this study found that Generation Z respondents wanted to create some separation between their digital and in-person lives. To accomplish this separation, respondents noted a number of ways that they go about "taking breaks" from technology. One way was by deleting apps that they felt wasted time, such as games or certain social media sites. Another was by cutting back on technology use. The behavior of "taking a break" shows that Generation Z respondents do not necessarily desire to be "constantly online" and are looking for ways to disconnect occasionally.

Overlap of Work and Personal Activities

Although Generation Z respondents are used to being online constantly in their personal lives, there was growing concern about the expectation of being available professionally 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Professional use of technology made them feel the need to be responsive and immediately available to any and every request. Participants in the study felt that they could never "fully leave work." Some worried that "sometimes technology overpowers our lives." This concern has extended from respondents' academic to their professional lives; this study supports previous findings that note a crossover between contemporary students' private, academic, and professional lives [7]. Respondents also noted an interweaving of technology-enabled work with nonwork tasks as more workers bring their personal devices into the workplace [28]. Both professionally and personally, the Generation Z respondents expressed concerns about the blurring of the lines that constant access to technology enables. Respondents felt concerned about not being able to truly disconnect.

Using Personal Phone for Work Activities

Almost half (48%, $n = 88$) of Generation Z respondents use their personal smartphone for work tasks. Texting co-workers or clients, emailing, taking photos for work, and note-taking for work were the top activities reported. The interviews indicated that respondents used their own technology because it was convenient. This finding supports previous research on Generation Z and multitasking activities, which found that students often used their smartphone for homework while intermixing personal activities such as listening to music [8]. Since young people already blend personal activities with classwork, it is not a surprise that they would also blend personal and professional activities on their smartphones. Because Generation Z has always used personal technology in the classroom, it is not surprising that the they would transition their use of personal technology to the workplace. For example, two interview participants in sales roles reported that they preferred to receive their work voicemail and email messages on a single personal device because it made things more efficient.

Personal Activities During Work Generation Z respondents noted blurred boundaries between personal and work life, and felt comfortable with completing personal tasks on their smartphones during work hours. As previously noted, there were many concerns from the Generation Z respondents about looking unprofessional by using their smartphones in the workplace for personal activities. One of the effects of almost always having access to a smartphone regards the anxiety of missing something important when voluntarily or involuntarily not having access to that technology. Even as they expressed concerns around appearing unprofessional, Generation Z respondents to the survey and interviews stated the need to check their phones at inappropriate times during work.

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Previous research suggested that Generation Z does not know how to exist without smart technologies [7]. This study supports those findings in a limited way. Respondents did want to take breaks, perceiving existence with limited or no technology as positive. However, they still struggled with boundaries in their personal and professional use. We also confirm that one of the underlying feelings of some Generation Z respondents was mild anxiety or fear of missing out when they did not have access to their phones. These feelings of anxiety may explain some behaviors from the Generation Z respondents, especially when there is so much acceptable overlap between personal and professional smartphone activities.

Our findings paint a complex picture of Generation Z respondents' feelings about ubiquitous technology, depicting a variety of positive and negative effects. This complex picture of technology use in the workplace suggests that although negative stereotypes of young people should be avoided, there are still valid concerns about technology in the workplace that employers should seek to manage. Employers should note that even though it is possible to be online at all times, young workers may not want to be online at all times. Policies and conversations surrounding employer expectations for response times in various communication media would be beneficial for young workers and the company at large. Young workers want boundaries in their lives, and companies can benefit from potential goodwill from employees by supporting practical efforts towards work-life balance.

Email Use Still Prevalent

Respondents reported adapting their habits to meet workplace performance expectations, such as using email professionally (which they do not do in their personal lives). Ninety percent ($n = 160$) of Generation Z survey respondents reported that they use email at work, making it the dominant platform for work communication. When using their personal phones for work activities, 55% ($n = 48$) of the respondents reported that they email co-workers and clients. This finding conflicts with the respondents' personal use of email: 0% of Generation Z respondents selected email as their most-used way to talk to friends. Recent research agrees that students do not prefer email as a communication method [10]. The differences in this study between personal and professional use of email show Generation Z respondents' ability and willingness to adapt to workplace norms. This finding supports earlier research covering contemporary student opinions on email being used only for communication with professors [14]. This study expands and validates the opinion that although Generation Z respondents do not prefer email, they will use it to communicate in the workplace.

Employers may not need to adopt new technologies specifically for Generation Z workers, as Generation Z has shown a willingness to adapt to existing professional communication media. As such, teachers of professional communication may be able to add emerging technological communication media into their classes while not abandoning discussion
of currently existing communication technologies.

Conclusion

Generation Z is unique: they do not know a world without personal smart technology. Yet they are aware of both the challenges and opportunities facing their generation's use of technology. Generation Z will bring their particular expectations and experiences to the workplace, which will ultimately shape the future of workplace communication. The concerns of Generation Z respondents around the overlap of personal and professional lives may benefit both areas of their lives, as they work to define what work-life balance means in the current reality of being always-on and always available via technology—the only reality that Generation Z has ever known.

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Citation:

Elayan, M. B. (2022). The New World Of Work And Digital Learning: Millennials And Generation Z. *Webology*, *19*(2).

Summary: The study was conducted to figure out the evolution of the workplace in the wake of technological advancements, where Millennials and Generation Z are also involved in this technology transition. The article assesses the essential role of digital learning is helpful to bridge the gap and preparing two of these generations for modern and technology-dominant workplaces. Under the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, employees quickly adopted digital learning platforms and reshaped the standard of the workplace. The article emphasizes the importance of upskilling and reskilling to adapt to rapid technological changes. Additionally, the study also mentions the gig economy which increases demand for flexible work arrangements and commits Millennials and Generation Z to digital transformation. The authors highlight the need for organizations to invest in continuous learning and digital assistance tools to enhance workforce activeness and competitiveness in the face of ongoing challenges.

Relevance: The topic is relevant because of discusses the change of management practice in the digital aspect and includes the Generation Z transition upon the evolution of the workplace due to technological advancements.

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The New World Of Work And Digital Learning: Millennials And Generation Z

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Abstract. In the modern business environment, there is an evident mismatch of the skills possessed by individuals and those businesses are sourcing. Despite business leaders ensuring automation, digitisation and extraction of value of data (for example by artificial intelligence) are core organisational priorities, the workforce should still be in a position to complement the value of technology. The rising popularity of technology has impacted the manner in which knowledge is acquired. This is particularly important for the Millennials and Generation Z who are currently transitioning to the new world of work and largely acquiring knowledge through the internet. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has upset the balance of this new world of work, involving business, digital technologies and new ways of working. The solution to a successful transition by Millennials and Generation Z requires embracing technology and upgrading training programmes.

Therefore, this paper has identified the best practice in using digital learning to harness the transition to the new world of work. Also, this paper has evaluated on the ways in which the markets evolve or change over time. It has been pointed out that their implications would include varying employment markets, changing demands and supplies for skills, and demographic trends (Millennials and Generation Z.) The current COVID-19 pandemic has been noted to have an impact on the labour markets today and in future.

Key Words: New World of Work; Digital Learning; Millennials, Generation Z, COVID-19

1. Introduction

The current COVID-19 pandemic has significantly shifted the view of work and skills for people of all ages. This is evidenced by a report (WEF, 2019) which notes that emerging technologies would generate some 133 million new jobs by the end of 2022, with 75 million being displaced. Even before the emergence of COVID-19 and recognition of the need for a new world of work, a global skills gap was evident, an indicator that most of these jobs would remain unfilled. Another report (Pearson, 2020) targeting more than 7,000 learners showed that COVID-19 represented a

major demand for changing learning strategies, with online learning and the demand for digital skills being critical . In the workplace, the different generations have distinct behavioural characteristics which correspondingly influence their unique benefits to their organisations. Currently, the majority of employees are the Millennials, with Generation Z also including a considerable percentage of the workforce from 2013 (Szymkowiak et al., 2021). This generation exists in the modern workforce amidst technological development and transition. This prompts the need for improving work and the nature of employment. One of these approaches is adoption of digital learning, which readily offers accessible and low-cost learning at a scale encouraged by immense forces. For instance, Rickard and Brown (2021) observed that in the best practice for mitigating the current challenges in the new world of work, technological advances are instrumental, acting as a channel for upskilling and reskilling Millennials and Generation Z. This is in the context of rapidly changing business models, digitalisation and automation.

Transition to the new world of work evidenced by shifts in work and expectations, economic recessions, and technological advances has significant implications for workers. For instance, most of the Millennials, the majority of past generations who have joined the workforce, have been struggling with transition into and out of their entry-level work. Importantly, O'Boyle et al. (2017) indicate that approximately 5.6 million US-based Millennials who were holding a job in 2000 did not have a job in 2010. Further, Buckley (2015) noted that this generation was significantly affected in the 2007-09 recession with an unemployment rate of approximately 13.4%. Hence, the shifts in the modern workplace represent distinct challenges and opportunities for all stakeholders. According to Djankov and Saliola (2019), these structural shifts require organisations and governments to work collaboratively. Digital learning should expand beyond simplified technical knowhow or STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) and integrate skills meant for complex problem solving, critical and creative thinking, social skills and strong capabilities for continuous learning.

2. New World of Work and Digital Learning

2.1 New World of Work and How It Evolve Over Time

According to CIPD (2020), the trends that shape modern economies, societies, and world of work have a direct implication on HR profession regarding who is included, what it does, and how it does it. In this case, the HR managers must ensure that they are monitoring labour market state and addressing potential economic developments. The changing world of work trends is as shown in figure 1;

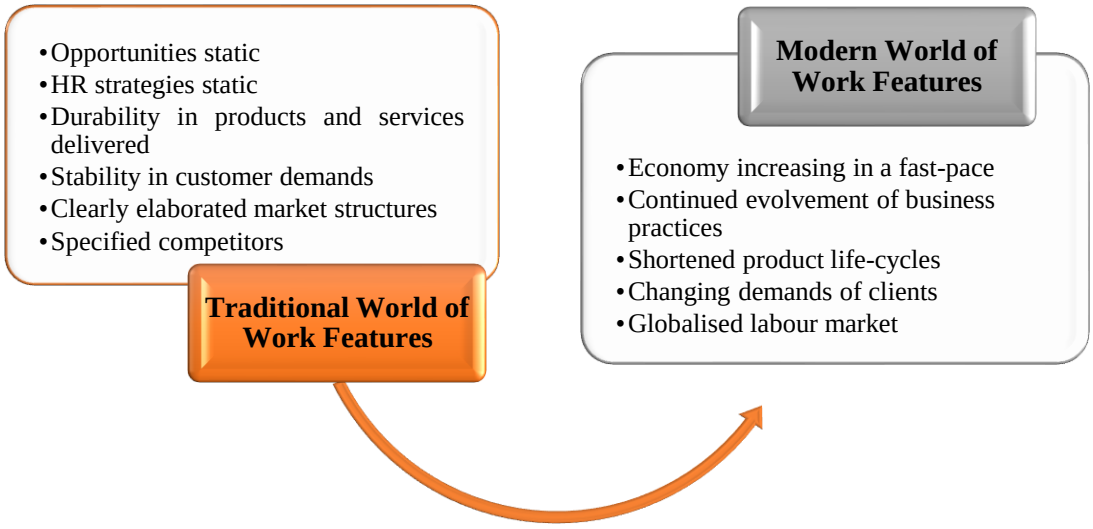


Figure 1: Comparison of Traditional and Modern World of Work

In a study by the World Economic Forum (2016), the employment markets are evolving in four main areas reshaping the world of work. These include demographic change, more excellent individual choice, ongoing technological revolution, and increased client sophistication. A summary of how these factors lead to employment markets varying and changing demands and supplies for skills is as shown in figure 2;

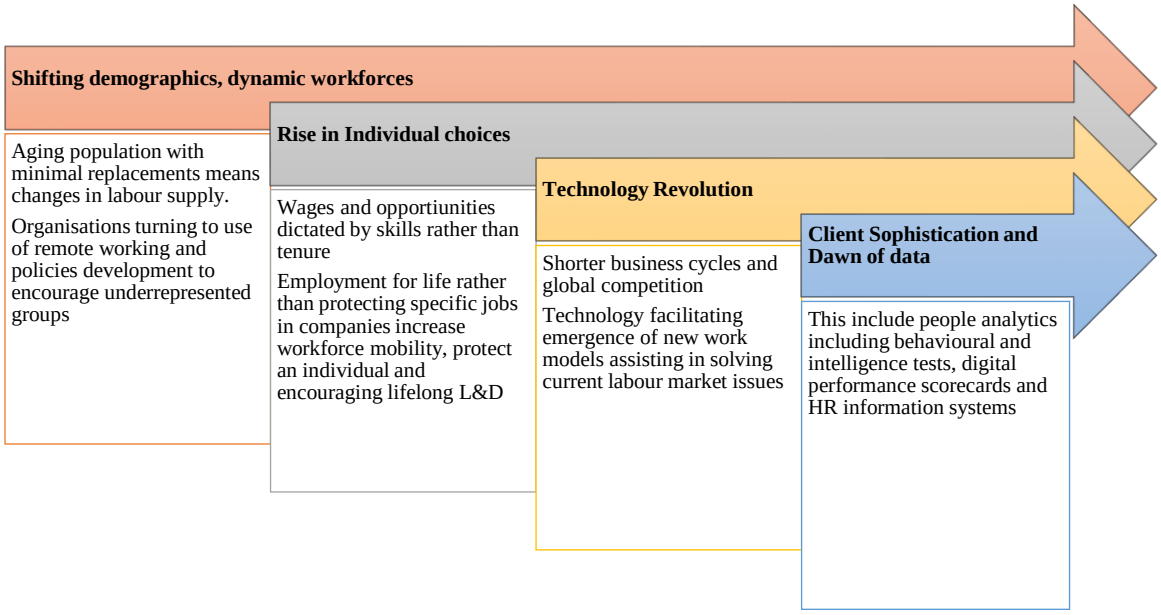


Figure 2: Markets evolving over time
Source: Summarized from World Economic Forum (2016)

2.2 Digital learning

This is identified in the literature as a complex scenario associated with multiple distinct interpretations. A basic definition (Kyndt et al., 2009) identified it as an unplanned and implicit process with unpredictable outcomes, with the use of different types of technological device such as smartphones, tablets and computers. This is supported by a study (Rickard & Brown, 2021) which noted that digital learning is characterised by many different supporting technologies, with continual development expanding the delivery options. These technologies include virtual learning (webinars, online classrooms and chat tools), online learning communities/social networks and collaboration, smartphone technology/mobile applications, video and audio content, learning management systems and learning experience platforms, curated content through social bookmarking and online courses/resource platforms. Hence, it can be argued that digital learning is an individual development interacting with the rest. Sousa and Rocha (2019) noted that digital learning is implemented in a spontaneous and unconscious manner with no prior set objectives for learning outcomes. Nevertheless, its effectiveness is evident in how it elicits the likelihood of preparing learners to think critically and solve complex problems, with collaborative work, efficient communication and autonomous independent learning processes. Conversely, by focusing on Generation Z and Millennials, Tick (2018) evidenced that digital learning can be done in a planned approach by creation of particular courses linked to the activities and procedures executed by employees. Hence, there exist learning activities appropriately planned and defined but normally integrated with spontaneous learning strategies. These include but are not limited to searching for information and watching complementary videos. The intention of this is improved understanding of issues in the course or acquisition of more knowledge in this area.

Digital Transformation

Immense changes are currently shaping the world of work, including digitisation and the gig economy . Dabić et al. (2021) note that photography, videography, wearables and eye tracking are becoming increasingly accessible, guiding data analysis in new and distinct dimensions. The rise of self-driving vehicles, drones, virtual assistance technologies, software for translation and robotic surgeries have significantly transformed the world of work. This digital transformation has contributed to immense challenges prompting organisations to invest in approaches for coping. These include new and emerging customer segments, cultural diversity in the global marketplace, market volatility, increased client expectations on the quality of products and services, and implications for the internet on core business (Potocka-Sionek & Aloisi, 2021). In the job market, for instance, there are higher-level positions in management and professional occupations which demand increased flexibility and problem-solving skills. It is projected that by 2020 in approximately 50% of organisations automation will contribute to a reduction in the size of the full-time workforce with more than half of all employees required to undergo significant re- and upskilling (Wightman, 2020). This is as a result of artificial intelligence, robotics, and nanotechnologies. However, not all the jobs are being replaced by the rising technologies, but are undergoing a rapid transformation. Apart from the evident organisational changes due to the digital

transformation, individuals are also faced by change. The old skills are becoming obsolete, with new ones being demanded (Mattila et al., 2021). Also, there is evidence that investment assists in the retention of skills and gaining a high-level competitive advantage.

Therefore, the complexities and uncertainties occasioned by globalisation and the accelerating rhythm of technology change must be balanced by human resources with relevant skills for assisting organisations handle digital transformation.

Trends in Skills Development

Although skills were historically used to identify individual features, now they are additionally defined with two distinct dimensions: individualised and collective (organisational) (Mettallo et al., 2018). Despite this concept attracting interest among different authors (Jagannathan et al., 2019; Dubé & Wen, 2021;) Mrozova & Demchenko, 2021) it is still a research issue in the higher education dominion as it represents the core goal to be achieved by learners. Skills development is identified as a strategic management tool for coping up with the current business environment, specifically since the market has changed from mass production to customisation of quality, price issues, and speed of delivery with new configurations in the industry. These changes have created new demand for developing innovative large-scale upskilling, reskilling and redeployment strategies. Organisations are presented with opportunities for transformation, as upskilling and reskilling at a higher levels contribute to improvement of economic dynamism of business operations, while creating an ecosystem for ensuring all employees are employable and productive (Wightman, 2020).

To meet these challenges, organisations have been working to establish a strategy for life-long skills development. At the start of the learning process, this means equipping young individuals with appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes essential for the emerging opportunities in life and work. Adult learning would be instrumental in assisting existing employees to acquire skills essential for digitally enabled workplaces. This is possible through application of the 70-20-10 Model, which is identified as learning with others and practical on-the-job experience. It is a transformative learning theory, and experiential learning enables adults to learn through reflection, peer dialogue and application.

2.3 Millennials and Generation Z Transition

Over the years, different generations have taken the lead in discussions with employers. Management must appreciate the values and contributions of all the generations when recruiting and retaining potential employees (Italia, 2020). Millennials, for instance, account for approximately 82 million individuals born between 1980 and 1994. This is opposed to Generation Z, which is first initial generation raised from birth in the era of smartphones and other technologies. This generation has an advantage in joining the contemporary workforce as they are more ready to embrace innovation. For example, Zoya and Chitrao (2021) note that the millennials put immense effort into teamwork, with Generation Z being increasingly independent although

both generations appreciate positive feedback in their workplace. The transition of both Millennials and Generation Z to the new world of work represents a major challenge.

Different authors have concluded that Millennials and Generation Z have similar features ; Baharudin et al., 2017; Maioli, 2016), given their interest in technology and job flexibility. It is clear that Generation Z, like the Millennials, prefer technology and hence adopt it in both their working environment and their lifestyle. Given these similarities, the fact that 75% of the global workforce comprises Millennials and Generation Z is critical for organisations adopting their engagement strategy in a manner which is consistent with how the generations communicate and engage in their work (Sinead, 2018).

2.3.1 Flexible Workplace

For Generation Z and Millennials, a common strategy adopted in transition to the new world of work is through remote working. A recent study (Gilchrist, 2019) showed that three-quarters (74%) of the Millennial and Generation Z managers have members of their teams working remotely, as opposed to 58% of Baby Boomers. It is expected that by 2028, 73% of entire teams will include remote workers, providing evidence of the demand for flexibility from the Millennials and Generation Z in their contributions to the contingent workforce. Hence, to attract and retain Millennials and Generation Z employees, employers must provide significant financial rewards and a flexible workplace culture. These findings are affirmed by a study (Racolţa-Paina & Irini, 2021) on human resource professionals, which noted that 80% of both Millennials and Generation Z are more likely to stay longer in organisations which offer flexibility. This growing trend has been specifically strengthened by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has created a new normal of working. In fact there is evidence that 46% of all Generation Z individuals are free-lances, with the numbers forecast to consistently grow (Racolţa-Paina & Irini, 2021).

2.3.2 Gig Economy

A majority of Millennials and Generation Z are involved in the gig economy, where there is a trend for job opportunities to be structured in small projects relying on online platform or applications (Willmott, 2016); a popular choice for these cohorts. The Millennials and Generation Z are encouraged to invest in opportunities for increasing their breadth of experience and interest in their operations. This includes the need to access online knowledge, with the Millennials and Generation Z being viewed as lacking patience and sourcing for new opportunities promptly (Seemiller & Grace, 2017). These authors recommended the need for employees to acquire unique experiences and skills, allowing them to make critical contributions in navigating the new post-COVID-19 world. The response of different generations to the pandemic would enable inter-generational innovations and optimisation today and in the future. The organisational leaders focusing on achieving high-quality work from an alternative workforce could be appropriately positioned in recruiting contract workers based on fair market pay.

2.3.3 Diversity of Expertise

Unlike past generations who spent years in perfecting specific skills, Millennials and Generation Z have been focusing on sourcing a variety of professional experience, matching their interests and supporting change throughout their entire professional lives. According to Rzemieniak and Wawer (2021), this is particularly important among employees as it gives them an advantage and an area of interest on an equal basis. Their engagement would offer appropriate opportunity of access to people with greater flexibility, enabling them to take part in the variety of tasks required in the new world of work. These features fit the gig economy and include short-term, specialist projects implemented by an on-demand workforce. In a different context, (Generation Z and the Environment ... 2021) the process id identified as influencing how an intense level of specialism could be readily available from more all-around employees. All the employees must be able to embrace new skills and as such be successful in the new world of work.

2.4 Role of Digital Learning in Enabling Transition

Given the evident demand for new skills for the Millennials and Generation Z, digital learning will play a critical role in their transition. One study noted that reskilling and upskilling of employees by embracing virtual and digital learning platforms is now a reality and the norm (Nachmias & Hubschmid-Vierheilig, 2021). In the face of uncertainty, organisations would be advised to blend learning in a more flexible learning experience. As an example of global best practice, Blayone (2018) noted that organisations are adopting digital learning to increase team collaboration working remotely or in distinct time zones. The best practice includes undertaking courses collaboratively in virtual formats, including videoconferencing and instant messaging. 77% of senior-level executives agree with the view that an organisation would gain from its staff's adaptable and flexible mindset in post-COVID era. This is particularly the case since education systems have failed to keep pace with the changing nature of work, leading to many employees being unable to access the needed skills; 40% of employers lack skills in their entry-level job opportunities. There are evident gaps in the technical skills including STEM subjects and soft skills, including communication, teamwork strategies and punctuality. This was affirmed thirty years ago by Manyika (1992), who noted that 37% of all respondents in the modern job environment did not holistically utilise the skills or rise to sufficient challenges.

The digital revolution has particularly influenced Millennials and Generation Z learning approaches, This includes Generation Z who are smartphone natives and are savvy with mobile and Web 3.0 technologies, including artificial intelligence software (Yu & Suny, 2020). This is gained through unlimited access to a broad range of information through multiple channels, particularly the digital platforms, making the most of opportunities by creating and distributing messages in a digital manner, instantaneously and collaboratively. Organisations also diversify course delivery platforms, such as full online platforms, blended learning and face-to-face courses. The website Digital Learning and Gen Z (2018) notes that 52% of Generation Z and Millennials normally adopt social media platforms, websites including YouTube, and online research tools. These are appropriate self-educating tools, used with the high level of independence critical for the modern world of business.

2.5 Conclusion, Implications and Directions for Future Research

In conclusion, this paper has identified the best practice in using digital learning to harness the transition to the new world of work. With advances in current technology and prevalence of the COVID-19 pandemic, employees' skills mismatch has increased. There has been significant success in using learning technologies, particularly in response to the pandemic, strengthening the culture of digital learning and creating an effective learning environment. This is particularly the case among the Millennials and Generation Z. Failure in a successful transition to the new world of work will contribute to labour market opportunities among the high- and low-skilled jobs, unemployment and underemployment, stagnating incomes and inequality. Increased digitisation in the modern business environment is dependent on technological innovations and the uptake of the new technologies. This report has encountered immense risks demanding the automation of job functions, while many people encounter changes in their roles and the required skills. As a consequence, employees must succeed in the modernised digitally enabled work environment, also posing immense challenges for policy makers and business leaders. There are immense opportunities for organisations which offer timely feedback, harness learning to meet future labour market needs, and customise learners' needs. The disruptions caused by COVID-19 and the increased use of technology will be a positive contribution to improving learning. Organisations must harness the overall resilience and efficiency of work practices to assist employees to successfully transition to the new world of work.

Despite various studies which have evaluated how digital learning can be used to promote transition to the new world of work, there is still insufficient research in this area. This is particularly the case while COVID-19 is an ongoing problem. Knowledge in this area continues to be characterised by constant change and hence new approaches to learning need to be considered. As the best future strategy, researchers should prioritise obtaining the knowledge to support appropriate management strategies for learning. Particularly, additional research is required which focuses on the Millennials and Generation Z.

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Summary: The article focuses on learning the distinct characteristics, values, and work ethics of different generations in the workforce, including Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z. Generation Z was described as "digital", which explains their integration in both physical and digital worlds, and also being known as hyper customizers which mean that they prefer personalization in everything from job roles to career path. It's also important to know that Generation Z ranks happiness as their top personal value when it comes to relationships, meanwhile, faith was ranked lowest. The article concentrates on discussing the management challenges of entering the workforce by Generation Z, which the organization leaders have to pay attention to in the areas of emotional intelligence, social skills, and leadership environment. Managers are advised to make an individualized approach to leadership roles and focus on motivation and performance-linked rewards to retain and recruit more Generation Z talents.

Relevance: The article mentions the challenge of management and leadership in the era when Generation Z begins to join the workforce, which is relevant to the topic of understanding the Generation Z influences management practice change incorporates.

Place in the paper: Literature review

GENERATION Z: CHALLENGES FOR MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

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ABSTRACT
The paper presents, in a comparative manner, four generations of individuals active on the labour market, focusing on their own subcultures. Briefly exposing the main characteristics of each generation, namely Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y and Generation Z, the paper emphasizes the values and work ethic of the latter. Individuals belonging to the Generation Z manifest a series of unique values and attitudes towards work, which might hinder their integration in the workplace if not correctly known. Their particular work values pose serious challenges to the management and leadership of any organisation, therefore managing the workforce belonging to Generation Z requires a proper understanding of their characteristics, attitude towards work, professional goals and expectations.

KEYWORDS: *Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Z, Leadership, Management, Millennials, Subcultures.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In common language, the concept of *generation* is primarily used to define and differentiate various social groups based on their age and to place individuals within a certain socio-historical timeframe, although in social sciences there is a long and solid terminology-related debate and confusion surrounding the term (Pilcher, 1994). Nevertheless, in defining and characterizing generations, age is not the only significant variable, given that a generation, as a social phenomenon, also points out to "certain definite modes of behaviour, feeling and thought" (Mannheim, 1952:291). In other words, social generations are bred and influenced by their specific geography, time and most especially culture, and from this point of view they are rather seen as subcultures.
From a sociological point of view, a subculture is a category of individuals who commonly share a distinct type of values, norms, beliefs, attitudes, lifestyles, even language, which differentiate them from the majority of people, without necessarily being in conflict with the dominant culture (Brinkerhoff et al., 2011). In its most extensive meaning, a subculture refers to distinctions between categories of individuals based on a wide variety of characteristics, from ethnicity or race to religion, region of provenance, location, age (Kendall, 2012).
Generations, with their specific values, norms, lifestyles, attitudes and, in general, ways of doing things, might be considered subcultures and acting in accordance with the predominant standards and practices, as well as meeting the expectations of the society at large might be quite problematic and a source of considerable pressure for certain generations at a given period of time (Tischler, 2011).
Although the phenomenon of generations has constituted an important object of study in social sciences for a long period of time (Mannheim, 1952), at present there is a major interest in

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determining the basic differences between current and older generations in terms of their participation to the labour market in particular and their adaptation to the "digital era" realities in general (Twenge, 2014; Twenge, 2017). Based on this interest of various researchers and experts in diverse fields of study, the current paper reviews the relevant literature regarding the classification and characteristics of each generation of the last decades in an attempt to identify the problems posed by Generation Z to management and leadership in organizations. Although theoretical, the paper draws upon a large body of empirical research presented in the literature dealing with the task of managing and leading the generations, especially Generation Z. The retirement of older generations and the entry of the Generation Z into the labour market, together with the technological provocations of the digital era, are serious challenges for the managers and leaders of current-day organizations.

2. DEFINING GENERATIONS

As poetically stated by the famous English novelist George Orwell, "every generation imagines itself to be more intelligent than the one that went before it, and wiser than the one that comes after it" (Bloom, 2007:124). Although this is rather an "illusion", according to the same author, it is nevertheless obvious that there are differences between generations, especially in terms of attitudes towards work, conformity to group norms and obedience to authority.
In general, it is agreed that since the second half of the last century until the beginning of the 21st century four generations have been and are active on the labour market, namely: the "Baby Boomers" (1946-1964), Generation X (1965-1980), Generation Y or the Millennials (1980-1995) and Generation Z (1995-2010), each with its own distinctive culture, attitudes and expectations (Seemiller & Grace, 2016).

2.1 The "Baby Boomer" Generation

The Baby Boomers refer to the generation born in the post-war period, between 1946 and 1964. After the difficulties of the war, the period of relative social stability and economic growth, that gave families the perspective of prosperity and the opportunity for affordable material wealth, led to a considerable increase in the birth rate. Baby Boomers, raised by parents who went through a time of extreme tragedy and deprivations, developed a solid work ethic as they grew up with the belief that success and personal achievement required hard work. Success was first of all linked to material wealth, and the ambition to prosper drove them to internalize the general values of the society and act towards achieving them (Seemiller & Grace, 2016).
Educated to believe that hard labour, constant effort and even sacrifice are the authentic, moral way to achievement, they came to associate work "with self-worth, contribution and personal fulfilment" (Yang & Guy, 2006) and even to initiate the "workaholic trend" (Glass, 2007) by inventing the 50-hour working week. This attitude towards work is even more praiseworthy when taking into consideration that Baby Boomers performed their jobs without benefitting much either from the advancements in information and communication technology at the workplace or from "labour-saving devices" at home (Twenge, 2017). Moreover, they perceived technology as a useful means to increase productivity, and not necessarily as a means to reduce their work effort. Unlike later generations, which came to see technology and various gadgets as labour- or time-saving devices and even as an extension of their minds and bodies, Baby Boomers made use of technological progresses "to do more work, not less" (Espinoza et al., 2010).
Although dissatisfied with the political power and the traditional establishment and living under the permanent threat of a nuclear war (Stehlik, 2018), Baby Boomers developed a stable sense of loyalty towards their employers (Karp et al., 2002), and as long as rules were clear, advancement in career was based on merit and individual capabilities and accomplishments were recognized, retaining them in the work place was an easy task for the management of any organization.

Cooperation and collaboration with their colleagues and working in teams were also fundamental characteristics of Baby Boomers (Zemke et al., 2000), as they were educated, both in school and at home, to believe that the objectives of the organization were also their objectives.
The Baby Boomer Generation was raised and worked in a society defined by increased economic affluence and diversified career opportunity, where "values such as professional identity, health and wellness, and material wealth" were the most important ones (Espinoza et al., 2010). Therefore, it is no wonder that their self-identity was first of all related to their work and their professional status, which was the primary source of self-worth and admiration.

2.2 The Generation X

Generation X, which got its name based on the international bestseller of Canadian novelist Douglas Coupland, *Generation X: Tales for an Accelerated Culture* (1991), comprises people born between 1965 and 1980, who grew up during a time in which outstanding machines and technologies, such as personal computers, cable television, video games and the Internet were at their beginning of changing the world. Compared to the generations before them, which were almost entirely technology illiterate, and to the other after them, which are "technoliterate" by definition, Generation X individuals became accustomed to digital gadgets by themselves and "learned computer 'science' via trial and error" (Zemke et al., 2000:113), which gave them a strong self-confidence.
Also called the "latchkey kids" (Seemiller & Grace, 2016) as they were raised by "absent" parents, especially mothers spending much of their time at work, Generation X individuals developed an extensive and strong sense of independence both from their parents and from authority in general, a characteristic that shaped their integration into the workforce and their relations to leadership and formal hierarchies. Moreover, they were nurtured to be self-centred and if Baby Boomers constituted the generation which invented individualism, Generation X outpaced its predecessor and "perfected the invention" (Twenge, 2014).
Generation X was formed in a period of economic, political and social instability, and as a result they internalized social and moral values that were different than those of their parents. While the previous generation saw work as the necessary and single path to self-fulfilment, Generation X individuals were rather focused on finding the right balance between labour and free time (Karp et al., 2002), as they were deeply affected by the absence of their parents, who spent much of their time at work. Therefore, work started to be regarded not as a goal in itself, but only as a means to earn financial resources in order to invest them in other more-fulfilling goals. Among the values that they embraced and cherished the most, one could mention independence, autonomy, mobility, self-focus, individualism. While Baby Boomers lived to work, Generation X worked to live. And this attitude towards work also changed their perception of space and time, especially at work. As a result, they rather prefer to work from home and at unusual time, seeing the traditional workplace and rigid schedule as restraining their freedom and restricting their creativity, work-power and even motivation. In terms of working style, they pretty much prefer management by objective, considering that it does not matter how and where you do your job, as long as it is done on time and properly (Zemke et al., 2000).
Highly adaptable, quite familiar with technology and used with difficulties of being unemployed or working part-time due to systemic economic and financial crises, they prefer tasks that are challenging, as the most important incentive to work is not definitely linked to money, but to risk and intellect provocation. Although retaining them in the work place, especially in the case of low paid or dull jobs, might seem harder for the management, several simple things, such as flexible schedule, an informal working setting, and a lower degree of supervision might be the key to motivate them (Zemke et al., 2000). Even though they are not as loyal to their employers as the previous generations used to be (Bova & Kroth, 2001), they are nevertheless craving for "a sense of

family" that they didn't find during their childhood and "they'll look for it on the job if they haven't found it elsewhere" (Zemke et al., 2000:99).
Unlike the Baby Boomers, who were defined by their solid orientation towards work, Generation X individuals lacked a consistent "generational identity of their own" (Seemiller & Grace, 2016), being rather designated by what they were not (Zemke et al., 2000:94) compared to their predecessors.

2.3 The Generation Y or the "Millennials"

The Generation Y, or Millennials as they were born while the previous millennium was coming to an end, consists of individuals born between 1980 and 1995. Generation Y is also called "Me Generation" because individuals born in the mentioned period of time were raised by supportive affluent and accomplished Baby Boomers and, to a lower extent, parents belonging to Generation X, and they grew up feeling entitled to receive things easily and perceiving themselves as well-prepared to occupy any place in society. Receiving steady emotional and financial support from their parents even after earning their own money, they are highly self-reliant, "with a can-do attitude" and quite optimistic about their future (Seemiller & Grace, 2016).
Unlike previous generation, which started to work and found families early in life, Millennials, supported financially by their parents, extended their education period, diversified their training and got involved in various curricular and extra-curricular activities in order to widen their experience and become more prepared in deciding what to do in life and choosing their career (Elam et al., 2007).
Perceived as being exceedingly self-focused and overconfident, their education and personal development increased their expectations regarding the workplace in particular and the society in general. Therefore, Millennials rather "want to be their own bosses and start their own companies" (Twenge, 2017) or, when looking for a job, they expect and even demand their employers to pay big salaries that will allow them to maintain a relatively high standard of living (including here travels, high-tech gadgets, stylish clothes, etc.), and to offer additional benefits such as health insurance, training opportunities, a stimulating workplace, early promotions, a work-life balance (Ng et al., 2010). At the same time, they are less willing than previous generations to work hard or overtime (Twenge, 2017).
In the workplace, Millennials are frequently criticized for lacking social skills and high-toned manners, being unable to change their behaviours according to the requirements of the social context they are in (Twenge, 2014). Being raised in a society where individualism is one of the most important values and slogans such as "do whatever you feel you should do" or "do it your style" are frequently heard, they became to think that work discipline, formal requirements of the workplace or non-material incentives are outmoded, unworthy, or unnecessary for performing the job (Sachs, 2018).
Unlike their predecessors, who have established clear boundaries between work and leisure, Millennials are characterised by the need to be always connected, including at work, where they seem to manifest an "attention deficit" (Sachs, 2018). They were socialized and developed personally in a technologically hyperactive environment, with a pervasive Internet technology and an emergent social media, therefore high-tech gadgets and various technologies were part of their life and not only instruments for increasing their comfort or helping them do their job more easily. They spent long hours "playing electronic, computer and video games" and, at least late Millennials became "digital natives" and "multitaskers" (Sachs, 2018). On account of having "nearly a lifetime of exposure" to advanced technology (Seemiller & Grace, 2016), they became accustomed to using a wide variety of communication media, such as platforms, text messaging, e-mails, social networking, etc., both at work and outside of the workplace. Technology became "an integral part" of the Generation X members, and using it "has become second nature" to them, being frequently

unable to understand that working hours should not be used for personal matters (Espinoza et al., 2010).

For any manager, Millennials are both an asset, in terms of the easiness with which they handle advanced technology and of their preparedness for overcoming the challenges of the digital era, but also a liability in terms of work ethic, loyalty and commitment, given that they always want "something bigger, better, and right now when it comes to their professional lives" (Seemiller & Grace, 2016).

3. GENERATION Z

3.1 The Sketch-Portrait

As David and Jonah Stillman (2017) put it, there are seven key traits that individualize the members of Z Generation as compared to the other generations before them, and consequently determine their value systems and their life and work attitudes. According to their view, the following features of 'Gen Zers' can be discerned:

1. They are **'phigital'.** This means that, due to the notable advances in digital technology, they are born in a world where every physical feature (facts, places, persons, actions, processes) already has some sort of a digital counterpart. Consequently, for 'Gen Zers', the real, physical world and the digital, virtual one, do always overlap, and somehow the virtual one came to be seen as a natural part or aspect of the real. Being so accustomed with this phenomenon, 91 percent of them declare that the level of technological sophistication of an organization or company would determine their willingness to be o part of it or work there. This is a major challenge for companies, since most of them, being managed by members of older generations, were not so rapid in adapting to the digital revolution, and consequently have difficulties to find their place in the 'phigital' environment (Stillman & Stillman, 2017, ch. 1).
2. They are '**hyper-customizers'**. 'Gen Zers' are in a high degree concerned with personalization and customization of every aspect of their life, from the most trivial ones, such as clothes or bicycles, to the most important, as job titles or career paths. Their desire to express individuality and specificity created an expectation that society should intimately understand and consequently meet their personalized needs, behaviors and desires. For instance, 56 percent of them would rather compose themselves their own job description, than accept to be given a generic one. This fact will put extensive pressure on companies and organizations, where the traditional way of doing things meant that everyone must be treated more or less in the same way, because equality and fairness, not individuality were believed to be the core values (Stillman & Stillman, 2017, ch. 1).
3. They are more **realistic** than the other generations. According to Stillman and Stillman (2017), the personal and direct experience of the events in the aftermath of 9/11, with the terrorism threat believed to be a part of everyday life and the economic crisis and recession that followed in the next years, made the members of this generation more pragmatic and realistic in their approach of future planning. Their belief is that if one is to survive the challenges of the future, idealism doesn't do much help, and being realistic about what life actually means is the best policy available. While millennials are known to be idealistic, this shift of accent towards realism is likely to became a cause of conflict and friction between generations. This has already happened in colleges and universities, and will undoubtedly happen in the workplace.
4. They suffer from a very strong **FOMO**, or 'fear of missing out' anything deemed to be important. This feature has both a good side, insofar as 'Gen Zers' will certainly therefore be always on top of all new trends and directions of evolution and ahead of all perceived competition, as well as a bad side, because they will suffer from a quasi-neurotic worry that

they are not advancing fast enough and in the best possible direction. Because of this omnipresent anguish, 75 percent of them declare that they would choose a workplace where they could have multiple roles instead of only one, so as to minimize chances to miss anything in terms of opportunity. Consequently, companies and organizations will have to face the challenge of workplace redesign and diversification in order to meet this preference (Stillman & Stillman, 2017, ch. 1).

5. They are '**weconomists**'. Being raised in an economic landscape dominated by the idea of sharing and by websites like Uber, Airbnb, RelayRides, Taskrabbits, Getaround, Zaarly, Lending Club, Fon and many others, they understand sharing as the basis of economic action. Consequently, they will put pressure on organizations and companies in order to move the accent from individual values and ways of action, to the collective ones, considered to be more effective and convenient. Since 'we' and not 'I' is viewed as the center of gravity of economic action, 93 percent of 'Gen Zers' declare that a company's impact on society is decisive for their decision of working there. Consequently, they will demand an openness to dialogue and expect that their employers and managers will become their partners of decision making, and together to find answers to the problems and wrongs they believe to have being found in the functioning of world and society (Stillman & Stillman, 2017, ch. 1).
6. They are '**DIY**', or the do-it-yourself people. Another important consequence of their familiarity with Digital Ages' tools and ways of doing things is the fact that they could find on YouTube or other similar channels a tutorial for every imaginable action and activity. Consequently, 'Gen Zers' came to believe that they can do themselves just about anything that needs to be done. This belief was also stimulated by their parents, members of Generation X, who highly value independence, and so tried to instill it in their offspring, urging them not to follow traditional paths. Consequently, the do-it-yourself youngsters are extremely independent and 71 percent of them strongly agree with the idea that if you desire something to be done right, the only way is to do it with your own hands, which is more than likely to create frictions with the Millennials, who are more collaborative and opposed to individualism (Stillman & Stillman, 2017, ch. 1).
7. They are extremely **driven**. According to Stillman and Stillman (2017), the education their parents gave them induced in 'Gen Zers' the conviction that world is a tough place, populated by winners and losers, and simple participation is not really a reward, but winning is. Moreover, they saw the economic crisis and the recession that affected the previous generation and are very much aware of the ever increasing and hard to keep up rate of change that affects both society and economy. So, no wonder that they are very determined and strongly driven, up and ready to enter the struggle, and 72 percent of them declared that they are competitive towards people doing the same job. The challenge for companies and organizations will consequently be to manage this competitiveness and adapt the working environment in order to accommodate the driven 'Gen Zers' and make them feel as the winning team.

3.2 Generation Z's Values

Since people's values are the basis of their choices and decisions, both in everyday life and in the workplace, it would be appropriate to take a short look at Generation Z members' personal and professional values. As executive and scholar Dr. Candace Steele Flippin (2017) has discovered, when asked to rank six value concepts in order of importance from a personal point of view, 'Gen Zers' placed *happiness* in the first place and *faith* on the last place: "For Gen Z, *happiness* was the most important to the respondents as a group, followed by *relationships with family and friends, health, financial security, career*, and *faith*. Gen Z ranked happiness significantly higher than did the Baby Boomers and Gen X" (Steele Flippin, 2017, Ch. II). On the other hand, if we look at the

rankings made by the two genders, we find out that there are significant differences. For men, the order was: 1. *happiness,* 2. *relationships,* 3. *career, 4. health, 5. financial security,* and 6. *faith*, while women manifested some different preferences: 1. *relationships,* 2. *happiness,* 3. *health,* 4. *financial security,* 5. *career,* and 6. *faith*. Consequently, we must notice that the only point of agreement of the two genders concerns the low rank value attributed to faith and also that financial security is not at all one of the main concerns of Generation Z, which Steele Flippin believes it should be seen as no surprise, since they have seen several economic crises and shifts, and consequently have become more attentive to what really matters in life. The preference for happiness above all other values could be a consequence of the fact that the members of this generation are for now very young and so their optimism is still high, and also of their self-confidence and trust in the accessibility and quality of opportunities for obtaining that happiness, whatever individual form it may take.

When Steele Flippin tried to assess the professional values specific for Generation Z (what is more important from professional point of view in the present moment), what she found out was that they ranked the six values in the following order: 1. *doing well in current role*, 2. *making more money*, 3. *work-life balance*, 4. *promotion,* 5. *changing career,* and 6. *retirement*. The fact that earning more money is second only to the desire to perform well in the current position could mean that for the respondents, financial incentives are almost as important as the satisfaction the job offers, while other aspects of work that could also offer satisfaction, such as acquiring new skills or gaining experience, were deemed less important. It is also interesting that, when answers were compared according to gender of the respondents, one could see that the two top values were reversed: men favored financial earnings over the satisfaction of doing well at job, while women preferred the other way around. The other values were ranked in the same order. Apart from these, maintains Steele Flippin, for Generation Z members more important even than financial earnings are the opportunities for professional promotion, which is believed to be the main motivator in the workplace. The low ranking of retirement and lack of concern for the possibility of multiple change of career are attributed also to the fact that respondents are still very young, and only at the beginning of the professional life, so job changes are not frightful, and retirement seems a very far away perspective (Steele Flippin, 2017, Ch. II).

Directly connected to personal and professional values is the general view of the life opportunities or the expectations about what life has to offer in the most general terms. When asked to rank their life opportunity expectations, members of Generation Z were found to be more optimistic than those of the other generations, more than 95 percent of them believing that their expectations are achievable. As they ranked them, those were: 1. *being able to achieve goals*, 2. *financial security*, 3. *ability to pursue education*, 4. *freedom of speech*, 5. *building a legacy*, and 6. *home ownership*. When women's and men's answers were compared, though, the differences were found to be more significant, with the only exception of the value first ranked, *the ability to achieve their goals*. As for the all others, the order is not the same, for males chose 2. *financial security,* 3. *freedom of speech*, 4. *pursuit of education*, 5. *building a legacy*, and 6. *home ownership,* while females preferred, in order: 2. *education,* 3. *financial security*, 4. *freedom of speech,* 5. *home ownership,* and 6. *building a legacy*.

3.3 Management, Leadership and Generation Z

As Corey Seemiller and Meghan Grace (2018) put it, since Generation Z is just now entering the work-force, many years would need to pass before we could fully understand their real impact in the workplace, but until then leaders and managers could use what we already know about them: that they are entrepreneurial-minded, loyal, inventive, determined and with a desire to make world a better place. But what are the managers looking for on today's labor market, and how does Generation Z meet these expectations?

1. **Complex cognitive reasoning**. Since the world we live in is so rapidly changing, employers are looking for people who have the skills to adapt to change, i.e. complex cognitive reasoning, critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. But as 'Gen Zers' grew up in a world one-click distance from any needed information, quick answers and instructional video-tutorials, they came to rely on technology and on other people's knowledge and abilities and consequently became less able to figure it out for themselves. The frequent use of Internet made them able to engage more in surface-learning than in complex problem solving, and if we add to this their maximum of eight-seconds attention span, the conclusion seems to be that they could not be able to meet this requirement (Seemiller & Grace, 2018, ch. 18).
2. **Creativity**. If we take the widest definition of creativity, it might mean the use of imagination to build what could be from what it already is. Members of Generation Z identify themselves as having high levels of creativity and about 40 percent of them are planning to invent something that could change the world. However, their self-perception might be not so accurate, as their desire to be creative could not have a real basis. In their case, creativity was not educated and stimulated because of the recent elimination from the school and college curricula of subjects linked to creativity, such as arts or philosophy, although both students and teachers believe creativity education is of great importance. So, their desire to be creative could be nothing more than an illusion (Seemiller & Grace, 2018, ch. 18).
3. **Emotional intelligence**. Since the World Economic Forum added emotional intelligence on the sixth position of their list of essential competencies in the workplace in 2020, it is clear that it will be also of the greatest importance for employers and managers who will hire 'Gen Zers'. They have already been educated in this respect, being exposed to programs of social an emotional learning in school, and as a result they have high levels of empathy and compassion, and better emotional skill, attitudes and behaviors. However, they are used to communicate mainly through digital technology and in short sequences, and therefore could become to direct and too blunt. Since their attention span is very short, while stress levels are high, they could send their messages before thinking sufficiently about their form and content, and therefore could become rude and demanding. According to Seemiller and Grace (2018), only 42 percent of employers and managers believe their Generation Z new employees do possess the emotional skills required for their position.
4. **Social intelligence**. As emotional intelligence, the social one is also important in the workplace. The first means mainly self-understanding and self-monitoring of behavior, while the second consists of the ability to understand thoughts and feelings of other people, and consequently to better collaborate with them. It is obvious that employers and managers will rank this skill very high. However, compared to other generations, 'Gen Zers' were found lacking high social intelligence abilities, especially because they are accustomed to communicate with friends and other people mainly via digital media, and not face-to-face, and therefore spend less time practicing socializing in-person. Being so caught in social-media environment, they tend to lack the abilities of having natural, human, personal relations with others. Since on-line communication does not directly convey emotions, 'Gen Zers' tend to have poorer abilities to read and understand emotions expressed by other people, being unable to naturally relate to them and successfully collaborate with team-mates at work, and consequently will need to learn on the job the social skills they lack (Seemiller & Grace, 2018, ch. 18).
5. **Specific experiences**. In addition to the aforementioned skills, employers and managers look to hire people who have specific forms of previous experience, such as voluntary work and other extracurricular activities and also having held leadership positions. Members of Generation Z are very much involved in various students' organizations, where more than

65 percent of them had leadership positions (which does not necessarily means they did developed useful management skills), but on the other hand, less than 42 percent of them have had any form of formal training in management or leadership. However, more than 70 percent of them believe that they do posses leadership and management abilities superior to other people and especially their peers. A clear manifestation of the well-attested 'Dunning-Kruger Effect', this highly unrealistic self-evaluation of their real leadership abilities may prevent them to seek and use education and training opportunities in this area, since they believe that they already excel at these abilities. This situation could seriously affect the quality of future leaders and managers of all organizations, when time comes for them to be handed over to the managers recruited from amongst the members of Generation Z (Seemiller & Grace, 2018, ch. 18).

4. CONCLUSIONS

Given the above-mentioned circumstances, how should people act in order to improve the situation of both employers and employees, leaders and followers, managers and those managed?
According to Candace Steele Flippin (2017), the employees should keep in mind that their managers have a real desire to relate to them and provide them with a better working environment. Consequently, this desire should be welcomed and met by attitudes and actions such as: trying to understand the manager's plans and priorities and address them; sharing one's own point o view and vision; being positive, constructive and having a positive mindset, centred on one's goal, i.e. to perform as expected and be productive; having patience, as this is the key to achieve both long and short term goals; searching both established and alternative ways to pursue a better education; being prepared to work hard in order to achieve the best possible position to fulfil one's desires and dreams. On the other hand, employees and managers should not forget that 'Gen Z' workers' goals and aspirations are in some measure similar to those envisioned by themselves some time ago. Consequently, they should have an open attitude towards 'Gen Z' employees, think of ways to encourage the practical aspects of career advancement, help them build the good habits and skills that would better serve them in the future, and last but not least, show them the money. Since from all opportunities a job has to offer 'Gen Zers' value making money and doing well compared to their peers the most, they should be frequently reminded about the direct connection between their performance and the rewards that follow, be those financial or of some different kind, such as promotions, bonuses or social recognition.

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Lanier, K. (2017). 5 Things HR professionals need to know about generation Z: thought leaders share their views on the HR profession and its direction for the future. *Strategic HR review*, *16*(6), 288-290.

Summary: The article explores the key insights for HR professionals in the context of Generation Z joining the workforce. The author briefly describes the characteristics of Generation Z and how it is different from Millennials, which draws out the solutions for better engagement and management at the workplace. There are five main points covered in the article, which are digital natives, diversity, pragmatism, entrepreneurial spirit, and in-person communication. The article has pointed out that Generation Z expects diversity and inclusion in the workplace, this is because of their exposure through social media. Although being born in the technology era, Generation Z shows their preference for face-to-face communication for feedback and interaction with leaders. HR has a big role in adapting to this trait by fostering diversity, providing clear career development paths, and providing a balance between digital tools and personal engagement.

Relevance: The article provides an understanding of the researcher's Generation Z personalities and traits, which contribute to the effort to improve management and communication topics for a better working environment for Generation Z.

Place in the paper: Literature review

5 things HR professionals need to know about Generation Z

Thought leaders share their views on the HR profession and its direction for the future

Kimberly Lanier

When millennials entered the workforce years ago, management and leadership experts had a field day with Millennial madness. New theories and research emerged constantly about the youngest generation, at the time, to join the workforce. That was then, this is now – and the workforce today welcomes Generation Z to the ranks.

No generation is a monolith, but there are growing trends of expectations and preferences that change as culture and worker demands change. As with any generation, engaging Generation Z will present unique challenges and opportunities that may change the world of work forever.

Working to understand Generation Z may tell leaders something about the generation, but isn't meant to be one-size-fits-all advice for personal engagement. It's important to consider characteristics emerging as indicative of Generation Z, how they differ from their closest generational relatives (Millennials), what they want and expect from work and the implications for HR.

Meet Generation Z

Generation Z is the latest demographic to round out the five generations working side-by-side for the first time in the history of the modern workforce. In many ways, Generation Z is manifesting a continuation and extension of Millennial demands at work, but with many key differences, Generation Z was dubbed the "Anti-Millennials" by *Fast Company* (Segran, 2016).

In a *New York Times* (*NYT*) essay introducing Generation Z, *NYT* reporter Alex Williams summarized the slight disagreement between demographers and marketers on the beginning and end of the youngest working generation (Williams, 2015). Williams wrote that while academia considers Generation Z-ers born between the early 1990s and the mid-2000s, marketers ("who tend to slice generations into bite-size units") mark the 15-year span from 1996 to 2011 – making them between 6 and 21 years old.

Generation Z currently outnumbers Millennials by nearly one million, with an estimated 60 million American citizens born between the 15-year definition of "1996 to 2011", making up nearly a quarter of the US population.

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Approximately, 3.5 million Generation Z-ers were projected to graduate from high school this year, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=372, accessed 12 July 2017). This generational cohort is joining the workforce by the millions each year, with the eldest nearing the start of their professional careers and the youngest still in grade school. Generation Z is coming to work in massive numbers. Is HR ready for the challenge of motivating a new generation with unique hopes, dreams and values? Let's find out.

While each individual brings unique motivations, values and aspirations to the workplace, generations do experience global and nationwide phenomena together, in a sense, although from their unique perspectives to the events of the day. Growing up in a global recession, in wartime, plugged into technology from birth, members of Generation Z are likely to share some connecting traits as a result of shared external conditions. While managers and leaders can learn a lot from generational trends, it's also important to remember that generations are made of individuals – who, again, bring their own unique perspectives and preferences to work (http://go.maritzmotivation.com/Workforce_2020_Infographic, accessed 12 July 2017).

With that in mind, here are five things HR needs to know about the incoming Generation Z:

1. *Generation Z is the first true digital native generation*: Millennials were previously classified as digital natives, growing up around technology of some sort all their lives. However, Generation Z is the first truly connected generation from birth – designated as not only digital native but also mobile native. Many Generation Z-ers don't remember a time without internet or a time before social media. That constant connectivity has Generation Z consuming information faster than any generation before. How can HR prepare for the extreme tech-savviness, and associated short attention spans, of Generation Z? Understand that Generation Z (and Millennials) bring a strength of tech fluency to the workplace and offer a space for collaboration that values the input of digital savvy employees from all generations, departments and seniority levels.
2. *Diversity is an expectation of Generation Z*: Aside from access to a lifetime worth of information and interactive history, social media has given Generation Z a connection to others from different cultures, backgrounds and circumstances. Mary Meehan wrote in *Forbes* that Generation Z is driven by a cultural ethos of social justice (Meehan, 2016). While the expectation for cultural, racial and gender diversity has been steadily increasing generation over generation, Generation Z is the first to overwhelmingly expect diversity at work.
3. *Generation Z is more pragmatic than you might expect*: While it is easy for generations to critique the latest addition for being lackadaisical (arguably a more common trait of adolescence than one to be tattooed as a permanent trait of a generation), it's not quite so easy with Generation Z. Living through a global recession has Generation Z focused on sensible, stable careers; security; safety; and privacy. After witnessing the "social media fails" of Millennials, the generation to document everything with social media, Generation Z-ers are more drawn to private social networks like Snapchat that focus on an impermanent Web. Rather than rewarding with perks and flexibility, consider that Generation Z-ers may be more driven by traditional opportunities for advancement and development, improved economic security and better benefits.
4. *Generation Z is more entrepreneurial than Millennials*: In a study by Millennial Branding and Randstad USA, 17 per cent of Generation Z respondents said they had entrepreneurial aspirations, whereas only 11 per cent of Millennials said the same (Schawbel, 2014). Managers and leaders can cultivate entrepreneurial goals at work by encouraging a sense of agency at work, fostering innovation, autonomy and project ownership.
5. *Ditch the digital to reach Generation Z*: Despite the constant connectivity of Generation Z, Randstad USA also revealed that 51 per cent of Generation Z-ers prefer in-person communication with leaders (Schawbel, 2014). While digital and social engagement, recognition and communication tools can still engage Generation Z, feedback (which Generation Z reportedly desires with more frequency than any generation prior) should be delivered in-person in meaningful conversations.

If Generation Z isn't already part of your workforce, that will change within

the next year or two. HR professionals can take steps today to prepare for the next generation – and in the process, if done right, improve engagement and culture for employees of all generations as processes and policies adapt for the future of work.

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Source 39 (Scholarly)

Citation:

OPOLSKA-BIELAŃSKA, A. (2024). RESILIENCE AND THE WORKPLACE OF GENERATION Z.

Summary: The article explores the role of resilience in the professional lives of Generation Z and analyzes how it impacts their ability to deal with workplace challenges. The study was conducted by surveying respondents from Generation Z, it found that this generation shows a higher level of resilience than expected, which helps them to adapt to market demand, cope with stress, and maintain mental well-being. Generation Z also has a high expectation of remuneration along with other benefits important for their mental health, and they use social media as a means of primary communication to obtain information and exchange experiences. The study states that expectations of Generation Z placed on companies by young employees are beneficial to both parties, but it needs mutual respect, building relationships, and respecting value. Social media plays a big role in influencing well-being, support in difficult situations, and generating self-esteem, that's why being able to constantly share information is the main advantage of the media for Generation Z.

Relevance: The article is relevant to the topic of research on the resilience level of Generation Z in handling stress at the workplace. The study also encourages to organizations create a supportive work environment.

Place in the paper: Literature review

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RESILIENCE AND THE WORKPLACE OF GENERATION Z

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Purpose: The aim of the article is to present the impact of resilience on professional relationships in Generation Z. The emerging psychological difficulties and failure to cope with the expectations set by reality make it necessary to focus on the analysed problem.
Design/methodology/approach: The work uses an original study conducted using the CAVI method. 98 respondents, representatives of Generation Z, took part in it. In parallel to the study, an analysis of the literature on the subject was carried out, presenting the concept of resilience. The obtained results allowed us to draw conclusions and determine trends.
Results: Respondents have a higher level of resilience than expected at work. This can be explained by the fact that the randomly selected sample consists of people who are aware of market requirements, their knowledge, skills and values, and have experience in dealing with difficult situations. In return, they expect remuneration along with other benefits important for their mental well-being. They treat social media as a means of communication, obtaining information and exchanging experiences
Research limitations/implications: This research was an attempt to verify how Generation Z copes on the job market in the context of awareness of their own resilience. Only a randomly selected sample of Generation Z representatives took part in the study.
Practical implications: Strengthening resilience brings many benefits to the company. First of all, it makes people inspired to work more often than motivated, able to respond flexibly to changes and less susceptible to burnout. They will actively seek development opportunities, increasing the scope of their own competences.
Social consequences: The demands placed on companies by young employees can bring profit to both parties, but it requires mutual respect, building relationships and respecting values. This is facilitated by social media, which influence well-being, support in difficult situations, generate self-esteem and help adapt to changes. This ability to constantly share information is the main advantage of the media for Generation Z, creating and promoting their style of functioning.
Originality/value: building awareness of resilience among Generation Z is an important factor in shaping the professional space. It is worth educating young employees by offering development in this aspect.
Keywords: resilience, Generation Z, social media.

1. Introduction

It is increasingly difficult to build one's own resilience when observing the dynamic changes in the immediate environment and feeling the constant influx of countless stimuli while participating in social media. Technological and scientific advancements contribute to improving the quality of life and we are witnessing the acquisition of information about extraterrestrial worlds and the construction of applications that support humans in almost every activity. Simultaneously, alongside these optimistic messages, we observe a decline in the mental strength to cope with daily existence.

Recognizing the need for psychological support for the young generation, it is important to address the phenomenon of resilience in the context of coping with adult life. The aim of this article is to present the impact of resilience on professional relationships among Generation Z. Emerging psychological difficulties and the inability to cope with expectations posed by reality make it necessary to analyse this problem. The hypothesis was put forward that the level of resilience affects the way of coping with professional work among representatives of Generation Z. To verify this, an original study was conducted using the CAVI method, involving 98 respondents from Generation Z.

Parallel to the study, a literature review was conducted to introduce the concept of resilience. The obtained results allowed for drawing conclusions and identifying trends.

2. Resilience – terminological analysis

Discussions about mental resilience began in the 1970s when Rutter studied the psychological adaptation of children after experiencing maternal deprivation. The concept of resilience explains the phenomenon of individuals functioning well despite various life conditions, adversities, or traumatic events (Rutter, 2006, pp. 1-12). In the Polish language, there is no single word that fully reflects the meaning of the English term "resilience". To-date, the definition of mental resilience among researchers has not been standardized. Analysing different approaches to the term, three types can be distinguished:

- The consequence definition refers to the phenomenon where an individual can adapt well and develop even in the face of significant threats (VanMeter, Cicchetti, 2020, pp. 67-73).
- The competence definition indicates the ability to maintain healthy and proper development despite various adverse factors (Masten, 2000, pp. 205-220).
- The process definition refers to mental resilience, where an individual actively adapts and develops in unfavorable circumstances (Slone, Peer, 2021, p. 76).

A holistic view of the term allows it to be understood as: flexibility, robustness, the ability to act in difficult, stressful conditions. The term was introduced to the social sciences lexicon by pioneers of research in clinical experiments, Emma Werner (2000, pp. 115-132), Norman Garmezy (1985, pp. 213-234), and Michael Rutter (2006, pp. 1-12). Discussions around the idea of resilience involve defining the term, its conceptual scope, and operationalization in measurement methods (Luthar, 2000, pp. 543-562).

In a broader sense, resilience has been defined as a dynamic process reflecting relatively good adaptation despite experiencing threats or traumatic events (Sameroff, Rosenblum, 2006, pp. 116-124). This process includes the interaction of a spectrum of risk factors, vulnerabilities, and protective factors (Craig, 2003, pp. 1-11). Resilience can be understood as a positive or protective process that reduces maladaptation in individuals experiencing adversity (Greenberg, 2007, pp. 139-150). In one of his latest works, M. Rutter (2006) emphasized the interactive nature of the resilience phenomenon. It is a concept that considers both exposure to a range of significant threatening factors and relatively good mental health despite these factors. Many studies have shown that mental resilience can help individuals maintain a relatively stable and healthy physiological level in traumatic or stressful environments, which is crucial for coping with stress and improving mental health (Labrague, 2021, pp. 1893-1905). Therefore, mental resilience is the ability to cope with difficult, stressful, and traumatic situations while maintaining or restoring normal functioning (Ungar, 2019, pp. 441-448).

Summarizing the above considerations, for the purposes of this article, the definition of resilience is adopted as the ability to adapt to changes occurring in our environment, the way of coping with stress. It helps prepare for and get used to the unknown and unexpected. Resilience is primarily related to caring for wellbeing and inner balance in the face of challenges and the ability to quickly recover in a crisis (https://gromar.eu, 16.01.2024).

Individuals with high mental resilience are usually more optimistic, perceive difficulties as experiences, focus on personal strengths, accept constructive criticism, build close relationships with others, develop social skills, and have emotional awareness (Ryff, 2013, pp. 10-28). This can be seen as overlapping with emotional intelligence, as the ability to be flexible and resilient among the traits influencing the handling of negative stress effects. Recently, most publications have focused on topics related to research on mental resilience aspects associated with the Covid-19 pandemic and PTSD, as well as the molecular biology and genetic basis of mental resilience (Su, Yi, Chen, Xiao, 2023, pp. 465-481). Mental resilience is significantly correlated with a higher level of life satisfaction (Zheng, Huang, Fu, 2020, pp. 1323-1332).

3. The essence of resilience in existence

The workplace is an environment that undergoes changes for various reasons and at different intervals. There can be many reasons, but stress caused by change factors is considered the most common. However, it is interesting that some people easily cope with difficulties, achieving success, while for others, it leads to changing jobs. The variation in how people react to stress factors is due to resilience – flexibility in functioning in the face of adversity. This enables a positive attitude toward work, problem-solving, and maintaining motivation for further action. Consequently, it translates into the ability to effectively regulate thoughts and emotions, perceiving difficult situations as opportunities rather than personal threats. People with high resilience see adverse circumstances as an inherent part of life rather than an obstacle (Karwowska, 2022). High employee resilience brings real benefits, fostering not just inspiration for work.

Summarizing the theoretical considerations on resilience so far, it can be stated that this dynamic process, reflecting the adaptation of an individual to the environment despite difficulties and threats, largely depends on us. Our flexibility in accepting changes, attitude towards unpredictable situations, novelties, or lack of stability are skills that shape the level of resilience. Implementing actions in the area of Corporate Social Responsibility, introducing benefits in the area of flexible working hours, sports activities, organizing training, and promotion opportunities make the employee independent and happy not only at work but also in personal life (Opolska-Bielańska, 2021).

A factor strengthening or perhaps creating psychological difficulties for Generation Z is the understanding and seeking of support in social media. Self-esteem is built based on the digital world – a direct connection with social media. This virtual world provides reinforcement, serves as a starting point for comparisons, which translates into self-esteem and frustration (Klimczyk, 2021, pp. 41-55).

Social media activity can lead to lack of patience, the need for instant gratification, lack of focus, making people demanding, creative, and engaged in actions taken. Research confirms that intense use of social media increases stress, procrastination, and problems with emotion regulation. This is confirmed by periodic FOMO reports (Jupowicz-Ginalska, 2023).

An important problem is the development of online contacts. The relationships built online are increasingly fluid, transitory, and new relationships result from a single click. New technologies facilitate connections, but in reality, they promote clearly distorted relationships (Ma, Fang, 2023). This translates into self-aggression or aggression towards others. Being in the world of digital contacts causes emotional unpreparedness for building real relationships and coping with failures in risky situations. Growing up in an increasingly individualistic and polarized social context has not contributed to the development of flexibility and adaptability to changes in the environment. The cult of instant gratification and getting what one wants at all costs seems to be a constant element of behavior today (Lemańska, 2023).

One could summarize that Generation Z is a social group bearing the consequences of the pace of life, information overload, and lack of stability, which translates into decision-making problems and fear of disapproval.

4. Resilience and job changes in Generation Z – own research analysis

In considering the idea of resilience among Generation Z, a pilot survey was conducted from 20 October 2023, to 20 January 2024, using the CAVI method. Participation in the study was voluntary and anonymous. The group was random, comprising 98 people – 64 women and 34 men, aged 19-26.

The questions covered three aspects: declared mental state, attitude towards professional work, and the role of social media in life.

Assessment of the mental state began with an evaluation of well-being. Most respondents rated it as variable (52.1%). This may indicate a lack of stability in self-assessment and emotional lability, which should not be confused with flexibility and life accommodation. An optimistic result is reflected by 34.4% of respondents who defined their well-being as good and 8.3% as very good – a total of 42.7% positively assessing their well-being. The obtained results are presented in figure 1.

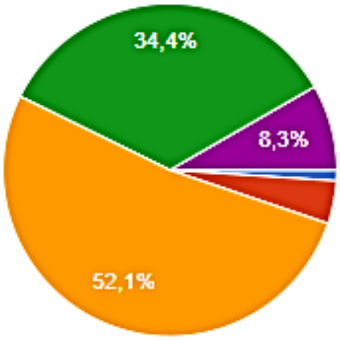


Figure 1. Self-assessment of respondents' well-being.

Source: own elaboration.

Next, the impact of stressful situations on well-being was assessed. As a result of self-diagnosis, the following distribution of answers was obtained: 57.3% assess the impact as significant compared to 40.6% as moderate. Only 2.1% state it has no significance for their well-being (figure 2).

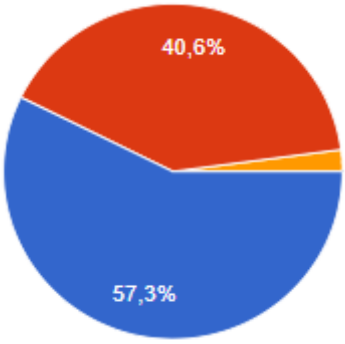


Figure 2. Assessment of the impact of stressful situations on well-being.

Source: own elaboration.

This confirms the significant impact of difficult situations on well-being and related functioning, translating into reactions. This is evidenced by the answers obtained to the question about specific behaviors in stressful situations (figure 3). Among the response options (multiple choice), both activating and introverted behaviors were included.

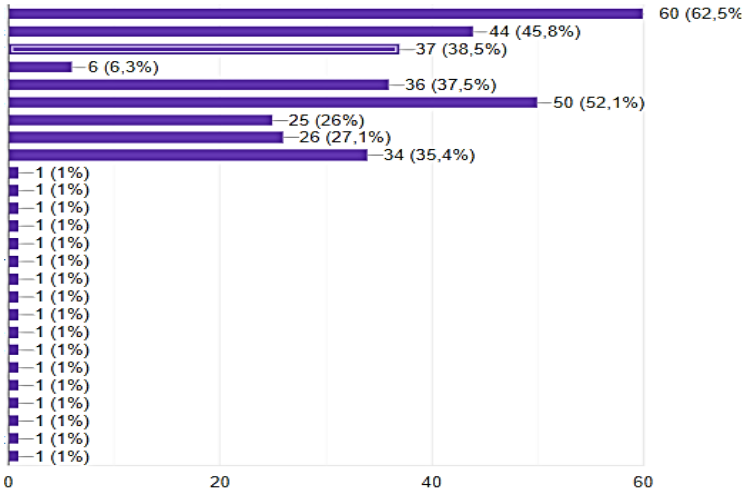


Figure 3. Preferred behaviors in difficult situations.

Source: own elaboration.

Among the responses, introverted behaviors dominated – listening to music indicated by 62.5%, "shutting oneself off" 52.1%, "going to sleep" 45.8%. Physical activity varied and oscillated around the responses: "meeting with friends" (37.5%), "going to a disco" (6.3%).

Aggressive reactions were reported by 26%, swearing 35.4%, and using substances 27.1%. This constitutes a high percentage of negative reactions to difficult situations.

This illustrates that in a difficult, stressful situation, we prefer to be alone, which may result from social alienation and the inability to cope with emotions.

Self-esteem is crucial for assessing well-being and adaptive abilities. For this purpose, respondents were asked for a self-diagnosis of self-esteem (figure 4). Positive self-assessment responses dominated ("high" 42.7% and "very high" 9.4%).

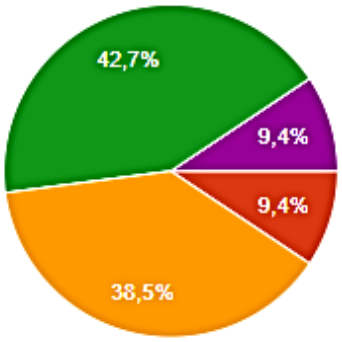


Figure 4. Self-esteem assessment according to respondents.

Source: own elaboration.

This generalized self-assessment influences mood and behavior. It can be assumed that it will translate into the level of resilience, determining flexibility and adaptation to changes (figure 5).

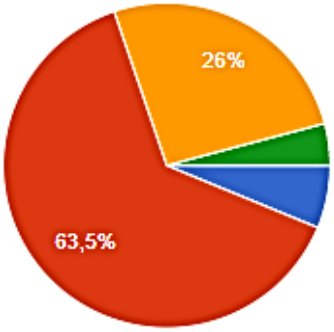


Figure 5. Flexibility and adaptation to changes.

Source: own elaboration.

Verifying well-being assessment through questions about individual functioning proved that in the case of the original study, respondents positively diagnose their adaptation to difficult situations. They assess their well-being as good, and this thinking accompanies them in everyday life. They cope differently with stressful situations, influenced by well-being, self-esteem, and adaptation to changes.

The next thematic block concerned professional activity. The comparison of mental state assessment with the attitude towards work aimed to verify the impact of resilience on coping in this area.

This part of the study began with defining what work means to the respondents. The options provided a wide range of answers. They were generated based on the author's previous article (Opolska-Bielańska, 2021, pp. 143-152). Among the possible answers, the results were: "exclusively a space for earning money" (12.5%); "a space for earning money and other benefits" (85.4%); "a space for social contacts" (69.8%); "a break from everyday life" (27.1%); "a space for realizing dreams" (27.1%); "a space for self-development" (27.1%); "a space for relaxation" (6.3%).

Among the responses, those related to money and other benefits, as well as social contacts, dominated. This confirms the assumption that work for the young generation is not solely about monetization but the essence of social relations and educational activities.

If work is not only an economic value, then it was appropriate to ask about the way of thinking about work. 46.9% of respondents had a positive perception of their workplace, while 34.4% viewed it neutrally. They value salary 76 %, knowledge of tasks and duties 68.8%, peace 62.5%, and mental well-being 54.2%. The distribution of responses confirms that Generation Z employees value salary as a reward for knowledge and skills, knowledge of tasks and duties, certainty, peace, and mental well-being as elements of life stability. This confirms the assumption that balancing work and personal life is valuable for Generation Z. They are not employees who would sacrifice their personal life for work. They work to perform tasks in which they are competent and to receive adequate remuneration and other benefits. They prefer to work in a social space rather than at home, even though it is convenient. When looking for job, they pay attention to salary, atmosphere, company location, personal development opportunities, flexible working hours (figure 6). These factors confirm the importance of independence and mental well-being for this generation.

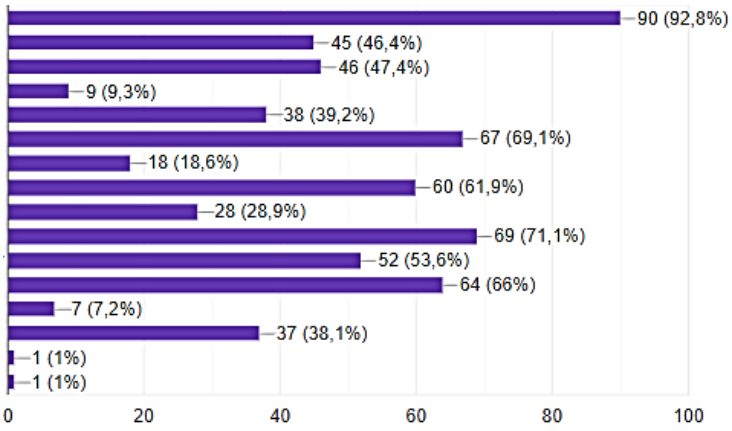


Figure 6. Important factors when choosing a job.

Source: own elaboration.

The ability to adapt to changes at work (figure 7), the speed of acclimatization to a new environment (figure 8), and treating difficult situations as challenges or escapes (figure 9) were to indicate flexibility and mental resilience as the basis of resilience. Analysis of the response distribution indicated a high level of resilience among the surveyed representatives of Generation Z. They show 66 % for good and very good adaptation to changes at work, 77.3% assess that they acclimatize quickly to a new environment, and 74.2% consider difficult situations at work as challenges.

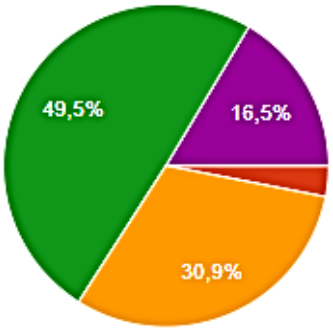


Figure 7. Adaptation to changes at work.

Source: own elaboration.

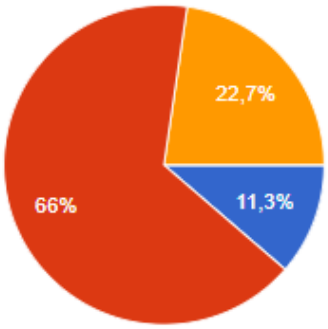


Figure 8. Speed of acclimatization to a new environment.

Source: own elaboration.

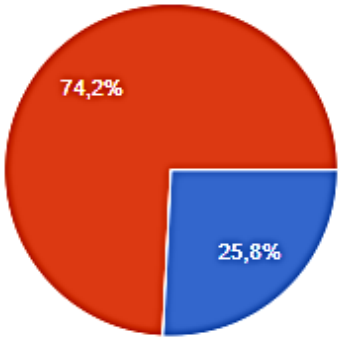


Figure 9. Treating difficult situations as challenges or escapes.

Source: own elaboration.

The final part of the original study included questions about social media in the context of encountered problems.

The first aspect addressed was the indication of the place for job searching. The responses were dominated by "internet portals" 88.5%, "social media" 49%, "company websites they want to apply to" 45.8%, "social networking sites specializing in professional-business contacts" 40.6%. Among the responses, although in single digits, were "from friends", "network of contacts", "job office websites".

The next questions concerned coping with difficult situations through social media activity. Treating them as a means of solving problems was declared by 56.2% compared to 43.7% who do not seek support there. In difficult situations, social media are an escape for 45.8% of respondents, not for 15.4%, and "sometimes" for 39.6%.

The obtained results of the original study confirm the assumptions made in the work, but to a lesser extent than expected.

5. Summary

The aim of the article was to present the impact of resilience on coping with work among Generation Z. It was assumed that they have a lower level of resilience than the original research showed. This can be explained by the fact that the randomly selected sample included individuals aware of market requirements, their knowledge, skills, and value, and having experience in coping with difficult situations. In return, they expect remuneration along with other benefits important for their mental well-being. They treat social media as a means of communication, obtaining information, and exchanging experiences.

Employers hiring representatives of Generation Z should focus on actions that allow for maintaining a balance between private life and work. The process of career advancement and development is being modernized. The company's offer should include opportunities for self-development through a package of dedicated training, employee duties should have meaning and provide satisfaction from the essence of action. It is necessary to create a good atmosphere and organizational culture based on respect, cooperation, and acceptance. The remuneration should be competitive, and if the work can be done remotely, there should be an option to choose.

Strengthening resilience brings many benefits to the company. First of all, it makes people more often inspired to work rather than motivated, able to respond flexibly to changes, and less prone to burnout. They will actively seek development opportunities, increasing the scope of their competencies.

The requirements that young employees impose on companies can bring benefits to both parties, but it requires mutual respect, building relationships, and respecting values. Social media, which influence well-being, support in difficult situations, generate self-esteem, and help adapt to changes, are conducive to this. Therefore, it is not surprising that this is a space for achieving mental well-being, job seeking, and building social contacts. It assumes dialogue, quick response, sharing experiences, and immediate communication. This constant sharing of information is a fundamental advantage of media for Generation Z, creating and promoting a style of functioning.

The applicative value lies in building awareness of resilience among Generation Z as an essential factor in shaping the professional environment. It is worth educating young employees, offering development in this aspect. This study was an attempt to verify how Generation Z copes in the labor market in the context of awareness of their own resilience. It would be necessary to expand the research by measuring before and after education in the area of resilience awareness in the process of one's own existence.

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Summary: The study was about the determination of key factors influencing work engagement among Generation Z employees. The research focuses on analyzing the impact of six factors, which are leadership, corporate social responsibility, work-life balance, autonomy, and technology on Gen Z employee engagement. A survey has been conducted and figured that transformational leadership has a strong positive impact on employee engagement, the leaders develop and align employees' individual needs and values with the organization's values, creating greater autonomy and resources of independence and power. Meanwhile, transactional leadership shows no significant impact on employee engagement, suggesting that extrinsic rewards and rigid management structures may not resonate with Generation Z employees. The dimensions of autonomy and technology have been proven to have a positive relation to employee engagement. Based on this result, the company should offer appropriate leadership training to managers and implement flexible workplace policies that will facilitate employee engagement.

Relevance: The article has shown relevance by meticulously analyzing the factors that impact Generation Z employee engagement, and figuring out the positives of transformational leadership style, which is a recommendation for organizations to make an appropriate change with Generation Z.

Factors Impacting Work Engagement of Gen Z Employees: A Regression Analysis

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This study examined the factors that impacted work engagement for Gen Z employees. Six factors were identified for analysis and hypothesized to be positively related to employee engagement, including: corporate social responsibility, leadership – transformational and transactional, work-life balance, autonomy, and technology. A survey was sent out through Amazon Mechanical Turk in April 2020. From the responses, Gen Z respondents accounted for 69. This study used a correlation analysis and a multiple regression analysis. Results revealed positive correlations between the variables and employee engagement, with transformational leadership showing the highest correlation and transactional leadership the lowest. Technology, autonomy, and work-life balance fell in between these two extremes. The results of the multiple regression analysis indicated that transformational leadership had the strongest influence on employee engagement, while transactional leadership had no impact. Autonomy and work-life balance were shown to have positive influences on employee engagement; technology and corporate social responsibility were not significant.

Keywords: employee engagement, Gen Z employee, transformational leadership, transactional leadership, corporate social responsibility, work-life balance, autonomy, technology

INTRODUCTION

Employee engagement is more than simply job satisfaction. When employees are engaged, they are emotionally committed to their company, which translates into real economic benefits. For instance, Kruse

(2012) reported that companies with an engaged workforce experienced a 6% higher net profit margin than those whose employees were not. Because of the importance to companies of employee engagement, numerous studies have been conducted to identify the factors that may influence it. For instance, Wasay (2013) found that when comparing two workplaces, the organization where employees had strong work-life balance also showed a higher level of employee engagement. Regarding its connection to leadership, a recent study by Gangai and Agrawal (2017) revealed that transformational leaders are more likely to increase employee engagement. Similarly, research by Slemp and coauthors (2018) discovered a leadership style called Leader Autonomy Support (LAS), which supports autonomy in employees, led to higher employee engagement as well as numerous other positive outcomes. It is becoming increasingly important for companies to understand the factors that promote employee engagement, especially as new generations with different values and needs enter the workforce. The next set of people who will be joining the workforce is Generation Z (Gen Z). Gen Z is the youngest, most ethnically diverse and largest generation in American history, comprising 27% of US population (Tracking Gen Z's characteristics, n.d.). According to a study by Deloitte with the Network of Executive Women, if given a choice of a boring job with high salary and an interesting job with lesser pay, Gen Z was fairly split over the choice (Gomez, Mawhinney, & Betts, 2020). Hence, it is important to identify the factors impacting Gen Z's engagement at work so that companies can act accordingly to retain them and their valuable skills.

The objective of this study is to identify and analyze the factors that will increase Gen Z's engagement, the newest members of the workforce. Although there are various individual studies that examine the relationship between employee engagement and such factors as effective leadership, work-life balance, autonomy, to name a few, very little research focuses particularly on Gen Z. This study proposes to fill that gap. Specifically, this research analyzes the impact of six factors: leadership (transformational and transactional), corporate social responsibility, work-life balance, autonomy, and technology on Gen Z employee engagement. The authors developed hypotheses and designed a survey to collect data via Amazon Mechanical Turk. The data were then explored using correlation and multiple regression analyses. In the next sections, a review of prior research is provided, along with the development of the current study's hypotheses. Research methodology and sample data are explained, followed by a presentation of statistical analysis. The paper concludes with a discussion of the research results, managerial implications, and potential future studies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Leadership and Employee Engagement

To date, much research has been performed to investigate the effect of leader influence on employee engagement. For example, in a study by Parimalam and Mahadevan (2012), data related to managers' support were collected from 300 employees representing various levels (officer, cashier and executives) across 10 different banking organizations. The result of the ANOVA and correlation analyses confirmed their hypotheses that leadership has a positive relationship with employee engagement in the workplace.

While there are various studies that tie the general subject of leadership to employee engagement, considerable focus has been placed on transformational and transactional leadership approaches. Transformational and transactional leadership theory was initially developed by Burns (1978), then further refined and applied to evaluate effective leadership styles in organizational settings (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1990).

Transformational leadership involves four components of behaviors, namely: idealized influence; inspirational motivation; intellectual stimulation; and individualized consideration (Avolio & Bass, 1991). Through these behaviors, transformational leaders tend to develop and align employees' individual needs and values with those of the organization, provide greater autonomy and resources of independence and power. These conditions in turn provide intrinsic motivation for employees, which is reflected in high levels of engagement in their work (Avolio & Bass, 1991; Lee, Idris, & Tuckey, 2019; Li, Castaño, & Li, 2018).

By contrast, transactional leadership involves three components of behaviors: use of contingent rewards; active management by exception; and passive management by exception. Transactional leaders

impact employee engagement particularly through contingent reward and active management by exception. Unlike the transformational leaders, transactional leaders tend to focus employees' extrinsic motivation by setting clear goals and expectations of performance and providing appropriate rewards when employees achieve goals that organization expects (Bass & Avolio, 1993; Bass, Avolio, Jung, & Berson, 2003; Li et al., 2018). Based on the above, the following hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 1a: *Transformational leadership is positively related to employee engagement.*

Hypothesis 1b: *Transactional leadership is positively related to employee engagement.*

Corporate Social Responsibility and Employee Engagement

Drawing on their study of 673 working adults from five different regions – Canada, China (Mainland), France, Hong Kong and Singapore, Rupp, Shao, Skarlicki, Paddock, Kim, and Nadisic (2018) concluded that the positive relationship between corporate social responsibility (CSR) and employee work engagement cannot be assumed to be universal, and suggested that other individual and contextual factors play an important role. Multigroup confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) were performed to examine the configural variance and metric invariance which justified the pooling of samples. Interclass correlations were also calculated to justify the execution of individual-level hypothesis tests. As a final step, the authors controlled the effects of an unmeasured latent method to examine if common method variance threatened to bias their findings. Their results ultimately indicated that employees' CSR perceptions positively correlate with work engagement. In a different study, Valentin, Valentin, and Nafulkho (2015) developed a conceptual model to link the impact on employee engagement with the level of autonomy in CSR initiatives. To collect data for analysis, the researchers performed a Boolean search for descriptors related to employee engagement and CSR from several databases (i.e. ERIC, EBSCO, JSTOR and ABI/Inform Complete). Their findings reveal a positive relationship between employee engagement and CSR, when the employee is involved at during the planning, designing and implementation stages of the CSR initiative. Extending this examination of CSR and employee engagement, Soni and Mehta's (2020) research makes an important distinction between internal CSR (where companies take actions for the betterment of employees) and external CSR (where companies promote positive social and economic impact). For their empirical study, data were collected from 485 managers (based on multistage sampling) across 10 banks in India, and then analyzed using the Partial Least Square Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method. Their findings show support for a positive correlation between internal CSR and employee engagement. Drawing on the evidence from the previous empirical studies, the following hypothesis is put forward:

Hypothesis 2: *CSR is positively related to employee engagement.*

Work-Life Balance and Employee Engagement

Previous research has demonstrated that creating policies to promote flexibility for work-life balance increases employee engagement. For instance, Pandita and Singhal (2017) studied 123 employees from two organizations to investigate how employees' personal lives influence work engagement in the presence or absence of work-life balance policies. Employee engagement was assessed using the factors of vigor, dedication, and absorption, while levels of stress and leisure were used to operationalize work-life balance. Their results showed that organizations who create policies which offer work flexibility increase employees' feelings of work-life balance and reduce levels of stress, thereby leading to increased employee engagement. There is further evidence that while work-life balance and employee engagement are positively related, they are both negatively correlated with turnover. In their survey of 213 executives, Jaharuddin and Zainol (2019) confirmed a negative relationship between employee engagement and turnover. The authors also concluded that as employee engagement increases, the propensity to leave the organization decreases. To increase work-life balance, managers should create an open dialogue with employees so that when personal stressors start disrupting work, managers can provide the flexibility needed to keep employees engaged. Dinh (2020) researched how the relationships managers have with their

employees can create a greater sense of work-life balance and thus, more engagement. Survey data was collected and analyze to reveal that the employee-supervisor relationship was the most important factor to determine workload and ultimately balance organizational needs with those of the employee. Dinh (2020) concluded that the relationship with the supervisor is imperative in creating a sense of work-life balance for the employee. While it may be inevitable that employees will experience stressors in their personal and work lives, research has shown that companies can promote work-life balance through flexible working, which in turn maintains employee engagement. Moreover, organizations with greater employee engagement have lower levels of turnover and are less likely to have employees who intend to leave. Previous studies also demonstrate that the employee's relationship with manager or supervisor is also very important to foster a culture of work-life balance. Based on this past research, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 3: *Work-life balance is positively related to employee engagement.*

Autonomy and Employee Engagement

Job autonomy can increase both employee engagement and innovation. Spiegelaere, Gyes, and Hootegem (2016) studied how various dimensions of job autonomy creates different outcomes for employees. They surveyed 927 employees to study four dimensions of autonomy (i.e. work method, scheduling, work time and place of work) and how they impact employee engagement and innovation. The findings revealed positive relationships between all four components of autonomy and employee engagement and innovation. Further, Spiegelaere et al. (2016) deduced that the presence of all four autonomy dimensions was more effective for improving employee engagement than any single dimension on its own. Evidence exists that there is a positive connection between manager trust in subordinates and level of autonomy. In their study on this relationship, Heyns and Rothmann (2018) surveyed 252 employees using a number of established scales: the Behavioral Trust Inventory; Work-Related Basic Need Satisfaction Scale; and Work Engagement Scale. The researchers found that communication was a significant factor. When communication is fostered through clear expectations, employees will feel more comfortable working autonomously, consequently increasing employee engagement. In addition to managers, colleagues can play a role in creating a workplace culture that enables work autonomy. Vera, Martínez, Lorente, and Chambel (2016) investigated this topic through sample of 313 nurses in 33 work teams. Analyzing both individual and aggregated responses, they found that feelings of job autonomy were stronger when there was support from both the supervisor and team levels, resulting in higher levels of employee engagement. To summarize the previous findings in this area, work autonomy and employee engagement are positively related, and the impact on the latter is stronger when multiple dimensions of autonomy are present. Managers who trust their subordinates and foster clear, open communication will increase employees' confidence in their ability to work autonomously. Finally, employees who have support from both their peers and manager, will see an increase in their ability to work autonomously, as well as in their engagement levels. Drawing on this past evidence, the following hypothesis is offered:

Hypothesis 4: *Autonomy is positively related to employee engagement.*

Technology and Employee Engagement

Alnoor, Al-Abrrow, Abdullah, and Abbas (2020) examined the link between the employee perception of organizational readiness for technology change, and subsequent efficiency in using new technology. Conducting the study at a large Iraqi educational institution, the researchers collected and analyzed survey data in SmartPLS 3.0 application module, using structured equation modeling (SEM) and partial least squares (PLS) methods. Their findings indicate that a positive correlation between technology and employee engagement exist. In their 2010 study, Holt and Diggins (2010) analyzed an internal communication project within a multinational company (T-mobile) to determine if the migration of paper-based (magazine) communication to a digital platform had an impact on employee engagement. The project

involved two phases: the first was to raise awareness of the change to the digital strategy. The second phase reinforced the change, and employees were encouraged to contribute to discussions on the digital transition.

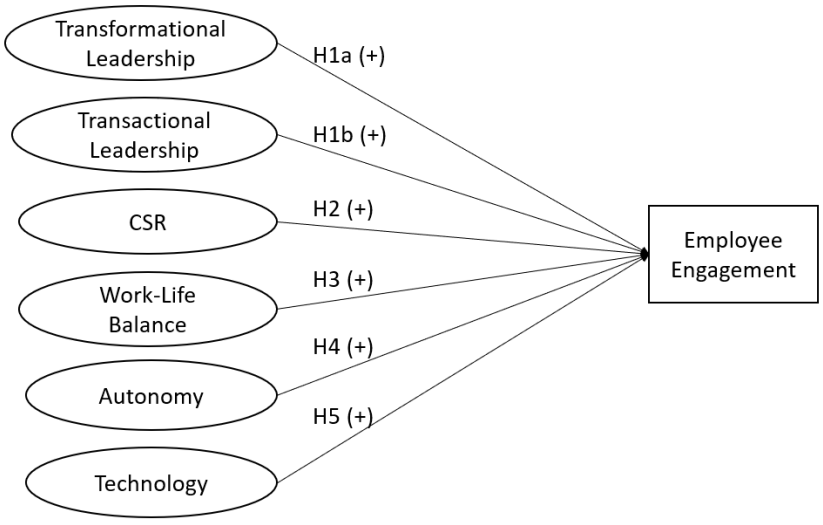
Surprising to the researchers, 93% of employees surveyed rated their understanding of the strategy to be 'good'. The digital magazine was read by more employees than the print edition, and about 40% of the employees said that they were able to use the details published in the digital version in their sales work. The response showed that the shift to digital communication had a positive impact on employee work engagement. Maltseva (2020) also discussed ways for engaging employees in their work and the organizational environment using wearables at work. This helps both managers and employees; managers find the data collected from wearables trust-worthy, while employees can move past some physical limitations posed by such things as noise levels, temperature, and blind spots, to complete their work. Drawing from these previous studies, the following hypothesis is put forth:

Hypothesis 5: *Technology is positively related to employee engagement.*

METHODOLOGY

Bringing together the six hypotheses on employee engagement proposed in the previous section, the following research framework is developed, as shown in Figure 1. Measures used for testing the research variables are described next.

FIGURE 1
RESEARCH FRAMEWORK



Employee Engagement

In a study designed to measure employee engagement, Schaufeli, Bakker, and Salanova (2006) identified three distinct dimensions: vigor, dedication, and absorption. For each of these three dimensions they created three items, for a total of nine items in their scale. One item from each dimension was chosen to include in the current survey, as follows: (1) I am enthusiastic about my job. (2) When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work. (3) I feel happy when I am working intensely.

Leadership

In order to assess transformational and transactional leadership, Bass and Avolio (1993) developed the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). In their measure, they identified four dimensions of transformational leadership: charismatic, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and

individualized consideration; and two dimensions of transactional leadership – contingent rewards and management by exception. The items per each dimension included in this research questionnaire are as follows:

Transformational Leadership

Charismatic leadership dimension includes three items: (1) My leader makes everyone around him/her enthusiastic about assignments. (2) I have complete faith in my leader. (3) My leader encourages me to express my ideas and opinions. Inspirational motivation dimension includes three items: (1) My leader is an inspiration to us. (2) My leader inspires loyalty to him/her. (3) My leader inspires loyalty to the organization. Intellectual stimulation dimension includes three items: (1) My leader's ideas have forced me to rethink some of my own ideas, which I had never questioned before. (2) My leader enables me to think about old problems in new ways. (3) My leader has provided me with new ways of looking at things, which used to be a puzzle for me. Individualized consideration dimension includes three items: (1) My leader gives personal attention to members who seem neglected. (2) My leader finds out what I want and tries to help me get it. (3) I can count on my leader to express his/her appreciation when I do a good job.

Transactional Leadership

Contingent reward dimension includes three items: (1) My leader tells me what to do if I want to be rewarded for my efforts. (2) There is a close agreement between what I am expected to put into the group effort and what I can get out of it. (3) Whenever I feel like it, I can negotiate with my leader about what I can get from what I accomplish. Active management by exception dimension includes three items: (1) My leader asks no more of me than what is absolutely essential to get the work done. (2) It is all right if I take initiatives, but my leader does not encourage me to do so. (3) My leader only tells me what I have to know to do my job.

Corporate Social Responsibility

In their respective studies, Woo (2013) and the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI, 2012) presented five dimensions to evaluate corporate social responsibility (CSR): environment, human rights and labor, product responsibility, society, and economy. From their total of 12 scale items, the following 11 items were selected for this research instrument. Environment dimension includes two items: (1) Minimize pollutions when produce products/services. (2) Invest to protect environments. Human rights & labor dimension includes three items: (1) Take care of water, energy, and material uses. (2) Minimize pollutions when produce products/services. (3) Invest to protect environments. Product responsibility dimension includes two items: (1) Clearly label/explain products/services for customers. (2) Take care of customer complaints. Society dimension includes two items: (1) Invest to develop local community welfares. (2) Avoid corruptions in business. Economy dimension includes two items: (1) Provide the company financial information to public. (2) Consider the indirect impacts of the marketing programs on society.

Work-Life Balance

In their investigation into why some managers work long hours, Brett and Stroh (2003) examined a plethora of factors, such as: housework, family involvement, family satisfaction, family to work stress, work to family stress, family alienation, work-balance life, work overload, and job satisfaction, to name a few. For the purposes of this study, the authors have opted to incorporate the work-life balance factor. The original five items from Brett and Stroh's (2003) scale chosen for this survey are as follows: (1) I feel that my job negatively affects my psychological well-being (reverse-coded). (2) I feel that my job negatively affects my physical health (reverse-coded). (3) I fell tension about balancing all my responsibilities (reverse-coded). (4) I feel that you should change something about my work in order to balance my responsibilities (reverse-coded). (5) I feel that personal commitments interfere with my job (reverse-coded).

Autonomy

In their now-famous ground-breaking research, Hackman and Oldham (1980) explored how job structure and design can influence the work performed. Specific to this study is their analysis of autonomy, which comprise the three items: (1) I have significant autonomy in determining how I do my job. (2) I can decide on my own how to go about doing my work. (3) I have considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in how I do my job.

Technology

Nambisan, Agarwal, and Tanniru (1999) developed a 21-item scale to evaluate the impact of technology on work engagement, distinguished by three dimensions: technology cognizance, ability to explore, and intention to explore. While their full scale is composed of 21 items, only three items related to the ability to explore dimension were deemed relevant for inclusion in this questionnaire, as listed: (1) I have easy access to new technologies at workplace. (2) I am permitted to use a new technology. (3) I am capable of experimenting with new technology as necessary.

Regression Model

The present study proposes an employee engagement model using a regression analysis. The model recognizes Employee Engagement as the dependent variable, while Leadership (transactional and transformational), Corporate Social Responsibility, Work-Life Balance, Autonomy, and Technology are the independent factors. The multiple regression model is expressed as follows:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_{1a}X_{1a} + \beta_{1b}X_{1b} + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3\beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \beta_5X_5$$

where Y = Employee Engagement
X_{1a} = Transformational Leadership
X_{1b} = Transactional Leadership
X_2 = Corporate Social Responsibility
X_3 = Work-Life Balance
X_4 = Autonomy
X_5 = Technology

Sample Data

A multi-item questionnaire was developed based on the proposed research hypotheses and associated scales to evaluate the relevant independent variables, as previously discussed. In April 2020, survey data were collected using Amazon Mechanical Turk. Adjusting for missing values and poor response quality, a total of 69 surveys were deemed usable for analysis.

RESULTS

Reliability Analysis

Reliability tests on each variable were run with Cronbach's alpha. Apart from transactional leadership, all other variables reported strong internal consistency with over .80. To improve the reliability for transactional leadership above .7, one survey item was dropped. The results are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1
RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

Variable	Items	Item dropped	Cronbach's Alpha	Scale Mean	Scale Variance
Employee Engagement	3	0	.940	13.58	34.865
Transformational Leadership	12	0	.965	56.94	327.791
Transactional Leadership	5	1	.708	21.180	34.590
Corporate Social Responsibility	11	0	.881	54.28	156.129
Work-life Balance	5	0	.883	24.610	57.400
Autonomy	3	0	.960	14.730	25.109
Technology	3	0	.874	15.930	19.382

Correlation Analysis for Gen Z Employees

For Gen Z employees, the data analysis showed that employee engagement was highly correlated with transformational leadership, transactional leadership, corporate social responsibility (CSR), work-life balance (WLB), autonomy, and technology ($p < .001$). This is presented in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS & CORRELATION MATRIX

	Mean	SD	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
(1) Employee Engagement	4.526	1.968	1						
(2) Lead_TF	4.745	1.508	.759***	1					
(3) Lead_TS	4.355	1.253	.592***	.822***	1				
(4) CSR	4.906	1.171	.553***	.584***	.512***	1			
(5) WLB	4.965	1.432	.594***	.448***	.315**	.372**	1		
(6) Autonomy	4.937	1.625	.671***	.625***	.538***	.332**	.599***	1	
(7) Technology	5.149	1.503	.436***	.434***	.374**	.357**	.236	.504***	1

*p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p<0.001 (two-tailed); N = 69; SD = Standard Deviation; TFL = Transformational Leadership, TSL = Transactional Leadership.

Regression Analysis for Gen Z Employees

A multiple regression model was analyzed to explore how the six independent variables (transformational leadership, transactional leadership, corporate social responsibility, work-life balance, autonomy, and technology) are related to the dependent variable (employee engagement). With respect to leadership, it is important to note that transformational leadership was statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), but transactional leadership was not. Autonomy and work-life balance were also found to be statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), while technology and corporate social responsibility were not. Variance inflation factors (VIF) are less than 4, which indicates that no serious multicollinearity is present in the model. The proposed regression model explained 71.3% of the variation in Gen Z employee engagement with the six independent variables. In summary, data fitted the regression model [Adjusted $R^2 = .713$, $F(6, 61) = 28.758$, $p < .001$]. Table 3 provides details of the multiple regression model results.

TABLE 3
REGRESSION MODEL RESULTS

Dependent Variable = Employee Engagement; Adjusted R^2 = .713, F(6, 61) = 28.758, p < .001						
	B	SE	Beta	t	p	VIF
(Constant)	-2.169	.813		-2.669	.010	
Leader_TF	.681	.151	.516	4.495	.000	3.083
Leader_TS	-.060	.181	-.029	-.330	.742	1.746
CSR	.191	.141	.115	1.362	.178	1.654
WLB	.251	.121	.184	2.070	.043	1.846
Autonomy	.273	.124	.225	2.211	.031	2.428
Technology	.022	.104	.017	.214	.831	1.485

Note: ID = 52 was identified as an outlier and excluded. B = Regression coefficient; SE = Standard error; Beta = Standardized coefficient; VIF = Variance inflation factor.

DISCUSSION

Hypotheses 1a and 1b

When considering leadership, evidence supports Hypothesis 1a – transformational leadership is positively related to employee engagement, and highly statistically significant (p =.000). However, the results are mixed for transactional leadership (Hypothesis 1b). The results were in line with the literature that states leadership style has a direct impact on employee engagement (Hsieh & Wang, 2015; Busse & Regenberg, 2019; Parimalam et al., 2012; Saad, Sudin, & Shamsuddin, 2018; Srivatsava, 2016). In particular, these studies looked at leadership traits such as being authentic, trustworthy, and inclusive – those traits associated with transformational leadership, identified by Vera and Crossan (2004). Thus, the current findings support that leadership does play an important role in any workplace for employees across generations, and Gen Z employees are no different. It is human nature to be inspired and engaged by leaders who have traits of transformational leadership. However, the non-significance reported here for transactional leadership may be explained by the lack of prior studies that distinguish the leadership variable between transformational and transactional styles.

Hypothesis 2

The analysis was inconclusive for Hypothesis 2 - CSR is positively related to employee engagement. The results showed no statistical significance between CSR and employee engagement (p = 0.178) in the regression models, while the correlations were significant. The current findings are inconclusive with the prior studies, which reported that CSR has a positive impact on employee engagement (Rupp et al., 2018; Valentin et al., 2015; Soni & Mehta, 2020). The discrepancy could be attributed which type of CSR is examined, either internal CSR (where companies take actions for betterment of employees) or external CSR (where companies promote positive social and economic impact). The current study tested overall CSR and did not distinguish between the specific types of CSR.

Hypothesis 3

Evidence supports Hypothesis 3 - work-life balance is positively related to employee engagement. The analysis showed that work-life balance is statistically significant in relation to employee engagement (*p* =.043), confirming past findings (Pandita & Singhal, 2017; Jaharuddin & Zainol, 2019). These studies found that employees who had more flexibility and a greater balance between home and work demands were more engaged. Although Gen Z employees may have fewer family priorities than older generations, they still want flexible work schedules and to keep the demands of their job and home life separate, in order to remain engaged at work. This study's results convey that when the balance is off, Gen Z employees will become less engaged.

Hypothesis 4

Evidence supports Hypothesis 4 - autonomy is positively related to employee engagement, and this relationship is statistically significant (p =.031). The results are in line with the extant literature that autonomy is positively related to employee engagement (Heyns & Rothmann, 2018; Spiegelaere et al., 2016; Vera et al., 2016). These researchers contend that an environment that fosters autonomy will increase employee engagement. The present data analysis suggests that in the case of Gen Z employees, autonomy was only marginally statistically significant to employee engagement. A plausible explanation could be that other factors are involved in enabling work autonomy. That is, creating a sense of trust from management and feeling supported by colleagues are both important to build employees' confidence in their ability to work autonomously.

Hypothesis 5

For Hypothesis 5 that proposed a positive relationship between technology and employee engagement, the supporting evidence is ambiguous. The results showed no statistical significance between technology and employee engagement (p = 0.831) in the regression model while the correlations were significant. As somewhat of a surprise to the authors, these findings are inconsistent with the prior studies (Alnoor et al., 2020; Holt & Diggins, 2010; Maltseva, 2020), which reported that technology has a positive impact on the employee engagement. It is argued that recent advances in technology further automate the employee's job, which should simply the work thus leading to greater job satisfaction. One possible reason for the deviation in results could be the smaller data sample taken up for analysis – only 31% of the participants surveyed (69 Gen Z people) were considered as part of this analysis. Replicating this study in the future with a larger sample size may yield different results.

Managerial Implications

The results of this study confirm and reinforce that leadership, work-life balance, and autonomy are important factors in employee engagement. Corporate social responsibility, transactional leadership and technology, however, were did not show statistical significance for improving employee engagement. Although each factor has a varying amount of influence on employee engagement, they have demonstrated benefits to increasing employee engagement.

It should also be noted that the type of leadership has a major effect on employee engagement. The current findings suggest that management should focus on a transformational leadership approach rather than transactional. To accomplish this, companies should train their managers in various leadership styles, ensuring to communicate the difference between transactional and transformational approaches. Since transformational leadership had the greatest statistically significant impact on employee engagement out of the all the variables, it is worth paying attention to how it is practiced in the workplace. One explanation may be that transformational leaders exhibit traits which are more likely to allow flexibility for work-life balance, foster clear and open communication, and build trust among employees, all which enable work autonomy. To cultivate greater employee engagement, companies are advised to implement flexible work policies to allow for work-life balance, and ensure that job descriptions promote levels of autonomy supported by their manager.

Regarding technology, organizations should motivate managers to bring innovation and change to workplace. Accordingly, managers should encourage employees to share their ideas, which in turn will inspire loyalty to the team and the organization. It is also recommended that managers mentor their subordinates, helping them during difficult situations, thus empowering employees to think in different ways to solve problems. Autonomy was also shown to be statistically significant in relation to employee engagement. One explanation for this might be that employees need to feel supported by their managers to work autonomously, and thereby more engaged. This kind of support typically comes from a transformational leader, which reinforces the positive relationship with employee engagement observed in this study.

CONCLUSION

The current study focused on employee engagement as it pertains to Gen Z employees. Subsequent research may be expanded to examine and compare other age groups to determine if generational differences exist. Given that the original sample size was reduced from 214 to 69 in order to isolate the Gen Z responses, future studies should endeavor to obtain larger samples can so that the results can be more accurately generalized. In addition, research opportunities to explore and investigate further independent variables should be pursued. For instance, leadership is a crucial component in organizational decision-making, and there is a multitude of leadership types that can be studied. Finally, from a methodological perspective, prospective studies may employ multiple regression in addition to other analytical tools, such as path analysis, factor analysis, and structural equation model.

This study offers empirical support that leadership style, work-life balance, and autonomy can make a difference in how engaged workers are in their work. More specifically, the findings reveal how central leadership style is to employee engagement. Based on these arguments, companies should offer appropriate leadership training to managers and develop flexible workplace policies that will facilitate employee engagement. Engaged employee are more likely to be productive, innovative, and collaborative than nonengaged workers. And furthermore, evidence shows that an engaged workforce benefits companies with higher profits, greater returns on investment, and overall success.

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Source 41 (Not scholarly)

Citation:

Horton, T., Cause, A. N., Primer, A., Thinking, E., & Fauzi, A. Rethinking the Workplace.

Summary: The article addresses the shift from traditional workplace to remote work with the help of technological development. The author mentions carefully the challenges and opportunities presented through this transition, highlighting the increased reliance on collaboration tools such as cloud storage, digital product design, integrated workflow management, knowledge management, network security, product management, productivity, video calls, and screen sharing. On top of that, the article also mentions the debate between the advantages of remote work and the value of in-person collaboration. Many tech leaders of big companies also establish worries about creativity and innovation potentially suffering in the absence of physical proximity. In the end, the article gives suggestions about the future of the workplace involving hybrid models, blending remote, and in-person work. Many tech companies are pioneers in this shift, offering employees greater flexibility while frequently maintaining the benefits of occasional in-person collaboration for creativity exchange of ideas, and problem-solving.

Relevance: The article is particularly relevant to the topic by giving the transition from a traditional working environment into a digital workplace, giving flexibility to the employees. Generation Z is well-known for growing up in the era of technology enhancement.

Place in the paper: Literature review

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Rethinking the Workplace

December 12, 2020 By Matthew Spelman



The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the trend of technologists working remotely at the same time that a suite of powerful software tools allows them to collaborate more effectively.

Since the beginning of 2020, the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus, which causes COVID-19, has forced people around the world to rapidly adjust to remote work. While scientists continue to study the novel coronavirus, businesses have needed to adapt to continue their operations and protect the health of their employees. Some, such as restaurants, hotels and other hospitality providers, have had to close or limit service. Others, in industries like education, finance, law and publishing, have

transitioned to a remote model, with varying degrees of success. Even in the technology industry — which arguably should have been the most prepared to work off-site — remote work has led to employees reporting technical issues, among other challenges, such as teams spread across different time zones and countries with different holidays, languages and cultures. Evidence is mounting, however, that remote technology teams can work effectively and collaboratively during the COVID-19 pandemic or any global crisis that requires remote work.

Technology companies have long grappled with the choice between building local development teams and using offshore resources. Well before the current crisis, the entire industry was at odds over which model worked better. Fans of the traditional model have long extolled the value of having engineers, developers and other technologists working side by side. In recent years, as the focus has shifted from hardware to software, the need for employees to work together in the same physical location may even have increased. At the same time, proponents of the distributed model contend that it provides flexibility and speed, and allows companies to access a global talent pool. In the past decade, the distributed model has benefited from advances in open-source software, cloud computing, video conferencing and high-speed internet that have made it possible for technologists to collaborate remotely in real time.

The COVID-19 pandemic has materially increased the adoption of collaboration tools to keep businesses functioning — and, in some cases, performing more efficiently than before. With high-speed internet, employers now have greater flexibility in how and where their employees work. A proliferation of tech companies have invested significant time and capital in data centers to enable cloud-based storage and keep up with demand. These actions have spawned a range of tools addressing things like productivity, project and knowledge management, digital product design, product management, reporting, screen sharing, network security and version control — allowing development teams to practice agile software development and enabling a constant feedback loop with end users whether colleagues are in the same room or working all over the globe.

In-Person Connections

There is an ongoing and protracted debate in the tech industry between those who think technologists need to be in close proximity and those who champion the benefits of working remotely.[1] In 2013, then–Yahoo! CEO Marissa Mayer, unhappy with the number of company employees who were working remotely, wrote in an email: "Speed and quality are often sacrificed when we work from home. We need to be one Yahoo!, and that starts with physically being together."[2] Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella recently echoed a similar sentiment during an interview with the *New York Times* about managing through the pandemic: "What I miss is when you walk into a physical meeting, you are talking to the person that is next to you, you're able to connect with them for the two minutes before and after."[3] Nadella believes such in-person interactions are crucial to spark creativity and innovation. Netflix co-CEO Reed Hastings has also been critical of working remotely, even though he has said the company's 8,600 employees will not have to return to the office until there is a COVID-19 vaccine. "I don't see any positives," Hastings told the *Wall Street Journal* during a video interview from his home in California. "Not being able to get together in person, particularly internationally, is a pure negative."[4]

By contrast, Facebook and Google have embraced remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic.[5] In August, Google announced that employees would be able to continue to work from home through June 2021. Facebook is allowing its employees to work remotely through July 2021 and is providing them with an additional $1,000 for home office needs; CEO Mark Zuckerberg has said the tech giant could have half of its people working remotely over the next five to ten years. Twitter and Square CEO Jack Dorsey has taken the remote initiative even further: In May, he announced that employees of both companies could work from home indefinitely.[6]

Researchers are studying how the global workforce is coping with the shift away from traditional office work. London Business School professor Lynda Gratton found that 47 percent of the executives she polled thought "collaboration seemed

stronger than before the pandemic." Gratton conducted the survey in May during a webinar with executives from 42 companies spanning 19 countries. "They talked about the positive impact of dismantling bureaucratic processes, using newfound digital skills and unleashing the energy of shared goals," she wrote in a column for *MIT Sloan Management Review*. But, Gratton added, "it may not be sustainable in the months to come as fatigue sets in, uncertainty continues, and the all-new challenges of remote work become the norm."[7]

Agile Development — Well Suited for Innovation

In practical terms, the agile framework works well in a globally distributed environment. This iterative approach to software development, which was codified in 2001 by a group of engineers in the "Agile Manifesto," is used by the vast majority of programmers around the world.[8] Agile development is well suited for innovation. "Confronted with a large, complex problem, [agile teams] break it into modules, develop solutions to each component through rapid prototyping and tight feedback loops, and integrate the solutions into a coherent whole," according to a 2018 *Harvard Business Review* article.[9] Agile teams are typically small, multidisciplinary and self-governing. As the *HBR* article explains: "Senior leaders tell team members where to innovate but not how. And the teams work closely with customers, both external and internal. Ideally, this puts responsibility for innovation in the hands of those who are closest to customers."

Is agile development more productive when it's done in person or remotely? In the tech industry, collaboration started in person and gradually shifted as tools improved. The modern tech industry grew up with founders and engineers working closely together, often huddled in a small room or office, trying to solve difficult hardware and software problems. When we think of some of the greatest companies to come out of Silicon Valley, such as Apple and Google, it is easy to remember the close-knit founding teams that worked day and night to develop products that would forever change the world.

One of the greatest examples of product collaboration is the relationship between Apple co-founder and CEO Steve Jobs and designer Jony Ive. In many ways, the two were inseparable following Jobs's return to the company in 1997. According to former Apple engineer Jon Rubinstein, "Ive and Jobs would regularly get lunch together, and Jobs would finish his day by dropping by the design studio to talk with Ive." Physical proximity in the design process mattered deeply to Ive. In 2018, he said: "One of the key characteristics of how we work is that we're very involved in how you make something: You can't just design in abstract and then tell someone else to make it. You know that from the fashion designers whose work you love: They are there for every step. I've stayed for months in places where we make products. I don't know how you can be an effective designer and not do that."[10]

In a similar vein, Google, co-founded in 1998 by Sergey Brin and Larry Page, aimed for a university-like culture in its early days, packing employees into small offices to encourage collaboration. When Eric Schmidt arrived at the company in 2001 as its new CEO, he found that several software engineers already occupied his office, so he relocated to a tiny office next door.[11] A few weeks later, Schmidt had a new office mate, Amit Patel, the engineer credited with coining the Google motto "Don't Be Evil," who had been sharing an office with several other engineers.[12] In a podcast interview with Schmidt, host Reid Hoffman explained that "ideas emerge organically through conversations like the one Eric and Amit had in their cramped executive suite."

The Emergence of Open Source

Google continued to grow exponentially off of a business model that embraced collaboration, thanks in part to the open-source software movement. Developers started to shift to open-source code sharing in the 1990s, with the goal of eliminating vastly redundant code and its associated maintenance costs, allowing new tech companies to form quickly by

ending the need to purchase costly closed-source licenses or build everything from scratch. This code sharing has enabled programmers to give back to the open-source community by helping to improve code quality and global standards. Although there was some initial resistance in the industry to adopting open-source technology, opinion has changed significantly in the past several years as the growth of the open-source community has allowed greater collaboration and bleeding-edge software innovation.[13]

One of the key developments of the open-source project is the Linux operating system, created in 1991 by Linus Torvalds when he was a student at the University of Helsinki. Torvalds, an avid programmer, initially built Linux as a free alternative to Minix, itself an alternative to the Unix operating system developed by Bell Labs in the 1960s and '70s. The Linux kernel, which Torvalds designed to run on a personal computer using an Intel CPU, would go on to power Android, Chrome and other operating systems. According to a 2017 report by the Linux Foundation, 15,600 developers have contributed to the Linux kernel since 2005.[14] Today more than 95 percent of the world's top 1 million internet servers run on Linux.[15]

In 2005, Torvalds created a source code management tool called Git to track developers' work on the Linux kernel. Git is the distributed version control system that powers nearly all modern-day software development and collaboration. It allows technologists to work more effectively: Code versions are automatically tracked on the local computer system and can be pushed remotely to a globally shared master branch. It also allows software developers to track their changes to code in a more automated and programmatic way. Major companies have grown out of Git, such as GitHub and GitLab, providing developers with easy-to-use interfaces for version control management.

Key Areas for Collaboration

Remote work depends on having collaboration tools like Git, GitHub or GitLab that allow employees to be as productive as they would be in a physically shared office. Other key areas for collaboration include cloud storage, digital product design, knowledge management, messaging, productivity, product and project management, reporting, screen sharing, integrated cloud-based platforms and video calls. Let's take a closer look at some of the cool tools and services available in each of those areas.

Cloud Storage. The recent IPO of data platform provider Snowflake illustrates the allure of cloud computing and storage, a market dominated by Amazon Web Services (AWS), Google Cloud Platform and Microsoft Azure. Before the cloud, companies had to store their data and software in on-premises data centers. Thanks to the cloud, the entire development pipeline can be significantly streamlined and improved. All different sorts of difficult computational and storage problems can be solved, with developers leveraging this infrastructure from anywhere in the world. What used to take hours or even days for a developer to set up on premises now can take just minutes.

Digital Product Design. When product designers want a rapid website or mobile prototype to iterate and test, they may turn to software like InVision or Balsamiq Wireframes. Remote teams can use these products to interact and collaborate on a design very early in the product-building process without waiting for wireframes to be translated into code. Rapid feedback allows for continuous product improvement and greater end-user satisfaction. A designer might turn to Balsamiq for a low-fidelity design that is very early in the product development cycle; InVision and other digital product design software also allow for faster user experience (UX) and user interface (UI) testing.

Integrated Workflow Management. Both the Google G Suite of Gmail, Google Drive, Google Calendar, Google Docs and Google Sheets (among a plethora of other Google integrations) and the Microsoft Teams platform are extremely useful for team productivity and collaboration. Because they are cloud-first, these software products make collaboration easier than ever before. The Google G Suite of intelligent apps lets employees work on the same documents simultaneously, with changes saved in real time in the cloud. Microsoft Teams brings together employees in a shared

workspace where they can chat and work on files together using Word, Excel and PowerPoint. Like Google G Suite, Microsoft Teams saves everything to the cloud in real time, allowing innovation to happen in one environment rather than many.

Knowledge Management. Proper knowledge management software can greatly increase transparency throughout an organization. A product like Atlassian's Confluence, which provides a centralized remote-friendly team workspace, can serve a wide assortment of employees and be a game changer for all facets of technology product development. With a centralized knowledge store, remote and globally distributed employees can avoid duplication of work and tap the trove of knowledge that exists in any organization.

Network Security. As employees continue to work remotely, network security plays an even greater role. Okta and Palo Alto Networks have emerged as vitally important companies that provide identity and access management and enterprise-grade cybersecurity for businesses, especially for organizations with remote workforces. Both Okta and Palo Alto Networks have a vast suite of products to protect a company's security and intellectual property.

Product Management. To build the strategies, road maps and features that users care about, product managers rely on software like Aha!, Asana and Pivotal Tracker to capture user feedback and allow agile development teams to work effectively.[16] These planning tools also provide senior management and end users with a lens into the overall direction of a product. For product managers — who are directly responsible for a product's success or failure and need the ability to pivot at a moment's notice — these tools allow them to fail fast and quickly move on so that they may eventually succeed.

Project Management. Atlassian's Jira Software has become ubiquitous for tracking tasks, bugs and projects in software development. Jira's ability to report and assign tasks allows managers to keep better track of agile development teams and the sprint planning process (as well as of Kanban, a visual workflow management system used for looking at the full software development life cycle). At the same time, Jira provides developers with a clear idea of what they have to do and forces them to provide estimates for deliverables. Although many competitors have emerged over the years, including Asana and Basecamp, Jira remains a reliable project management tool for software development teams.

Productivity. Messaging platforms like Slack and Microsoft Teams have quickly become the primary communication mechanisms for many technology teams. Both products have strong mobile applications that people on the road or away from their desks can use to participate in conversations. Messaging apps are particularly helpful for letting remote technology teams provide quick feedback on urgent issues or brainstorm unique ideas.

Reporting. Some of the best reporting tools in the marketplace include Microsoft's Power BI and Tableau Software, which was acquired by Salesforce in 2019.[17] As the world continues to build business intelligence using ever-increasing data, remote development teams can quickly iterate and develop on top of these visual analytics platforms. At a time when many development teams may have fewer resources available to build bespoke visualizations and applications, products like Power BI and Tableau provide a responsive and fast off-the-shelf solution.

Version Control for Developers. GitHub, which Microsoft acquired for $7.5 billion in 2018, offers developers an easy-to-use interface that provides hosting and software development version control using Git.[18] By allowing developers to perform code reviews in a seamless manner, new code can be written and improved with ever-greater efficiency. GitHub allows remote teams to work on the same code as if they were in the same room. Companies that embrace products like GitHub and GitLab are likely to be attractive to developers who care about the open-source community.

Video Calls and Screen Sharing. During the COVID-19 pandemic, organizations ranging from start-ups and nonprofits to universities and Fortune 500 companies have had to turn to video conferencing platforms like Zoom and Cisco Webex.

These platforms allow for clear video and audio along with many other built-in features to enhance virtual meetings. They help tech teams feel connected and handle important tasks like interviews, code reviews and stand-up meetings.

Cloud storage, video conferencing and other collaboration tools have received a significant boost from the pandemic and the shift to working from home. But for the development community, the experience has been mixed. While some technologists have embraced working remotely and have shown little interest in returning to their cubicles, others miss the camaraderie of the office and the ability to whiteboard ideas with their colleagues in person. Of course, the isolation that people have experienced during this pandemic has tested even the most introverted among us. Continuous engagement by remote technology teams can be challenging in the current environment, but using collaboration tools — and practicing discipline — can mean the difference between finding a bug in one's code base early on and discovering a costly mistake later in production.

Conclusion

According to a 2017 MIT study, proximity matters when it comes to collaboration in academic research, and the same principle could be applied to technology development.[19] The study used network analysis and examined 40,358 published papers and 2,350 patents from MIT research between 2004 and 2014. "Intuitively, there is a connection between space and collaboration," the lead author of the paper says. "That is, you have a better chance of meeting someone, connecting and working together if you are close by spatially."

So what does the future of the workplace look like for technologists? Will they continue to work remotely after there's a COVID-19 vaccine and it's safe to go back to the office? Or will tech companies revert to their roots and require most employees to work physically together again?

Mark Zuckerberg envisions a hybrid model. On May 21, the Facebook CEO wrote to staffers about prioritizing remote hiring, focusing on hiring engineers within four hours of a city where the company has an engineering office.[20] "Eventually we want to enable many existing employees to become long term remote workers if they want," Zuckerberg went on to say. "But we're going to roll this out in a measured way so we can learn as we go."

Sundar Pichai, CEO of Google parent Alphabet, is also working on a hybrid model that includes long-term remote work options.[21] In a July survey of Google employees, 62 percent said they would prefer to return to the office on a part-time basis post-COVID-19, while only 8 percent said they would need to be in the office every day to do their job well. "I see the future as being more flexible," Pichai says. "We firmly believe that in-person, being together, having a sense of community is super important when you have to solve hard problems and create something new, so we don't see that changing. But we do think we need to create more flexibility and more hybrid models."

For his part, Apple CEO Tim Cook has been impressed by his employees' ability to work remotely during the pandemic, he told an online audience in a September 21 interview at the all-virtual Atlantic Festival, citing the on-time launch of a new line of Apple Watches and iPads earlier in the month.[22] Like Zuckerberg and Pichai, Cook believes his company's recent experience will have a longer-term impact on the way Apple operates "because we've found that there are some things that actually work really well virtually." Still, he added, working remotely is "not like being together physically." There is a certain amount of creativity during impromptu meetings that's lost when people are not in the office, and not even the best collaboration tools can replace it.

Facebook, Google and Apple are likely harbingers of a hybrid future that will provide more optionality in where employees work but not necessarily when they work. Companies will need staff to stay engaged, and that is likely to be achieved through a mixture of office time, company off-sites and optional remote days. Collaboration and productivity tools such as videoconferencing, file version control management and messaging apps will help technologists thrive in this hybrid world.

With rapid change come both opportunity and risk, but by staying flexible and adapting to the ever-changing landscape, companies can build better products and better serve their customers.

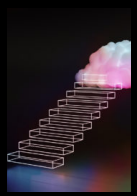
Matthew Spelman *is a Vice President at WorldQuant and has a Masters in Computer and Information Technology from the University of Pennsylvania's School of Engineering and Applied Science.*

Endnotes

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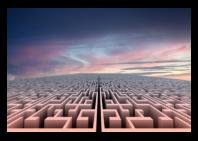
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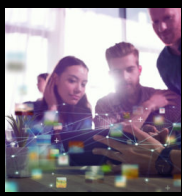
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Work & Careers

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Citation:

Ilag, B. N. (2021). Tools and technology for effective remote work. *International Journal of Computer Applications*, *174*(21), 13-16.

Summary: The article highlights the idea of how the office environment efficiently promotes collaboration between employees, however, there are still challenges when productivity is limited by distraction by noise, interruption, impromptu meetings, or even gossip sessions. According to that, employees are advocating for working remotely and many organizations are launching a policy of remote working. The study focused on exploring the tools and technologies necessary for effective remote work, emphasizing the importance of communication and collaboration aspect in maintaining productivity outside the office. It is imperative to choose collaboration technology that effectively responds to the productivity gaps and inconsistencies of working remotely. Unified Communications and Collaboration Technology tools are helpful in remote work environments and enable real-time interaction, file sharing, and video conferencing, which help to solve the challenge of isolation and communication gaps. Ultimately, the study concludes that remote working can be productive as as traditional office work with the proper use of tools and systems.

Relevance: The article is relevant to the topic by showing the current trend of many companies, remote working. Also, the study gives insight into technology components contributing to the effectiveness of remote working, which is relevant to the technology savviness of Generation Z.

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Tools and Technology for Effective Remote Work

Balu N. Ilag
UC & Collaboration Expert
Juniper Networks

ABSTRACT
Office work refers to work that is generally done in an office building designated explicitly for administrative and professional duties. Remote work relates to business operations and professional tasks outside of the office space like telecommunication or working from home. Many companies believe that office spaces are more productive because the collective energy of having other people around who are working towards the same goal promotes innovation, collaboration, and collision. Production is at a faster pace when there are a laser focus and no distractions. More impromptu and immediate interactions and consultations create a deep cultural connection and assistance on tasks that one cannot complete independently (Haynes et al., 2017).

The office space is not without its challenges. Productivity can be limited due to distractions that one is unlikely to encounter when working remotely, such as noise and commotion, interruptions from other workers dropping into one's office space, impromptu meetings, and gossip sessions (Haapakangas et al., 2018). Commutes to and from the office building result in time wastage and fatigue. Skipping a commute has the impact of letting one customize the workday and work longer hours due to the reduced stress levels (Lin & Bao, 2019).

General Terms
Remote work, Effective Work from Home, Tools for Remote work, Effective Remote work using Tools, Effective Tools for remote work.

Keywords
Remote work, Effective Remote work, Tools and Technology for Remote work, VoIP, Data Network

1. INTRODUCTION
Office work refers to work that is generally done in an office building designated explicitly for administrative and professional duties. Remote work relates to business operations and professional tasks outside of the office space like telecommunication or working from home. Many companies believe that office spaces are more productive because the collective energy of having other people around who are working towards the same goal promotes innovation, collaboration, and collision. Production is at a faster pace when there are a laser focus and no distractions. More impromptu and immediate interactions and consultations create a deep cultural connection and assistance on tasks that one cannot complete independently (Haynes et al., 2017).

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2. WORKING STYLE CHANGE FROM OFFICE TO REMOTE WORK
Employees are advocating for working remotely, and many organizations are working towards the policy of remote work. The flexibility awarded by remote work is desirable, especially to millennial employees. They still want to spend time on their hobbies and talents and dedicate time to their families. Employers enjoy the same perks, with the added advantage of lesser costs on in-house office facilities and rent on large office spaces (Hunter, 2019). Bloom and Lang's experiment on increased productivity (2018) revealed that remote workers were more productive than office workers by 13% and worked 9.5% longer.

Similarly, remote work offers an opportunity to workers who are geographically further away from the firm and allows employers to recruit the top talent without limiting workers to only those who can physically make it to the office. Variety creates diversity and culture, which helps develop dynamics for problem-solving due to the varying experiences, expertise, and viewpoints that people from different works of life provide. It is easier to appeal to a broader range of consumers if they are well-represented in an organization (Rintel et al., 2020).

While others are more productive when working remotely, some workers find it hard to be productive when working in isolation (Bell, 2020). Great geographical distances and time differences can be disadvantageous because simple queries may take hours to be sorted if it is not office hours in the other time zone. Sometimes, workers may be forced to work late into the night to accommodate the clients' time zones. Discipline might be hard to establish when establishing working hours and a routine (Elshaiekh et al., 2018). Just as in-house offices require equipment, remote working might require technological and communication equipment that might be hard to come by or be region-dependent. The resources needed for sufficient remote work are meant to counter the challenges that remote workers face when accomplishing their tasks. Therefore, to get the best out of remote working, organizations have to develop plans that can implement intelligent business software and tools and increase value on the influence of business communication and collaboration tools (Willcocks, 2020).

3. COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION
Communication and collaboration require a combination of intrapersonal, communication, and problem-solving skills that are sustainable for a long-term basis. Excellent communication is the basis of trust and is achieved by listening intently, offering encouragement and support, and talking with respect for the information (Rochester, 2017).

Intrapersonal skills involve maintaining relationships, building new ones through proper communication, appreciating others' efforts, solving problems, and disagreements amicably and being considerate. Problem-solving skills refer to analyzing a situation correctly and developing the best possible solution (Banaeianjahromi & Smolander, 2019).

Collaboration differs from teamwork because it involves working with people on different levels and sectors with differing sets of skills, providing a more comprehensive range of options and solutions. However, differing skill sets suggest different thought processes, modes of operation, and communication, making it hard to establish a united team. As such, collaboration can only be created through proper communication, cooperation, coordination, and teamwork. Remote working faces teamwork and collaboration threats due to its nature of remote operations (Scott & Queens, 2017). Some lack the appropriate communication tools to sustain the standards of service. Those who have underlying software and communication tools require the right systems to utilize them for maximum benefit. Therefore, as companies move towards remote work, it is essential to establish the right balance of software and tools with working systems and management (Rebentisch & Prusak, 2017).

Communication breakdown is fatal for the running of any business. The lack of serial communication plagues remote employees and teams. Emails are not enough. Tools to expedite real-time communication are valuable firstly because they reduce the feeling of isolation and improve the perception of being a member of a team (Sadgrove, 2016). Regularly interacting with the people, one works with raises morale, helps build trust and engagement, and reduces competition. The workers focus on working alongside each other to achieve their goals. Constant and timely feedback addresses any mistakes that the remote team is making before much damage is done. It keeps all the members on their toes because supervisors can track how both short-term and long-term goals are being achieved. Likewise, excellent performance can be praised to motivate the employees to keep doing good work. Collaboration is hindered by the lack of real-time communication (Erlandia, 2016).

4. COLLABORATION TECHNOLOGY AND MICROSOFT TEAMS

The communication and collaboration problems in remote working cause productivity gaps and inconsistencies. The lack of proper schedules disrupts routines, disables workflow, and creates bad habits that lead to a failure to accomplish goals and objectives set. Productivity gaps can destroy hours of progress without proper systems for time and project management. Therefore, when selecting a technological system to it is crucial to choose one that caters to most, if not all, of the difficulties that a remote team is facing. Communication and information-sharing should be smooth so that everyone can participate in creative brainstorms, feedback loops, and cross-functional decision-making for effective collaboration (Deshpande et al., 2016).

4.1 Unified Communications and Collaboration (UCC) Technology

Unified Communications and Collaboration (UCC) technologies are software that enables enterprise communication in real-time and asynchronous cooperation proficiency. It uses a single interface comprising collaboration solutions and Individual Unified Communications (IUC) methods to improve productivity through connectivity. During these times, with a worldwide pandemic, almost all companies and organizations have been forced to work remotely to minimize contact and infection (Silic et al., 2017). One essential UCC tool that has proven useful and effective for most organizations is Microsoft Teams.

Microsoft Teams is an all-in-one collaboration application that helps teams working remotely to have conversations and stay organized by allowing firms to create their inside channels for on-the-spot, real-time meetings, chat conversations, and file-sharing. Microsoft teams can set up audio and video calls even with people who do not use the Teams software. It can hold, organize, and schedule meetings through the Outlook Calendar. Activity is meant for live interactions among the Team members through messages, conversations, mentions, replies, and more (Ilag, 2018).

The most significant advantage for Microsoft Teams is that it provides most of the necessary communication and collaboration features for free as long as one has an active subscription to Microsoft Office 365. The free version offers unlimited video and audio calls, messaging, and activity with ten gigabytes storage for Team data and two gigabytes for personal data (Ilag, 2019). It thus lowers organizational expenditure. Another great advantage is that Microsoft Teams seamlessly integrates with Office 365 applications like Excel, Word, Access, PowerPoint, Project, and OneNote. One can use Skype, Exchange, SharePoint, and Yammer with Microsoft Teams (Hubbard & Bailey, 2018).

Microsoft Teams addresses the problem of isolation that remote and dispersed teams face by including the Chat option. Teams can hold project meetings and keep up-to-date with the relevant information concerning progress and accomplishments by creating a group chat. The Group Chat feature allows the group to send links, documents, images, and any necessary information, allowing individual remote teams to have all their data in one place to avoid project mix-up. It will enable one-on-one conversations for regular consultations and data transfer that do not require the entire team (Ilag, 2020). As such, data is transferred flawlessly, and anyone who is part of the team can access it without wasting time going through contact channels. It provides organizational privacy since one-on-one chats are private to the participants only while group chats are visible to all group members. Everyone is made to feel important as part of the team since Microsoft Teams chat does not develop a superiority hierarchy.

Every project, department, sector, or client data and conversation in Microsoft Teams can be stored separately for organization and easy access. For every user, Microsoft team allows every user to create up to two hundred and fifty teams and be a member of up to one thousand teams. Up to ten thousand people can be members of one team, and the limit for organization-wide teams is five thousand members. The teams' difference is that private teams require administration permission to join and are mostly protected by passcodes. Public teams are free for anyone in the company to join, and organization-wide teams automatically add everyone in the organization (Hubbard & Bailey, 2018).

The global administrators in organizational teams have the advantage of automatically adding everyone who is a member of the firm into the team. As new members join, Active Directory updates them into the organization and eaves no one out. Unlicensed users within the organization are added into

the group and assigned an Exploratory License, which means automatic additions that are yet to be signed in by the Team owners or administration are allowed to use the Microsoft Team features on a trial basis (Hubbard & Bailey, 2018). People who leave the team are automatically disabled from the organization-wide team, a significant security feature that prevents data trading from previous employees. It allows employers and managers to virtually keep track of their remote employees since members cannot leave the organization-wide team unless the administrator removes them. Thus, it establishes an accountability system and encourages all workers to create a schedule and stick to it (Ilag, 2020).

Organization-wide teams provide a general channel where all members can monitor the activities going on. Microsoft recommends allowing only the team owners to post the required announcements on the general channel to reduce an influx of unnecessary information that overshadows the crucial information. All the teams are given a limit of two hundred channels. In case the team owners delete any channels, they are counted within the two-hundred channel limit to provide a chance to restore the channel but is permanently deleted after the month expires and is no longer counted within the channel limit. Consequently, team owners have the privilege of setting channel priority ensures that the most important channels are auto displayed to steer discussions and engagement towards specific topics and directions (Hubbard & Bailey, 2018).

Video calls and conferences on Microsoft Teams are scheduled using the Outlook Calendar, which comes with an automatic reminder after accepting the invitation to join the meeting that ensures everyone attends the meetings (Hubbard & Bailey, 2018). Scheduling the meetings allows remote teams to account for time differences by selecting a meeting time that does not inconvenience others. New members of remote teams find it easier to integrate into the team if they can interact with their new workmates. Necessary recruitment process like orientations has become easier since interactive ones are more effective than brochures and written documents (Cooper, 2020).

Given that eighty percent of all communication is derived from visual cues, remote team meetings have been made more accessible since Microsoft Teams allows up to twenty people to join in one video chat at a time and up to one hundred participants. The extra people above the twenty limit are usually more of an audience than participants since the video feature does not work for them. PowerPoint presentations can be made through Microsoft Teams video conference calls with a limit of two gigabytes (Hubbard & Bailey, 2018). Next to in-person meetings, video conferencing is the only meeting that provides all the required communication cues from visual, tonal, audio, facial expressions, and postures. It encourages engagement and minimizes communication errors. It gives a more accurate gauging of decision-making because the reception of the decisions is visible in real-time. The entire decision-making process is made time-conscious since feedback is immediate (Ilag, 2020).

Microsoft Teams stores meeting details, minutes, and documents shared during the video chat for up to twenty days if one needs to clarify or remind themselves of any data they may have forgotten or overlooked. Afterward, Teams can upload call data to Microsoft Stream, where it is available anytime and anywhere for local download to one's local drive. The Microsoft Stream feature is useful because of the ability to store all that was said, and all the documents exchanged without losing any data to translation or a low attention span. The team members can go back and watch the meeting or discussion repeatedly (Hubbard & Bailey, 2018).

The collaboration and seamless communication that Microsoft Teams has been able to provide for the teams and firms that use it have been useful in improving overall productivity. Organizational collaboration is five times more likely to lead to higher performance (Silic & Sammer, 2017). Microsoft Teams' lowered costs, improved productivity, and shortened timelines have raised return on investments (ROI). A survey showed that companies using Microsoft Teams had reduced their email volume by 48%, reduced their physical meetings by 25%, and increased their overall productivity by 32% (Ilag, 2018).

The different channels in Microsoft Teams are used by various departments to easily communicate and share information because they belong to the same team. As such, Teams break down depositories and allow inter-departmental communication for faster communication and easier collaboration that saves time and minimizes friction. Streamlined workflows create an able company that cost-efficiently replies to market demands. The business can dedicate more time to customer development and fulfillment and organizational expansion (Hafermalz & Riemer, 2016). Connecting the customers or clients to the right team member that can offer them direct service and assistance reduces the resources and time that is usually involved in customer care services without having to compromise on quality. Minimizing the use and reliance on email services gets rid of version control problems from delays by sharing up-to-date data in real-time (Begel, 2019).

5. CONCLUSION

The overall advantage of using the right Unified Communication & Collaboration tool like Microsoft Teams for remote work is that it bridges the physical and virtual communication and collaboration gaps, making it possible to enjoy the perks of remote work without most of the challenges and disadvantages. As we move towards a working environment, it is important not to have to compromise on the quality of work. Microsoft Teams can save time and bridge distance without having to compromise on the quality or quantity of work output and customer satisfaction while still saving on costs. They also have the added advantage of cloud storage of data, automatic workflow and updates, event planning and scheduling, and security through end-to-end encryption.

6. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Kaneko, A. (2023). Team Communication in the Workplace: Interplay of Communication Channels and Performance. Business and Professional Communication Quarterly, 0(0).

Summary: The article is about the investigation of the effectiveness of communication channels in workplace teams using the Media Richness Theory, the ability of information to change understanding within time intervals, and Media Synchronicity Theory, the communication process as both a convergent and transfer process. The study expects to determine the different communication channels, such as face-to-face meetings, videoconferencing, emails, and text messaging, that impact team coordination, inclusion, and performance satisfaction. There are two critical terminologies in this article, which are rich communication channels (face-to-face, video conferencing) and lean communication channels (emails, text messages). The analysis provides the conclusion that well-coordinated were found to use a blend of both rich and lean media more frequently than poorly coordinated teams, which proves that a diverse communication strategy is key to success. The study assesses the relationship between the frequency and effectiveness of communication channels in teamwork can help organizations enhance intrateam relationships and coordination.

Relevance: The article concentrates on the study of workplace communication channels that are often used for working remotely. It is relevant when showing the application of communication channels to increase the flexibility of employees, which are potential to meet most Generation Z employees' expectations.

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Original Research Article

Team Communication in the Workplace: Interplay of Communication Channels and Performance

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Atsuko Kaneko[1]

Abstract

This study examines how communication channel use explains the effectiveness of workplace team communication through Media Richness Theory and Media Synchronicity Theory. It examines how job characteristics, personal attributes, communication channel usage, and team performance are interrelated in the workplace. The results of an online survey of 400 full-time employees and executives of large Japanese companies show that team communication effectiveness, including the degree of team coordination, inclusion, and performance satisfaction, can be explained through a combination of rich (synchronous) and lean (asynchronous) media use. The implications of using communication channels in the workplace are also discussed.

Keywords

Media richness, synchronous, asynchronous, computer-mediated communication

Introduction

Communication media channel selection is becoming increasingly important to organizational performance. This has occurred as digital media, such as videoconferences, emails, and electronic documents, have become more widely used in the workplace. The practical limitations brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic led to remote working, where team collaboration depends much more on computer-mediated communication (CMC). With this rise in communication options, the workplace requires

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evidence of effective communication channels. This study illustrates the theoretical background and workplace behaviors practiced in Japan to discuss media task fit in response to this pressing issue. In this study, communication channels and media are used interchangeably. Communication channels are more commonly used today, although media are also used in many theories.

Literature Review

Computer-Mediated Communication and Media Richness

Today's work communication leverages a myriad of available technologies. After the COVID-19 pandemic, workplaces have shown a growing dependence on computer-mediated communication (CMC). The most widely used model to explain the optimal choice of media is the media richness theory (MRT), also known as the management information processing model (Daft & Lengel, 1986; Rice, 1992, p. 476). MRT ranks face-to-face communication as the richest, and assumes that richer communication channels enable accomplishing tasks, solving problems, avoiding misunderstandings, and building relationships more quickly than lean communication channels (Aritz et al., 2017; Cardon, 2023). However, lean communication channels, such as meticulously crafted written messages, augment work performance differently (Cardon, 2023). In this section, we first review the classification of communication channels based on the MRT framework, with references to media synchronicity theory (MST) and social affordances.

Media richness theory. Media (or information) richness is defined as "the ability of information to change understanding within a time interval" (Daft & Lengel, 1986, p. 560). MRT suggests that task performance, especially complex tasks involving ambiguity, improves by using richer communication channels. MRT suggests four characteristics of media that determine media richness: immediacy of feedback; number of nonverbal cues, such as gestures and channels used; diversity of languages; and personalization of focus. MRT ranks media in descending order of richness (from rich to lean) as follows: (1) face-to-face, (2) videoconferences, (3) telephone, (4) texting, (5) email, and (6) documents (Aritz et al., 2017; Daft & Lengel, 1986; Pentland, 2012; Rice, 1992; Webster & Hackley, 1997).

Daft and Lengel (1986) suggested that uncertainty and equivocality affect information processing within organizations, and that there should be a fit between information processing needs and communication channels. More specifically, they described uncertainty as a lack of information, with lean communication channels being ideal for minimizing uncertainty. Conversely, equivocality refers to situations within multiple interpretations or explanations within an organization. High equivocality indicates a condition of confusion and inadequate comprehension, and rich communication channels, fit to resolve equivocality (Daft & Lengel, 1986). According to the MRT, rich media, such as face-to-face, are suitable for tasks that need to deal with ambiguity, whereas lean media, which are primarily in written form, such as email, are best suited for tasks that reduce uncertainty (Daft & Lengel, 1984, 1986).

Existing research generally suggests that richer channels, particularly face-to-face communication, enhance group effectiveness and decrease the time required to complete tasks (e.g. Maruping & Agarwal, 2004). A central premise of MRT is that face-to-face communication is the most effective channel. Compared to face-to-face groups, CMCs are considered less effective per hour; they often lead to a decrease in group effectiveness, require more time to complete tasks, and result in lower member satisfaction (e.g., Baltes et al., 2002).

Media synchronicity theory. Although the MRT claimed the validity of both lean and rich channels, it does not adequately detail the defining characteristics of lean channels. Communication channels are classified as Spoken and Written, with spoken being synchronous and rich channels and written being asynchronous and lean channels. MST expands on MRT by introducing the "communication process" in relation to task accomplishment (Dennis & Valacich, 1999; Dennis et al., 2008).

MST defines the communication process as both a convergent and transfer process, and suggests that asynchronous (written) channels are suitable for the conveyance process, while synchronous (oral) channels function best for the convergence process. MST identifies five media features that characterize media synchronicity; (1) transmission velocity, (2) parallelism, (3) symbol sets, (4) rehearsability, and (5) reprocessability. Transmission velocity (immediacy) defines the speed at which the media channel can send a message to the recipient. Parallelism refers to the number of transmissions that may occur simultaneously among team members. Symbol sets indicate the number of ways in which information can be encoded, and refer to the media's ability to process symbol sets of various natures, including nonverbal, tactile, auditory, and visual cues. Rehearsability indicates the extent to which the sender prepares and adjusts a message in advance. Reprocessability refers to the extent to which a message can be accessed and reprocessed.

MST defines the communication process as both a convergent and transfer process, and suggests that asynchronous (written) channels are suitable for the conveyance process, while synchronous (oral) channels function best for the convergence process. Despite a contribution by MST in illustrating communication channel features, both MRT and MST suggest similar classifications of specific channels. Spoken synchronous communication channels are classified as rich, while written asynchronous communication channels are lean.

Perceived social affordance. The utilization and sophistication of CMC have significantly grown in recent years, prompting an expansion of the types of CMC used in the workplace. Initially limited to face-to-face, email, and phone, the repertoire has now expanded to include texting, social media, online meeting tools, and collaboration tools such as Google Docs. Nevertheless, academic research typically focuses on conventional CMC tools, which means that emergent technologies, despite their widespread use, often go unexamined. This disconnect suggests that research is not keeping pace with practice (Gilson et al., 2015). Over the past decade, the range of CMC products has continued to grow, and teams can now leverage document sharing (e.g.,

Dropbox), document cocreation (e.g., Google Docs), meeting tools (e.g., Google Hangouts), project management tools (e.g., Microsoft Project), and social networking (e.g., Yammer). However, while this extensive list of CMC tools are being leveraged in practice, within research, the norm remains to examine conventional CMC tools.

As technology continues to evolve and permeate our lives, attempts have been made to integrate various significant communication channels into existing media richness theories. One notable contribution toward capturing the nuances of communication channel features is the introduction of the concept of affordance. Fox and McEwan (2017) identified 10 elements of perceived social affordances (accessibility, bandwidth, social presence, privacy, network association, personalization, persistence, editability, conversation control, and anonymity). They compared these affordances across eight different channels: face-to-face meetings, texting, phone calls, emails, posts on social networking sites (specifically Facebook), instant messaging, Skype videoconferencing, and the mobile app Snapchat. The perceived affordance bandwidth, in descending order of richness, was face-to-face, videoconferencing, phone, texting, and email. Persistence ranked from highest to lowest as email, texting, videoconference, face-to-face, and telephone. The researchers noted that persistence was perceived as a favorable feature of email and texting.

Significantly, the affordance-based approach highlighted the characteristics of lean media as persistence and editability, rather than simply labeling them as "not rich." This approach also provided measures to capture channel characteristics. Earlier studies of channel choice in business communication argued that face-to-face communication, with its high richness, was the most favorable medium (e.g., Braun et al., 2015; Turkle, 2015; van den Hooff et al., 2005). Though MRT had posited that communication tasks to reduce uncertainty are more suitable for lean channels, subsequent studies did not fully evaluate this aspect of leanness. The Perceived Social Affordance model illuminated the strength of lean communication channels.

Fox and McEwan's (2017) work is notable for introducing the concept of Perceived Social Affordance and for specifically measuring channel characteristics. While the study did not successfully extract synchronicity, it found that reprocessability, as identified by MST, enriched MRT. However, the affordance-based approach, despite its success in depicting communication channel features, did not capture synchronicity, which remains one of the most intuitive and widely used channel classifications. Consequently, in the current study, we will use specific communication channels as variables instead of channel characteristics, and we will utilize those frameworks in our discussion. Table 1 summarizes the features of several communication channels in terms of immediacy, symbol variety, reprocessability, and constraints.

Media task fit. MRT claims that rich media are better suited for tasks that have a high degree of equivocality. Braun et al. (2015) reported that employees perceived face-to-face communication to be of higher quality than telephone and email-based communication, and that perceived quality of face-to-face communication was strongly positively related to job satisfaction, and perceived supervisor effectiveness. Some empirical research supported MRT that rich media such as face-to-face and voice media (i.e., telephone calls) are preferred for ambiguous tasks, including supervising,

Table 1. Comparison of Selected Communication Channels Regarding Aspects of Channel Richness and Channel Synchronicity.

Communication Channels	Immediacy	Symbol variety	Reprocessability	Constraints: Coordination + Resources
Written messages	Low	Low	High	Low
Spoken communication	High	Medium to high	Low	Low to high
Asynchronous				
Collaboration platforms (including Google Docs)	Low to high	Medium	Medium to high	Low to medium
Email	Low to medium	Medium	Medium	Low
Messaging (including texting)[a]	Medium to high	Medium	Medium	Low
Synchronous				
Phone conversations	High	Medium to high	Low	Low to medium
Videoconferences	High	Medium to high	Low to medium	Low to medium
Face-to-face	High	High	Low	Low to high

Note. Developed by the author adapting Cardon (2023), Aritz et al. (2017), and Fox and McEwan (2017). Immediacy and reprocessability are based on Aritz et al. (2017).
Variety of cues is based on Bandwidth by Fox and McEwan (2017).
Constraints are based on Cardon (2023, p. 234).
[a]Cardon (2023) states that messaging (including texting) may be considered asynchronous (such as in meetings), but in many situations professionals use messaging in a synchronous manner (p. 234).

building relationships, and giving feedback. Kingsley Westerman et al. (2015) showed that rich media such as phone calls were preferred by employees over text messages when receiving feedback.

Previous research has suggested that rich communication channels (i.e., face-to-face) are effective in building intrateam relationships. Conversely, lean media have been shown to be more effective in building relationships through out-of-team communication. Lee (2022) reported that face-to-face meetings and videoconferencing were significant for achieving symmetrical communication with managers and peers, although the lean communication channels such as print media and email commonly used by CEOs were also important for symmetrical communication. In addition to media-task fit, information source affects communication channel effectiveness. The findings of Lee (2022) suggested that face-to-face communication is not the first choice for all instances of required communication. When the level of collaboration is low, lean media are preferred. Anders et al. (2020) reported that email is the preferred medium for initial contact with sales representatives. Therefore, setting the scope of

the communication context is important in order to gain relevant insights. Thus, this study focuses on team communication.

As ability of CMCs increased, researchers focused more on how workplace professionals utilize rich and lean CMC. Some studies have highlighted the importance of combining rich and lean media for team communication. Malhotra et al. (2007) reported that most successful working teams use both synchronous and asynchronous communication. A study by Aritz et al. (2017) showed that in a university context, where student collaboration is highly necessary for successful projects, well-coordinated teams used both videoconferences and electronic documents. This study aims to expand upon the findings of Aritz et al. (2017) and instead apply them in a workplace context.

Aritz et al. (2017) focused on team communication and organized the degree of media richness per channel with the aid of MST, and then comprehensively examined the relationship between channel use preferences and the degree of team coordination in virtual teams. They found that teams with a higher degree of coordination (success) in teamwork perceived the use of videoconferencing and electronic documents more positively. This is important as it demonstrates the importance of richness (speed of cues and feedback) and reprocessability in the choice of communication channels in the workplace.

The current study. Numerous studies have examined media richness from a variety of theoretical perspectives. In this study, based on MRT, MST, and social affordance theory, we adopt MRT as our theoretical framework following the works of Aritz et al. (2017), Cardon (2023), Kandola (2006), and Fox and McEwan (2017).

For richness, we address two factors: immediacy of feedback and variability of cue. The difference between spoken and written channels arises from this variety of cues. The written channel is further categorized based on the sociolinguistic distinctions between typed words used in texting and written words in emails (Murata, 2023).

From the MST, we incorporate the concept of reprocessability in our analysis, echoing Aritz et al. (2017). Additionally, we include socially oriented file sharing (e.g., Google Docs) as a channel with higher reprocessability than email. The inclusion of social-style file sharing (e.g., Google Docs) acknowledges the evolution of collaborative practices beyond email, facilitated by features such as simultaneous editing, version control, and tracking.

It is worth noting that the use of CMCs may diverge from the expected patterns based on factors like the degree of diffusion, individual preferences, and context. Therefore, while our analysis will employ the above theoretical framework, we will also assess the effects of specific channels. Furthermore, we will encompass face-to-face interactions in our investigation to gauge the applicability of our findings from predominantly virtual teams in a hybrid context. Although our study is heavily influenced by Aritz et al. (2017), who focused exclusively on virtual teams, the landscape of CMC usage has undergone significant changes since the onset of COVID-19. With a substantial increase in hybrid work environments, it is essential to evaluate communication channel task fit in workplaces where hybrid models have become the norm, building upon the findings from studies on virtual teams.

In alignment with the comprehensive study by Aritz et al. (2017), our investigation will scrutinize media choices made in team collaboration across diverse contexts, given the expanding array of options presented by evolving technology. In essence, our study aims to provide a comprehensive examination of media choices in contemporary workplaces.

Research Questions

This study explores the effectiveness of communication channels using media richness and media synchronicity theory. It examines the connections between task characteristics, communication channel use, and the level of team coordination. Furthermore, we evaluate the conditions under which the findings of previous studies can be extended to a workplace in a different sociocultural context (in Japan), including where the positive impact of channel use on team coordination degree was demonstrated in a university project (Aritz et al., 2017; Fleischmann et al., 2019). Based on MRT and MST, the current study proposes the following research questions and hypotheses:

Research Question 1: Are channel-task fits observable?
Hypothesis 1. Professionals engaged in nonroutine tasks are more likely to use rich, synchronous communication channels.
Hypothesis 2. Rich, synchronous communication channels (face-to-face communication, videoconferences, telephone) are preferred for rich collaboration (decision making).
Hypothesis 3. Lean, asynchronous media (email, electronic documents) are preferred for lean collaboration (information sharing).
Hypothesis 4. Rich media usage frequency has positive affect on the level of inclusion.
Hypothesis 5. Lean media usage frequency positively affects the level of performance satisfaction.
Research Question 2: What communication behaviors contribute to effective team communication?
Research Question 3: Are there differences in communication behaviors between well-coordinated teams and poorly coordinated teams?

Method

Participants

A research company in Japan conducted an online survey to address the above research questions and test the accompanying hypotheses. The participants were recruited from large companies (with more than 300 employees) across various industries in Japan. To ensure a sample with varying levels of age, gender, years of work, and education, the ratios of full-time employees and executives and the ratios of male and female

employees were assigned based on the composition of the Basic Labor Force Survey (Statistic Bureau of Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, 2021), and the survey company's monitors were asked to respond to the survey. The final sample consisted of 400 full-time employees of whom 267 were male, with a mean age of 42.1 years, with standard deviation (*SD*) = 12.1. A total of 215 (53.8%) respondents worked remotely at least once a week. Table 2 summarizes the demographic characteristics.

Measures

Participants were asked which team members they communicated most frequently with in their role and their position within the team (leader, subleader, or member). Three items on task characteristics, job characteristics (routine/nonroutine), collaboration needs (high/low), and leader dependence (high/low), were measured on a 5-point Likert scale, referring to the previous work by the Recruit Works Institute (2020). Two items on personal attributes (proficiency and engagement) were also included (Recruit Works Institute, 2020).

To measure communication channel use, seven channels were selected (face-to-face, videoconference, phone, text message, email, electronic documents, and paper documents). Communication channel usage can be measured in several ways, including frequency (how often the communication session occurs), duration (length of the session), number of interactions (number of turns taken), and frequency of the communication channels, which was selected in order to cover both symmetrical and asymmetrical channels. The frequency of communication channel usage was assessed using a 6-point Likert scale: 6 = 4-5 days per week (daily), 5 = 1-3 days per week (weekly), 4 = 1-3 days per month (monthly), 3 = 1-2 days per quarter (quarterly), 2 = 1-3 days per year (annually), and 1 = less than 1-3 days per year. The perceived effectiveness of each channel was measured using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = not effective, 2 = somewhat ineffective, 3 = neither ineffective nor effective, 4 = somewhat effective, and 5 = effective). Participants were asked to count 1 day if they used the communication channel at least once per day.

The survey also examined the preferred channels for rich communication tasks (decision making) and lean communication tasks (information sharing). Adapting from the work of Fleischmann et al. (2019), the most useful communication channels were ranked first, and the least useful were ranked seventh in information sharing and decision making respectively.

To measure communication effectiveness, levels of team coordination, inclusion, and satisfaction with team performance were employed. The coordination problem of the team's task was measured by eight items adapted from Aritz et al. (2017) on a 7-point Likert scale (7 = very difficult, 6 = difficult, 5 = somewhat difficult, 4 = neither, 3 = not very difficult, 2 = not difficult, 1 = not difficult at all) ($\alpha = .99$). The level of coordination (six items) was measured using a 5-point Likert scale (5 = very much agree, 4 = agree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 2 = disagree, 1 = not at all disagree ($\alpha = .91$), adopted from the work of Aritz et al. (2017). The degree of team inclusion (3 items) ($\alpha = .86$) and team performance satisfaction (3 items) were adapted

Table 2. Demographic Characteristics of the Sample.

	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	267	66.8
Female	133	33.3
Age		
20s	93	23.3
30s	93	23.3
40s	95	23.8
50s	85	21.3
60s	34	8.5
Education level		
High school	62	15.5
Vocational college	17	4.3
Junior college degree	17	4.3
Bachelor's degree	269	67.3
Graduate level	35	8.8
Years of work experience		
Less than 1 year	12	3.0
1-3 years	41	10.3
4-6 years	67	16.8
7-9 years	46	11.5
+10 years	234	58.5
Position		
Senior-level (board members, CEO, etc.)	36	9.0
Managerial position (Bucho)	27	6.8
Managerial position (Kacho, Jicho)	49	12.3
Managerial position (Kakaricho, Shunin)	75	18.8
Nonmanagers	212	53.0
Other	1	0.3
Industries		
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	2	0.5
Mining	0	0.0
Construction	15	3.8
Manufacturing	124	31.0
Electricity, gas, heat supply, and water supply	8	2.0
Information communication	51	12.8
Transportation	32	8.0
Wholesale and retail	30	7.5
Finance and insurance	49	12.3
Real estate	8	2.0
Restaurant and lodging	3	0.8

(continued)

Table 2. (continued)

	Frequency	Percentage
Medical care, welfare, education, and learning support	31	7.8
Service industry	44	11.0
Other	3	0.8
Job type		
Sales	75	18.8
Planning and administration	122	30.5
Production	27	6.8
Technology/research	48	12.0
System engineering	40	10.0
Customer service / sales / service	26	6.5
Teachers/lecturers	2	0.5
Management	17	4.3
Other	43	10.8

from Fleischmann et al. (2019) ($\alpha = .90$) using a 5-point Likert scale (5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 2 = disagree, 1 = strongly disagree).

Results

The average number of team members was 23.00, ($SD = 52.13$) and the median was 10.00. Job characteristics tended to be routine ($M = 2.67$, $SD = 1.06$), with a high percentage of individual tasks ($M = 2.79$, $SD = 1.13$). Regarding personal attributes, the means recorded for both proficiency ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 0.94$) and engagement ($M = 3.51$, $SD = 1.00$) were relatively high (Table 3).

The frequency of communication channel usage within a team is presented in Table 4. The preferred channels listed in descending order of average use frequency were as follows: emails, voice calls, text messages, electronic documents, face-to-face, paper documents, and videoconferences. The perceived effectiveness of the communication channels within the team is presented in Table 5. The average perceived effectiveness of each communication channel, in descending order once more, was as follows: face-to-face, email, phone, videoconference, text messages, electronic documents, and paper documents.

Communication Channel Use by Tasks

The perceived usage frequency of communication channels, as designated by task (information sharing and decision-making) is shown in Table 6. The top three channels are face-to-face meetings/conferences, emails, and telephone calls, while the bottom

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics: Job Characteristics and Personal Attributes ($N = 400$).

				n (%)					
	M	*SD*		1	2	3	4	5	
Nonroutine (T_Nvc)	2.67	1.06	Routine	53 (13.3)	135 (33.8)	124 (31.0)	69 (17.3)	19 (4.8)	Non routine
Teamwork (T_TmW)	2.79	1.13	Individual work	54 (13.5)	112 (28.0)	127 (31.8)	77 (19.3)	30 (7.5)	Team work
Leader decision requirement (T_LdrD)	3.06	1.07	Individual discretion	30 (7.5)	93 (23.3)	137 (34.3)	105 (26.3)	35 (8.8)	Leader decision
Proficiency (T_HSkll)	3.55	0.94	Low proficiency	7 (1.8)	42 (10.5)	138 (34.5)	149 (37.3)	64 (16.0)	High proficiency
Engagement (T_HEffrt)	3.51	1.00	Low engagement	9 (2.3)	52 (13.0)	134 (33.5)	135 (33.8)	70 (17.5)	High engagement

Table 4. Communication Channel Usage Frequency (N = 400).

	Score		Frequency, *n* or %					
Communication Channel	*M*	*SD*	Once per day 6	1-3 days/ week 5	1-3 days/ month 4	1-3 days / 3 months 3	1-3 days/ year 2	Less than 1/year 1
Score								
Email	4.49	1.92	187	81	33	13	10	76
Phone	3.86	1.91	87	122	54	22	13	102
Text message	3.73	2.04	107	88	55	14	12	124
Electronic documents	3.61	2.07	104	83	45	19	17	132
Face-to-face	3.56	1.76	44	113	89	32	20	102
Paper documents	3.53	1.86	66	89	78	37	19	111
Videoconference	3.27	1.85	35	108	77	25	18	137
Email, %			11.0	28.3	22.3	8.0	5.0	25.5
Phone,			8.8	27.0	19.3	6.3	4.5	34.3
Text message, %			21.8	30.5	13.5	5.5	3.3	25.5
Electronic documents, %			26.8	22.0	13.8	3.5	3.0	31.0
Face-to-face, %			46.8	20.3	8.3	3.3	2.5	19.0
Paper documents, %			26.0	20.8	11.3	4.8	4.3	33.0
Videoconference, %			16.5	22.3	19.5	9.3	4.8	27.8

Note. 1 = ineffective, 2 = somewhat ineffective, 3 = neither, 4 = somewhat effective, 5 = effective.

Table 5. Perceived Effectiveness of Communication Channels ($N = 400$).

	Score		Perceived Effectiveness, *n* or %				
Communication Channel	*M*	*SD*	Ineffective 1	Somewhat ineffective 2	Neither 3	Somewhat effective 4	Effective 5
Score							
Face-to-face	3.62	1.08	17	39	121	126	97
Email	3.44	0.98	17	39	147	146	51
Phone	3.40	0.94	16	33	174	131	46
Videoconference	3.32	1.01	24	45	154	135	42
Text message	3.31	0.96	19	43	177	118	43
Electronic documents	3.28	0.96	23	39	179	122	37
Paper documents	3.18	0.96	27	42	194	106	31
Face-to-face, %			4.3	9.8	30.3	31.5	24.3
Email, %			6.0	11.3	38.5	33.8	10.5
Phone, %			4.0	8.3	43.5	32.8	11.5
Videoconference, %			4.8	10.8	44.3	29.5	10.8
Text message, %			4.3	9.8	36.8	36.5	12.8
Electronic documents, %			5.8	9.8	44.8	30.5	9.3
Paper documents, %			6.8	10.5	48.5	26.5	7.8

Note. 1 = ineffective, 2 = somewhat ineffective, 3 = neither, 4 = somewhat effective, 5 = effective.

Table 6. Communication Channel Use Rankings by Tasks.

		Score		Ranking, *n*						
		M	*SD*	1 (Most used)	2	3	4	5	6	7 (Least used)
Information sharing										
1	Face to face	3.16	2.10	151	39	33	53	48	47	29
2	Email	3.19	1.69	85	72	75	68	64	23	13
3	Phone	3.57	1.64	42	66	111	61	59	44	17
4	Texting	3.98	1.88	41	69	54	76	63	46	51
5	Videoconference	4.02	2.08	47	85	50	49	44	50	75
6	Electronic documents	4.85	1.68	14	40	35	52	78	123	58
7	Physical documents	5.22	1.92	20	29	42	41	44	67	157
Decision making										
1	Face-to-face	2.71	2.13	203	43	21	34	36	27	36
2	Email	3.37	1.60	56	81	78	75	74	26	10
3	Phone	3.52	1.57	33	77	117	67	44	51	11
4	Videoconference	3.90	2.12	56	89	51	40	45	45	74
5	Texting	4.28	1.77	29	42	63	83	77	48	58
6	Electronic documents	5.00	1.56	10	28	35	56	76	140	55
7	Physical documents	5.22	1.89	13	40	35	45	48	63	156

Note. Sorted by mean.

two are electronic and paper documents. The mean difference between face-to-face (3.16) and email (3.19) is small for information sharing, while a larger difference existed for decision-making (face-to-face 2.71, email 3.37). A difference was observed in the fourth- and fifth-ranked communication channels: information sharing involved text messaging (Rank 4) and videoconferencing (Rank 5), while decision-making involved videoconferencing (Rank 4) and text messaging (Rank 5).

Correlations

Partial correlation coefficients controlling for gender, age, education, years of service, and job title are shown in Table 7. There was a correlation between the frequency of use and the perceived effect for each of the seven channels, but the reliability alpha for this measurement was not high (range 0.39-0.48). Therefore, both communication channel usage frequency and perceived channel effectiveness were analyzed.

There was a strong positive correlation between the level of team coordination, inclusion, and satisfaction and team performance ($p < .01$), with the primary analysis focusing on the degree of team coordination. The frequency of use and perceived effectiveness of all channels were positively correlated with the degree of team coordination ($p < .01$). None of the job characteristics (task novelty, collaboration needs, and leader dependence) showed any correlation with the degree of team coordination, while individual characteristics (proficiency and engagement) were positively correlated with the degree of team coordination ($p < .01$).

Team coordination problems had a moderate negative correlation with the level of team coordination, inclusion, and team performance satisfaction ($p < .01$). Team coordination problems were positively correlated with leader dependence and negatively correlated with engagement. The team coordination problem had a negative correlation with the frequency of voice call usage, and the perceived effectiveness of all channels.

Regarding job characteristics and channel use, task novelty was positively correlated with the frequency of videoconferencing, email, and electronic document use, as well as the perceived effectiveness of videoconferencing, text messaging, and electronic documents. Leader dependence was negatively correlated with the frequency of electronic document usage and the perceived effectiveness of text messages. Regarding personal characteristics and channel use frequency, proficiency was positively correlated with the frequency of face-to-face use, and the perceived effectiveness of face-to-face and voice calls. Engagement was positively correlated with the frequency of use of five channels other than electronic documents and paper documents (face-to-face, videoconferencing, voice calls, text messages, and email) and with the effectiveness of six channels other than electronic documents (face-to-face, videoconferencing, voice calls, text messages, email, and paper documents).

Multiple Regression Models

Multiple regression models with dependence valuables of the level of team coordination, inclusion, and team performance satisfaction were developed as shown in

Table 7. Partial Correlation Coefficient.

		T_ Nvc	T_ TmW	T_ LdrD	T_ HPrfcnt	T_ HEnggmnt	TmFtF_ Fr	TmVi_ Fr	TmVo_ Fr	TmTxt_ Fr	TmEml_ Fr	TmEDoc_ Fr	TmPDoc_ Fr	TmFtF_ E	TmVi_ E	TmVo_ E	TmTxt_ E	TmEml_ E	TmEDoc_ E	TmPDoc_ E	Prb	TmCrd	Inclsn	Stsfctn	
Novice task proportion	T_Nvc	1.000	.170**	-.167**	-.184**	-.004	-.023	.226**	.075	.090	.104*	.111*	-.025	-.054	.169**	.028	.121*	.096	.102*	-.033	-.059	.031	.073	.092	T_Nvc
Teamwork necessity	T_TmW		1.000	.039	-.269**	-.097	.026	.041	.034	.045	.015	-.045	.013	-.007	-.045	-.009	-.020	-.003	.088	.088	.006	-.075	-.075	-.057	T_TmW
Leader decision dependence	T_LdrD			1.000	.055	.120*	.094	-.002	-.013	-.041	-.027	-.104*	.019	-.059	-.091	-.092	-.188**	-.093	-.032	-.017	.150**	-.005	-.003	-.048	T_LdrD
Task proficiency	T_HPrfcnt				1.000	.326**	.111*	.066	.027	.050	.074	.024	.060	.112*	.098	.099*	.069	.079	.017	.054	-.082	.268**	.292**	.251**	T_HPrfcnt
Engagement	T_ HEnggmnt					1.000	.204**	.106*	.108*	.152**	.100*	.053	.080	.227**	.145**	.181**	.205**	.176**	.097	.107*	-.102*	.461**	.396**	.408**	T_ HEnggmnt
Face-to-face frequency	TmFtF_Fr						1.000	.302**	.334**	.314**	.303**	.256**	.453**	.224**	.036	.091	.067	.109*	.016	.083	-.028	.170**	.204**	.169**	TmFtF_Fr
Videoconference frequency	TmVi_Fr							1.000	.534**	.569**	.523**	.541**	.260**	-.014	.311**	.139**	.178**	.191**	.150**	-.017	-.049	.228**	.223**	.217**	TmVi_Fr
Phone frequency	TmVo_Fr								1.000	.574**	.574**	.487**	.368**	.082	.238**	.352**	.218**	.227**	.126*	.053	-.102*	.223**	.159**	.184**	TmVo_Fr
Text message frequency	TmTxt_Fr									1.000	.543**	.518**	.248**	.025	.197**	.197**	.315**	.169**	.089	-.046	-.070	.213**	.221**	.215**	TmTxt_Fr
Email frequency	TmEml_Fr										1.000	.611**	.434**	.083	.217**	.242**	.198**	.316**	.192**	.046	-.094	.238**	.172**	.222**	TmEml_Fr
Electronic document frequency	TmEDoc_ Fr											1.000	.486**	.036	.206**	.194**	.201**	.226**	.295**	.077	-.078	.240**	.191**	.203**	TmEDoc_ Fr
Paper document frequency	TmPDoc_ Fr												1.000	.103*	.008	.107*	.044	.087	.090	.253**	.006	.163**	.145**	.170**	TmPDoc_ Fr
Face-to-face effectiveness	TmFtF_E													1.000	.466**	.446**	.347**	.397**	.344**	.490**	-.207**	.227**	.167**	.168**	TmFtF_E
Videoconference effectiveness	TmVi_E														1.000	.531**	.562**	.555**	.502**	.277**	-.201**	.269**	.220**	.221**	TmVi_E
Phone effectiveness	TmVo_E															1.000	.616**	.571**	.447**	.382**	-.243**	.280**	.212**	.228**	TmVo_E
Text message effectiveness	TmTxt_E																1.000	.688**	.547**	.354**	-.259**	.322**	.296**	.299**	TmTxt_E
Email effectivenes	TmEml_E																	1.000	.655**	.435**	-.265**	.254**	.198**	.175**	TmEml_E
Electronic documents effectivensss	TmEDoc_E																		1.000	.578**	-.218**	.219**	.171**	.153**	TmEDoc_E
Paper document effectiveness	TmPDoc_E																			1.000	-.163**	.154**	.071	.072	TmPDoc_E
Coordination problems	Prb																				1.000	-.306**	-.235**	-.324**	Prb

(continued)

Table 7. (continued)

		T_ Nvc	T_ TmW	T_ LdrD	T_ HPrfcnt	T_ HEnggmnt	TmFtF_ Fr	TmVi_ Fr	TmVo_ Fr	TmTxt_ Fr	TmEml_ Fr	TmEDoc_ Fr	TmPDoc_ Fr	TmFtF_ E	TmVi_ E	TmVo_ E	TmTxt_ E	TmEml_ E	TmEDoc_ E	TmPDoc_ E	Prb	TmCrd	Inclsn	Stsfctn	
Team coordination level	TmCrd																					1.000	.742**	.763**	TmCrd
Team inclusion	Inclsn																						1.000	.740**	Inclsn
Team performance satisfaction	Stsfctn																							1.000	Stsfctn

Note. Control variables: gender, age, education, work years, and position.
**$p < 0.01$. *$p < 0.05$.
(Gndr & Ag10 & Ed & WrkYCd & Pstn).

Tables 8 and 9. To focus on communication channel use behavior, this model was created using a stepwise method with inputs for the frequency of channel use and perceived channel effects.

The level of team coordination. Model 1 included text message effectiveness, electronic document usage frequency, face-to-face meeting effectiveness, and videoconference frequency; adjusted $R^2 = .194$, $F(4, 395) = 23.83$, $p < .001$. Model 1 did not show a high adjusted R^2, and Model 2 was developed using all dependent variables with a stepwise method; adjusted $R^2 = .335$, $F(4, 395) = 49.83$, $p < .001$. Model 2 included engagement, text message effectiveness, electronic document usage frequency, and proficiency.

Inclusion. Model 1 included text message effectiveness, videoconference frequency, face-to-face frequency; adjusted $R^2 = .177$, $F(3, 396) = 29.54$, $p < .001$. Model 1 did not show a high adjusted R^2, and Model 2 was developed using all dependent variables with a stepwise method; adjusted $R^2 = .284$, $F(4, 395) = 40.55$, $p < .001$. Model 2 included engagement, text message effectiveness, videoconference frequency, and proficiency.

Team performance satisfaction. Model 1 included text message effectiveness, videoconference frequency, and paper documents frequency; adjusted $R^2 = .157$, $F(3, 396) = 25.76$, $p < .001$. Model 1 did not show a high adjusted R^2, and Model 2 was developed using all dependent variables with a stepwise method; adjusted $R^2 = .277$, $F(5, 394) = 31.65$, $p < .001$. Model 2 included engagement, text message effectiveness, electronic document frequency, proficiency, and team size.

Communication Channel Use in Groups of Different Levels of Team Coordination

According to the degree of team coordination, the responses were divided into three groups: poorly coordinated (team coordination ≤ 3, n = 128), somewhat coordinated (3 [neither good nor bad] $<$ team coordination < 4, n = 134), and well-coordinated ($4 \leq$ team coordination, n = 138). The results showed that the well-coordinated group had higher mean values than the other two groups (somewhat coordinated and poorly coordinated) for the frequency of use and effectiveness of all channels, except face-to-face ($p < .001$). There was a significant difference among the three groups in the perceived effectiveness of the face-to-face channel: well-coordinated $>$ somewhat coordinated $>$ poorly coordinated ($p < .001$) (see Tables 10 and 11). For well-coordinated teams, the mean frequency of use of six channels other than emails was higherthan four (more than 1 day per month but less than 1 day per week), while for emails, it was greater than five (more than 1 day per week but less than every day).

Regarding personal attributes, the mean values for both proficiency and effort were in the order of well-coordinated, somewhat coordinated, and poorly

Table 8. Multiple Regressin Model 1: Channel Usage and Perceived Channel Effectiveness.

	β	*t*	
Dependent variable: Team coordination			
Text message effectiveness	0.22***	4.43	Adjusted R^2 = .194, $F(4, 395)$ = 23.83, $p<.001$
Electronic document frequency	0.14*	2.47	
Face-to-face effectiveness	0.16**	3.21	
Videoconference frequency	0.14*	2.44	
Dependent variable: Inclusion			
Text message effectiveness	0.27***	5.76	Adjusted R^2 = .177, $F(3, 396)$ = 29.54, $p<.001$
Videoconference frequency	0.17**	3.40	
Face-to-face frequency	0.17**	3.37	
Dependent variable: Team performance satisfaction			
Text message effectiveness	0.27***	5.68	Adjusted R^2 = .157, $F(3, 396)$ = 25.76, $p<.001$
Videoconference frequency	0.17**	3.30	
Paper documents frequency	0.14**	2.94	

Note. Stepwise method (criterion: probability $F \leq 0.050$ to be injected, probability $F \geq 0.100$ to be removed). *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001.

Table 9. Multiple Regression Model 2: Channel Usage and Perceived Channel Effectiveness (Individual Attributes, Channel Usage, and Perceived Channel Effectiveness).

	β	t	
Dependent variable: Team coordination			
Engagement	0.36***	7.96	Adjusted R^2 = .329, $F(4, 395)$ = 49.83, $p<.001$
Text message effectiveness	0.21***	4.93	
Electronic document frequency	0.18***	4.26	
Proficiency	0.13**	3.03	
Dependent variable: Inclusion			
Engagement	0.27***	5.80	Adjusted R^2 = .284, $F(4, 395)$ = 40.55, $p<.001$
Text message effectiveness	0.22***	4.91	
Videoconference frequency	0.17***	3.91	
Proficiency	0.18***	3.88	
Dependent variable: Team performance satisfaction			
Engagement	0.30***	6.27	Adjusted R^2 = .277, $F(5, 394)$ = 31.65, $p<.001$
Text message effectiveness	0.21***	4.76	
Electronic document frequency	0.15**	3.43	
Proficiency	0.14**	3.00	
Team size	0.09*	2.17	

Note. Stepwise method (criterion: probability $F \leq 0.050$ to be injected, probability $F \geq 0.100$ to be removed). *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001.

Table 10. Communication Channel Usage in Well-Coordinated, Somewhat Coordinated, and Poorly Coordinated Teams.

	Communication channel usage by levels of coordination		
	Poorly coordinated (P)	Somewhat coordinated (S)	Well-coordinated (W)
	$n = 128$	$n = 134$	$n = 138$
Face-to-face frequency	3.09	3.43	< 4.12
Videoconference frequency	2.73	2.94	< 4.08
Phone frequency	3.43	3.57	< 4.53
Texting frequency	3.23	3.35	< 4.57
Email frequency	3.89	4.19	< 5.32
Electronic documents frequency	3.07	3.15	< 4.54
Paper documents frequency	3.10	3.32	< 4.14

Note. Tukey's honestly significant difference test, $\alpha = 0.05$.

Table 11. Perceived Communication Channel Effectiveness in Well-Coordinated, Somewhat Coordinated, and Poorly Coordinated Teams.

	Perceived communication channel effectiveness by levels of coordination		
	Poorly coordinated (P)	Somewhat coordinated (S)	Well-coordinated (W)
	$n = 128$	$n = 134$	$n = 138$
Face-to-face effectiveness	3.28	3.60	< 3.95
Videoconference effectiveness	3.07	3.11	< 3.74
Phone effectiveness	3.16	3.23	< 3.78
Texting effectiveness	3.02	3.10	< 3.78
Email effectiveness	3.19	3.21	< 3.88
Electronic document effectiveness	3.06	3.11	< 3.64
Paper document effectiveness	2.98	3.16,	3.38

Note. Tukey's honestly significant difference test, $\alpha = 0.05$.

coordinated teams ($p < .001$) (Table 12). No significant differences in job characteristics were observed between the three groups.

Discussion

Research Question 1: Are Channel-Task Fits Observable?

Hypothesis 1. Professionals engaged in nonroutine tasks are more likely to use rich, synchronous communication channels.

Table 12. Personal Attributes in Well-Coordinated, Somewhat Coordinated, and Poorly Coordinated Teams.

	Poorly coordinated (P)	Somewhat coordinated (S)	Well-coordinated (W)
	$n = 128$	$n = 134$	$n = 138$
Proficiency	3.24	< 3.52	< 3.87
Engagement	2.95	< 3.58	< 3.96

Note. Tukey's honestly significant difference test, $\alpha = 0.05$.

Hypothesis 1 was partially supported: nonroutine tasks increased both rich channels and lean channels. The nonroutine task proportion showed a medium positive correlation with videoconference frequency and a weak positive correlation with videoconference, email, electronic document, and text message effectiveness. Nonroutine tasks increased lean media usage as well as rich media use, and lean media was not used less for ambiguous tasks. The data did not support the suppositions of MRT, which claim that lean media channels help reduce uncertainty. Rather, a higher proportion of nonroutine tasks were correlated with more frequent use of both rich media (videoconferencing) and lean media channels (email, electronic documents, and text messages).

Job characteristics (novelty, need for cooperation, degree of dependence on leader) showed no correlation with the degree of team coordination, while individual characteristics (proficiency and engagement) showed a medium-level positive correlation with the degree of team coordination. Three communication outcome indicators—degree of team coordination, inclusion, and team performance satisfaction—were highly correlated. The degree of team coordination illustrated a small to medium degree of correlation with both the frequency and perceived effectiveness of all seven communication channels (face-to-face, videoconferencing, phone, text message, email, electronic document, paper document). Thus, regardless of task characteristics or need for communication, communication frequency explained the level of coordination.

Hypothesis 2. Rich, synchronous communication channels (face-to-face communication, videoconferences, telephone) are preferred for rich collaboration (decision making).

Hypothesis 3. Lean, asynchronous media (email, electronic documents) are preferred for lean collaboration (information sharing).

Rich media were preferred for decision making. MRT and MST both suggest that lean media channels are better suited to information sharing, whereas rich media channels are a better fit for semantic negotiation (agreement/decision-making). The results of this study show that the top three and bottom two channels were the same for both information sharing and meaning negotiation. However, the data also indicated that rich media channels were preferred for decision-making. The difference in decision

making between face-to-face (rich media) and email (lean media) was greater than the difference in information sharing. In information sharing, text messages (lean media) ranked fourth and videoconferencing (rich media) ranked fifth, but in decision making, videoconferencing ranked fourth and text messaging ranked fifth. This suggests that rich media are preferred for decision-making purposes.

Hypothesis 4. Rich media usage frequency has positive affect on the level of inclusion.

Multiple regression model suggested that both a lean channel (text message effectiveness) and rich channels (videoconference frequency, face-to-face frequency) affected inclusion. Therefore, Hypothesis 4 was partially supported.

Hypothesis 5. Lean media usage frequency positively affects the level of performance satisfaction.

Multiple regression model also suggested that both lean (text message effectiveness and paper documents frequency) and rich (videoconference frequency) channels affected the level of performance satisfaction. Therefore, Hypothesis 5 was partially supported.

Research Question 2: What Communication Behaviors Contribute to Effective Team Communication?

To answer this question, multiple linear regression models were developed, with the degree of team coordination, inclusion, and team performance satisfaction serving as dependent variables. First, to obtain suggestions for communication channel use behavior, a model was created using the stepwise method, with the use of communication channels (frequency of use and perceived effectiveness) serving as explanatory variables. Consequently, text message (effectiveness) was included as a common explanatory variable for the degree of team coordination, inclusion, and team performance satisfaction. Videoconference (frequency) and face-to-face (effectiveness) explained inclusion, and videoconference (frequency) and paper document (frequency) explained team performance satisfaction (R^2 from .157 to .194). This suggests that text message (effectiveness), a lean media channel with a higher capacity of quick feedback, was a common variable that explained both the socioemotional aspects and task completion side of team communication. Additionally, a combination of lean (frequency of electronic documents) and rich media channels (frequency of face-to-face meetings and videoconferences) explained team coordination. Rich media (frequency of video meetings and face-to-face effectiveness) explained inclusion, and rich media (frequency of video meetings and face-to-face effectiveness) explained team performance satisfaction. It has been suggested that a combination of rich media (frequency of videoconferences) and lean media (frequency of paper documents) contribute to team communication effectiveness.

As the adjusted R^2 of the model obtained from the measurement of communication channel usage frequency and perceived effectiveness was at a medium level, additional models were developed using a stepwise method, by inputting all variables, including job characteristics, personal characteristics, and communication channel usage. Consequently, stronger models were developed (the adjusted R^2 ranged from .277 to .329). The effectiveness of individual characteristics (engagement and proficiency) and the text message channel were common variables for all three indicators: team coordination, inclusion, and satisfaction with team performance. In addition to individual attributes and text messages, team coordination was explained by lean media (electronic document frequency); inclusion was explained byrich media (videoconference frequency); and team performance satisfaction was explained by lean media (electronic document frequency) and team size. Therefore, lean media (text messages) are used as a common communication platform, supplemented by rich digital media channels (videoconferencing) for social and emotional processes, and additional digital lean media channels (electronic documents) for coordination and performance.

Research Question 3: Are There Differences in Communication Behaviors Between Well-Coordinated Teams and Poorly Coordinated Teams?

The results showed that well-coordinated groups communicated more often and communication channels were perceived as more effective than somewhat coordinated and poorly coordinated teams across all seven communication channels. It has been suggested that well-coordinated teams formulate a positive loop in terms of communication channel use frequency, perceived effectiveness, and coordination level.

The mean frequency of communication channel usage by well-coordinated teams indicated that email was used more often than weekly (i.e., the mean score of the channel usage frequency was above 5), and that communication channels other than email (face-to-face, videoconference, phone calls, text messages, electronic documents, and paper documents) were used more than monthly (mean score was above 4). Well-coordinated teams reported more confidence in the personal attributes of engagement and proficiency, whereas no significant differences in job characteristics were found among the three groups. Task characteristics were not perceived to influence the level of team coordination, and it is suggested that personal attributes explain the level of team coordination.

Conclusion

This study aimed to examine the relationship between communication channel usage in teams and the degree of team coordination, task characteristics, and personal attributes. The usage frequency of all communication channels, perceived effectiveness, and personal attribites were correlated with the level of team coordination. Team

effectiveness measures, including the levels of team coordination, inclusion, and performance satisfaction, were explained by personal attributes (engagement and proficiency) and lean media usage (text message effectiveness). Team coordination and team performance satisfaction were explained by lean media (electronic document frequency) usage, and inclusion was explained by rich media (videoconferencing frequency) usage. A combination of rich and lean media channel usage has been suggested to increase team effectiveness. The task-media fit was not clearly observed. This may be because the communication tasks were intertwined. MST suggests that an analysis of media use in various processes or comparing media use between different tasks may not conclusively establish a media-task fit. However, our results indicate that lean media channels contribute more to performance satisfaction, while rich media channels contribute more to socioemotional satisfaction.

Although emails were used more frequently than text messages and electronic documents, the use of text messages and electronic documents helped to explain team coordination and performance. This supports the work of Aritz et al. (2017), who created a study based on a project with college students and showed it to be scalable in the workplace. Together, these results indicate that the frequency of videoconferencing rather than face-to-face meetings improves socioemotional satisfaction, even in environments where face-to-face communication is a team communication channel option.

This study adopted and extended the MRT and MST frameworks to demonstrate that the use of specific channels contributes to communication performance. Our findings underscore the importance of using a combination of written (text messages/electronic documents) and verbal (videoconferencing) communication in the workplace. By providing practical guidelines on the frequency and selection of intrateam communication channels and their impact on team coordination, this research may help shape future communication protocols within organizations. Of particular importance is the role of lean media channels (text messages) in increasing the degree of team coordination, while the use of both lean (electronic documents) and rich media channels (videoconferencing) is recommended. Channels with appropriate usage frequency (videoconferencing and electronic documents) and appropriate effectiveness (face-to-face meetings and text messages) for understanding channel usage may be particularly useful for implementation of communication guidelines.

The study's limitations include a narrow focus on intrateam communication and the variable effectiveness of communication channels based on factors like message length and content (e.g., daily/nondaily/new and positive/negative). Further research should be conducted using methods such as content analysis and interviews in combination, to better determine the effectiveness of a communication channel in different contexts or situations. Additionally, the use of specific channels is expected to continue to change as technology develops and penetrates. Although the combination of lean and rich media is likely to be universal, ongoing research is required for its effective implementation.

This study contributes to business communication both theoretically and practically by providing a comprehensive comparison of communication channel usage within teams in a specific cultural context. By assessing the relationship between

the frequency and effectiveness of multiple communication channels within a team and the degree of team coordination can aid organizations in improving intrateam relationships and coordination.

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Laybats, C., & Tredinnick, L. (2019). Increasing importance of knowledge management in the workplace. Business Information Review, 36(4), 146-148.

Summary: The article emphasizes the growing role of knowledge management in the modern workplace, specifically with the rise of remote work influenced by advancements in technology. The author discusses how flexible working environments are impacted by the help of fast internet connections and collaborative tools like Microsoft SharePoint, which has significantly transformed traditional work practices. Along with that, it highlights challenges such as maintaining engagement, avoiding isolation, and ensuring that knowledge reaches the right people at the right time. That is the reason why it is important to perform knowledge management, advocating for strong policies and quality assurance processes to ensure the effective use of digital tools. The study marks the crucial personal connection factor to maintain team cohesion and trust even though working remotely through video conferencing.

Relevance: The article is relevant to the topic when presenting the management practices of utilizing the technology advantage to the transition from a traditional office environment to remote work.

Place in the paper: Introduction

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Increasing importance of knowledge management in the workplace

Technology moves us forward providing us with speed, efficiency and flexibility like never before. Several articles in our issue this time certainly reflect that which has led me to consider how knowledge and information management practices may have to adapt and change to our changing work environment. With fast 4G and even 5G Internet connections, Wi-Fi hotspots all over the place and fibre-optic broadband as standard in most homes flexible and remote working has never been easier.

According to the latest statistics from Office for National Statistics, remote working has risen by approximately 10 per cent between 2008 and 2018 in the UK. The data, which can be viewed at https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/adhocs/009913homeworkersbyukregion2008comparedto2018, go into more detail defining remote working in several categories: own home, same grounds or building, different places with home as a base and separate from home. The category with the biggest growth was the working from own home which rose in the 10 years from 884 to 1542, a rise of 43 per cent.

The implications of this are many. While technology is there to help us connect, how do we ensure connectivity and guard against isolation and disconnectivity on the person-to-person level? How do we ensure that employees stay engaged when essentially they are often sitting in a room on their own? How do we replace/recreate chance meetings at the water cooler or coffee machine? How do we ensure knowledge is being captured and that it reaches the right people at the right time?

I am a remote worker and work for an organisation that is very virtual in nature with many of my colleagues also working remotely from their own homes around the world. We are constantly driving towards addressing all of the above questions to make sure that we are managing information and knowledge effectively and stay engaged with each other and the business as a cohesive workforce. We use a number of tools to assist us with this, regularly review processes and have regular meetings. I recently came across a piece of best practice on remote working and managing remote working teams from one of the tools we use. You can see the full article at https://blog.teamwork.com/the-3-things-you-need-for-successful-remote-work/. Essentially, the article touches on a number of points around engagement and connectivity under the headings of transparency, trust and time management. It identifies these headings as 'pillars to success' and gives practical advice and perspective both from the worker and from the manager point of view.

Two things really struck me as important within this and that was verbalising what is happening in your day, not the sort of thing I am comfortable with or used to, but thinking about it, you need to make up for the fact that you are not sat in an office where your colleagues can see you, pick up on cues to understand how your day is going and celebrate with you your successes and sympathise or advise on your challenges. Changing my perspective on this really facilitated engagement with the rest of the team and opened up an avenue of connection that had not previously been there.

The second thing was the use of the video conference again something I would shy away from, but the depth and richness of communication it provides when compared with just voice communication outweighed any negative factors I had in my head. Engagement was enhanced, trust and understanding more easily developed as well as a general sense of 'knowing' your team.

There are many tools out there to facilitate connectivity and engagement from collaborative working platforms such as Microsoft SharePoint, Google Shared Drives to chat tools such as Slack and Yammer and video call conferencing through tools such as WebEx or Zoom. The following article reviews some of these technologies and reflects on the way forward as remote working increases developing the use of augmented and virtual reality as a way to enhance person-to-person connectivity https://www.hrtechnologist.com/articles/mobile-workforce/remote-work-predictions-2019/?zd_source=hrt&zd_campaign=4438&zd_term=nehapradhan.

With the array of tools available and the ease at which remote working is possible and is continuing to rise in popularity, a key aspect of any knowledge and information management programme has to be governance – ensuring that the tools are being accessed securely and used correctly, that quality assurance processes are in place to measure and review this and that there is cross-connectivity between tools to link information and knowledge in the right places. Time and again when I have read about or spoken to organisations that work a lot in virtual environments with a remote workforce strong governance policies and quality assurance measures are key to ensuring success.

Another aspect of this area is the work a knowledge and information team need to do to support remote workforces. The following article provides an interesting view from Grant Thornton who have recently transformed the way their 8500 strong workforce of mainly remote workers work, which is available at https://www.hrtechnologist.com/interviews/mobile-workforce/can-distributed-teams-outperform-traditional-teams-qa-with-grant-thorntons-david-boland-and-michelle-smith/. My key takeaways from this were: the use of technology and artificial intelligence (AI) to effectively connect workers to the information they needed at the right time taking care not to cause information overload; personalisation of virtual workspaces and tools facilitated through AI and machine learning enabled this to be effective for them; the importance of regular meetings through voice or video to avoid feelings of disconnection or isolation.

The UK government has also published its guide to 'smart' working covering a number of different aspects of remote working for public sector including a smart working maturity model illustrating the various stages towards complete smart working. Their aim is to create a cohesive and effective life–work balance through the ability to work seamlessly across locations and through the day. The full article is available at http://www.flexibility.co.uk/downloads/TW3-Guide-to-SmartWorking-withcasestudies-5mb.pdf.

Within this article is reference to collaborative spaces. This is something that has been worked on quite extensively by one of our writers, Paul Corney. His latest article on this was featured in our June publication earlier this year (Corney, 2019). In the article, Paul reflects on key characteristics of collaborative spaces and how much of today's collaboration is conducted virtually. There is a very practical guide that he created with another of our writers, Martin White, on successful facilitation when working in a virtual collaborative environment.

What is clear is that remote working will continue to rise particularly as businesses seek to connect with and obtain the best talent which is increasingly geographically dispersed. The world of work has already transformed dramatically and will continue to do so. What is needed is adaptation of work practices and culture to ensure effective business operations into the future and good knowledge management practice is a key part of this.

The December issue

In our issue this time, we take a look back at trends in the changing workplace, the impact technology has on working practices and also look forward to how this is continuing into the future. We look at the ever-increasing importance of soft skills in the profession from negotiation to communication and persuasion.

Our first article is by Tredinnick: 'Twenty-Nine Years of the BIR Annual Survey Part 2: Changing Information Work'. In celebrating 35 years of *BIR* and nearly as many of the *BIR* survey, this is the second part of Luke's review reflecting on changes, developments and trends in information and knowledge management. In this article, he covers the following themes: the decline of public library business services, changing budgets, globalisation of business information, offshoring and outsourcing of information work, rising up the value chain, changing skills in information work, reliability and accuracy of information and rising up the value chain. He summarises and consolidates longitudinal trends revealed by the survey to provide a guide to the rich data contained within the surveys. The paper's findings relate to the changes in the nature of professional practice and the pressures on professional practice over the time the survey has been running.

The second article by Guha et al. 'Decision Making on the Go: Smart Phones and Decision Making in Early 21st Century Workflow' looks at the way smartphones have impacted the way employees connect with their work and reflects on the changes in the workflow. They are a tool that enables us to stay connected and work on the go. In this article, Guha et al. have conducted an 'exhaustive a research as possible' reviewing different studies that relate to the use of smartphones in a number of different areas of work. The work also reviews different studies reflecting on both the advantages and the problems that have arisen in the use of smartphones. The article is an interesting look at the literature in this area covering different perspectives and ways of working.

The third article by Mohammad Hossein Jarrahi 'In the Age of the Smart Artificial Intelligence: AI's Dual Capacities for Automating and Informating Work' looks at the transforming force of AI on the world of work and how we can learn from previous waves of technology transformations in the workplace to diffuse anxiety and ensure effective use of technology within organsiations. He reflects that what is needed is a holistic approach to taking on board and utilising AI looking at informatics, the way it is placed in the organisation and the social factors it raises and the culture of the organisation.

The fourth article by Weightman 'Business Ops – Hiding Knowledge Management Practices in Plain Sight' is an interesting look at how to change behaviours and embed good knowledge management practice within an organisation's workflows, almost without them noticing. In the article Janine reviews the complex range of organisational factors at play which create obstacles to knowledge sharing and how to ensure employee anticipation in knowledge management initiatives to ensure success. Janine states:

> The mindset of 'hiding knowledge management practices in plain sight' is presented as an intervention strategy to boost employee engagement in knowledge management. This

should appeal to knowledge management practitioners working in organisations who present lower levels of readiness, resistance, limited resources, or imperatives to rapidly leverage critical knowledge.

Through her article, Janine highlights opportunities to kick-start changes that will ensure successful knowledge management practice.

The fifth article by Chrissy Street 'Seven Practical Steps for Successful Supplier Negotiations: Incorporating Developing a Template for Negotiation Preparation' takes a very practical view of supplier negotiations, relating best practice tips, to ensure that those working in this area can balance ensuring the business's information needs are met as well as their budget and financial goals when working with suppliers to obtain the best service. It is an increasingly complex area to successfully manage and needs a host of skills and tools to ensure the most advantageous outcome. Chrissy's article outlines tools that can be adapted to your own personal style of negotiation and helps you build a template that can be used over and over again with suppliers.

Claire Laybats and Luke Tredinnick

Reference

Corney P (2019) Any time, any place anywhere . . . . *Business Information Review* 36(2): 75–79.

Source 45 (Scholarly)

Citation:

Navickas, V., Grenčíková, A., & Španková, J. (2019). The use of social media job search. *Mediterranean journal of social sciences*, *10*(1), 17-26.

Summary: The article was written about how different Generation Z, Y, and Z use social media as a platform for job searching. To have the answer to this topic, the study uses survey data compared to the job search behaviors of each generation. Generation Z tends to rely on personal recommendations and traditional job portals but is gradually adapting to using social media for job searches. With Generation Y, they show a strong preference for online job portals and increasing engagement with social media for job opportunities. Lastly, Generation Z who was born in the digitalization era mostly integrates social media into their job search process, although they still use conventional methods. Even though social media is becoming an effective tool for finding jobs, traditional methods like recommendations and applying through job portals still hold significant value. The trend of searching for jobs through social media is increasing, especially useful with younger generations, and emphasizes the necessity of employers to adapt their recruitment strategies to this shift.

Relevance: The article is relevant to the topic by discussing the optimization of talent recruitment through the use of social media, which highly attracts Generation Z and is considered to increase shortly.

Place in the paper: Introduction, literature review

sciendo

Research Article

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The Use of Social Media Job Search

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to determine the level of use of social network job search different generations X, Y, Z. We have used the method of literature study, the questionnaire method and the statistical methods, the method of comparison and deduction in the article. We meet the concept of a social network on a daily basis and many people use them. Among the young people, there is probably no one in a civilized world who would not come into contact with them. They are part of not only private but also professional life. People of generation X consider work to be the most important value in their value list. In their work they are loyal, they do not seek changes voluntarily, because they prefer certainty. This generation is characterized by the fact that technology and technology are not at the same level as the younger Y generation, but generation X is adapting to technical and information progress. People called Generation Y are considered to be an ambitious generation for whom it is important to have an interesting job and a high standard of living. This generation is looking for changes and challenges in its work. Generation Y favors their personal life, family, and partner in the ranks of values before work. They are innovative, creative and they like to develop and train in their work. They work efficiently and flexibly. Generation Z is the first generation that has not experienced a world without the ultimate digitization, they are called "digital people" and there is nothing easier for them to live without living communication with the world, they are more comfortable in the home on the Internet. Generation Z addresses everything with modern technologies.

Keywords: *social media, social networks, generation X, generation Y, generation Z, job search*

1. Introduction

Social media serve to socialize and develop social contacts. Their advantage is that content can be created, edited, or commented on by any registered user (Červenska, 2013; Berkelaar 2017; Schmidt, O'Connor, 2015). Social media are superior to social networks. It's because social media

are more extensive and also includes blogs, wikis, chat rooms, etc. There are various social media sites today. Some deal with sharing videos, others focusing on professional networks. The term social media is related to social networking. The social network is a web service that allows an individual to create a public profile. Social networks have become a phenomenon of the 21st century. We can see the increase in technical progress as well as the increasing computer literacy of the population as a reason for increasing the number of social networks and their use (Berthon, Pitt, Plangger, Shapiro, 2012; Roth, Bobko, Van Iddekinge, Thatcher, 2016). Convenient and simple control is the key to the success of social networks. Developing mobile technologies and mobile applications are becoming a common part of young people's lives, in particular. The growth of social networking can be dated to the period of qualitative Internet transition from so-called Web 1.0 to Web 2.0, what we can call the transition to a new generation web (Velšic, 2012). Web 2.0 has resulted in a better design that promotes user creativity, helps to better share information, and enables mutual collaboration between users. Advanced technologies have so greatly contributed to the development of the second generation of web communities and they have enabled the emergence of services such as social networks, file sharing systems, and blogs.

We meet the concept of a social network on a daily basis and many people use them. Among the young people, there is probably no one in a civilized world who would not come into contact with them (Bartakova, Brtkova, Gubiniova, Hitka, 2017; Tufts, Jacobson, Stevens, 2015). They associate billions of people around the world and connect them through their activities or interests. The user's public profile is linked to other users who can share content, view and view the record. (Boyd, Ellison, 2007) The concept of social networking originated prior to the emergence of the Internet and in the last century constituted social structures linked to friendship, religion, sexual orientation, or the bond of people based on common interests (Horváthová, 2016). Internet social networks originated with the development of information technologies. More and more people use them in their private lives. Today they are already part of different generations (Pavlíček, 2010). The number of users is growing steadily. They are increasingly getting into the working lives of individuals. Social networks represent both a positive and a negative view in the employers' work sphere (Horváthová,2016; Coker 2013). They see the positive social networks in communications, which can be faster and more efficient in organizations. From a negative perspective, employers are worried about employee productivity losses. We divide social networks by purpose into personal social networks, corporate and group profiles (Bizzi, 2018; Eger, Mičík, Řehoř, 2018). On these networks, users share and store media such as photos, videos. Another major feature of personal social networks is the creation of friendships with other users. We included among them as Facebook, MySpace and so on. Professional social networks are based on professional interests. The organization chooses a suitable potential worker based on his / her work profile. (Lorincová, Ližbetinová, Brodský, 2018; Miller 2013). We can consider LinkedIn as a professional social network. Interesting social networks are those that connect users with the same interests. These may be social networks that involve travel, photography, or even where users rate a movie database.

2. Objective and Methods

Social networks are increasingly being used to search for a workforce, and the development of this search method is very dynamic. On the other hand, more and more people are also looking for new job opportunities through social networks. The speed of expanding job vacancy information is very fast and very effective, and it attracts a relatively large number of job seekers. The aim of this study was to determine the level of use of social network job search different generations X, Y, Z. We used the analysis of the available literary sources as well as practical knowledge in the elaboration of the presented study. The research sample was selected by available selections using well-known people who were contacted through the Facebook social network. The survey was attended by different age groups, with different education and different attitudes towards using social media to find work and with different work experiences and opinions. We had used the questionnaire method of collecting information, we received the necessary answers through the online method through the social network. We had used descriptive statistical methods to generate and evaluate

questionnaire responses. The questionnaire contains 11 simple-choice questions. We had chosen the closed questions that determine respondents in advance of the answers. In some cases, we had used semi-closed questions that represent a combination of closed and open answers. We had offered a respondent to choose one of the answers we provided, and we had offered the "other" answer in the last option, where respondents answered in their own words. The total attendance of the questionnaire was 240 visits, of which 210 replies were filled in and retrieved. Total return in percentage terms is 87.50%. Our questionnaire was attended by 51 men from a total of 210 respondents (24.30%).

Most male respondents were born in 1982 - 1995 (Generation Y), in percentage terms, represent 47.02% male respondents. 41.18% of male gender belong to generation X, so they were born in 1965 - 1981. The smallest group of men in our survey were born from 1996 to 2010 and belong to the Z generation. In percentage terms, they represent 11,80%. 53 women responded from the total number of respondents. Most female responses fall into the Y generation. Of the total number of women, women born between 1982 and 1995 represent 50.94%. Women of the X generation took part in our questionnaire for 30.20% of the total number of women. 18.86% of women participating in the questionnaire survey belong to generation Z because they were born between 1996 and 2010. The highest number of our respondents reached secondary education with a school-leaving examination (45,70%). Higher education level 1 was reached by 16 respondents (22.90%). Respondents with a higher education degree of the 2nd degree represent 14.30% of the respondents. Respondents with secondary school education without maturity accounted for 12.90%. People with primary education, post-secondary education, and university level 3 education represented the same percentage of respondents (1.40%).

3. Findings

For us, it was interesting to find out the social status of the respondents who were interviewed to explore the use of social media when looking for a job. Social status can affect the use of social networks when looking for a job.

Table 1 gives us an overview of the social status of randomly selected respondents in the labor market.

Table 1. The social status of respondents in percentage

	Number of respondents	
	n	**%**
Employed	129	61,40
Unemployed	3	1, 40
Student	69	32,90
Maternity leave	9	4,30
Total	210	100

Source: Own processing based on survey results

Employed people formed the largest group, which was more than half. 129 people employed represent 61.40% of our survey participants. Students (69 respondents) represented the second largest group. They represent 32.90% of the total number of respondents in the percentage. Among the respondents there were nine people on maternity leave (4.30%) and three unemployed respondents (1.40%).

We have focused on how respondents have found their last job position. The largest group of 102 respondents (48.60%) found their work on the recommendation of a well-known. The second largest group of 48 respondents (22.90%) found their job position through websites / portals. 27 respondents (12.90%) found their work through social networks, 15 respondents (7.10%) used the option "Others", where they subsequently wrote their form of finding the last job. These respondents found their job through their college practice, previous brigade, or direct contact with

the employer. With the same percentage of 2, 90%, 6 respondents reported the form of finding the last job through a job agency, an ad and the Office of Labor of Social Affairs and Family. These results show an increasing trend in job search through both social media and social networks.

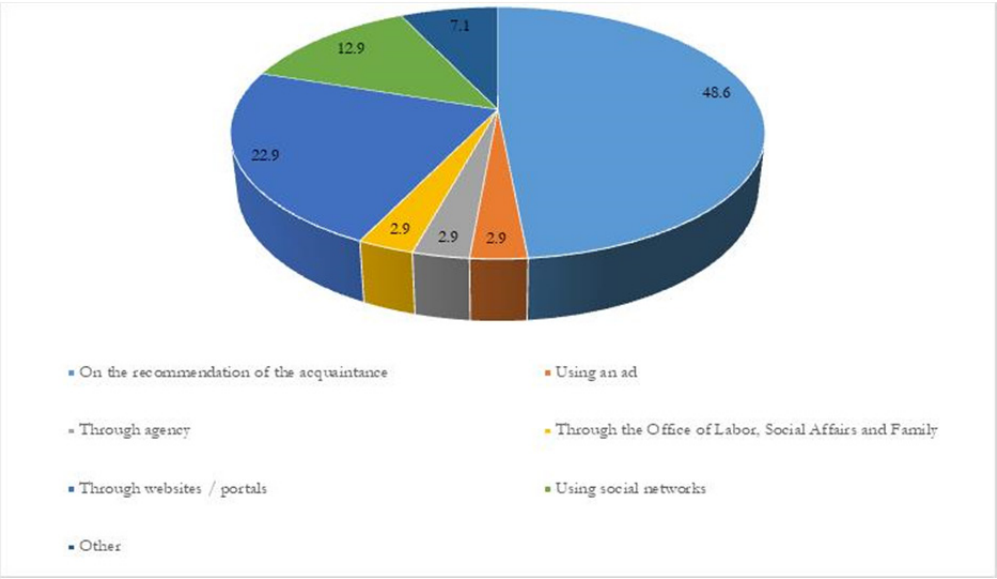


Figure 1. How respondents found their last job
Source: Own processing based on survey results

We had investigated whether the respondents would use the same form as their last job or would choose something else. Respondents had 6 choices, the responses were the same as the previous question. Due to the widening of the impact of social media, we have estimated a higher percentage of use of social networks and websites and portals. 81 respondents (38.60%) would choose websites and portals. 75 respondents (35,70%) would search for a new job on the recommendation of the acquaintance, only 24 respondents (11,40%) would search for a new job through social networks, 12 respondents (5,70%) would use the form of an advertisement, 9 respondents (4.30%) would be looking for a job agency, and 3 respondents (1.40%) of the respondents would look for new work through the Office of Social Affairs and Family.

Table 2. How respondents found their last job and how they would find future job

Form of finding a job	Last / current job		Future job	
	Number of respondents		Number of respondents	
	N	%	n	%
On the recommendation of the acquaintance	102	48,60	75	35,70
Using an ad	6	2, 90	12	5,70
Through agency	6	2,90	9	4,30
Through the Office of Labor, Social Affairs and Family	6	2,90	3	1,40
Through websites / portals	48	22,90	81	38,60
Using social networks	27	12,90	24	11,40
Other	15	7,10	6	2,90
Total	210	100	210	100

Source: Own processing based on survey results

Table 2 gives us a summary of how the respondents were looking for the last job. We looked at how the respondents were looking for the last job position and how they would look for new jobs at the present time. Our aim had been to compare the percentage of individual forms of finding the last job position and the future work that respondents would be looking for at the present time. Most respondents searched for their last job on the recommendation of the known, these respondents representing 48.60%. 35.70% of respondents would look for their future work through their acquaintances, this represents a 12.90% smaller number of respondents. 22, 90% of respondents found their current job through web sites or job portals. This was 15, 70% more respondents.

Up to 38, 60% of respondents would use the website to find a job. 12.90% of surveyed respondents used social networks to find their last job. 11.40% of surveyed respondents would be looking for future work through social networks, which represents a reduction in interest of 1.40%. Our respondents would make more use of job search through an advertisement and via an agency today. Ad utilization would currently be used by 2.80% more respondents than in the past. Job search assistance in the form of a work agency has increased by 1.40%. Selected respondents found their last job with a work agency (2.90%). Currently, this form of job search is used by 4.30% of respondents. The services of the Office of Labor of Social Affairs and Family in its last work were used by 2, 90% of the respondents. Currently, 1, 40% of interviewed respondents will use the services of the Office. Interest in this form fell by 1, 50%.

We also asked our respondents whether they ever found work through social media or social networks. More than half of respondents (58.60%) report that they have not yet found work, through social media or via networks. The remaining 87 respondents (41.40%) report that they have already found work using social media or social networks.

We've determined if people prefer more social media or social networks to find a job. When asked, what do you prefer more? Looking for work through social networks or through job portals, up to 59 respondents answered that they prefer job portals, such as Profesia. sk, Job.sk. In percentage terms, this represents 84.30% of the total number of respondents surveyed. The remaining 15.70% (33 respondents) prefer social networks, for example Facebook.com or Pokec.sk.

Facebook 84,30% (177) is the most popular social network for finding job, 10% of respondents looking for social networking would prefer the Linkedin social network, 2,90% choose the option "other" where they said they would choose social the Google+ network, 1.40% of respondents would opt for the social network Pokec, and the same percentage would choose the social network Instagram.

The majority of respondents agreed that Profesia.sk is the best working portal. In percentage terms these respondents represent up to 71.40% of the respondents. 7.10% of respondents used the option "other" and would choose, for example, the Edujob.sk work page to help find work in school or to use the Istp.sk work portal. The other 4 respondents (5.70%) would choose the Bazos.sk job portal to find a job. The same percentage of respondents (4.30%) selected a job portal as Job.sk, Kariera.sk and Pracovne-ponuky.sk. One responding (1.40%) opted for the Brigada.sk work portal and in the same percentage the respondents also opted for the Praca.sme.sk work portal.

99 respondents answered yes, they consider it useful / beneficial to use social media to find a job. The percentage represents 47,80% of the respondents. 30.40% have chosen the option certainly yes. 15.90% of respondents did not know whether the use of social media was considered beneficial and 5.80% of respondents did not consider social media to be useful in finding a job.

4. Comparison of Generational Difference in Finding Jobs Using Social Media

We have dealt with the intergenerational differences in the use of social media in this section. We detect preferences of generation X, Y and generation Z. We suppose that Y-generation (1982-1995) people prefer more to seek work through social media than their previous generation X (1965-1981). Of the total number of respondents, generation X represents 32.90% (21 men, 48 women), generation Y 50% respondents (24 males, 81 women) and generation Z 17.10% of respondents (24 males, 81 women).

Table 3. Social status of individual generations

	Gener. X	Percentage of the total number of generation X	Gener. Y	Percentage of the total number of generation Y	Gener. Z	Percentage of the total number of generation Z
Employed	63	91,30	57	54, 30	9	25
Unemployed	3	4, 35	0	0	0	0
Student	0	0	42	40	27	75
Maternity leave	3	4,35	6	5,70	0	0
Total	69	100	105	100	36	100

Source: Own processing based on survey results

We can state that the largest representations of the Y generation are employed people expressing 91.30% of the respondents born to the Y generation. We can see the same percentage of 4.35% of the X generation respondents in the number of unemployed and mothers on maternity leave. As expected in Generation X, no respondent was found to be a student, therefore the percent expression of the students of the X generation is 0%. Y-generation respondents represent 54.30% of employees and women on maternity leave represent 5.70% of the total number of respondents. Generations Y represent most students from all generations of randomly selected respondents. Up to 40% of Y generation respondents were students, this represents an increase of 40% over generations X. The smallest representation of respondents is represented by the generation Z, in which up to 75% of the respondents are students. 25% of working respondents were from generations Z on the basis of statistical evaluation.

We found that the largest number of employed (63) people was in the X generation (30%), comparing the number of employed people from other generations. We surveyed in Y generation less than 57 employed respondents (27.14%). This represents a reduction of less than 3% and only nine employed respondents (4.30%) were born in generations Z. We have also seen a reduction in the number of students in each generation. From the questionnaire survey, we found that 42 respondents from the Y generation are students, representing 20% of the total number of respondents. Questionnaire was attended by 27 students from Generation Z, they represent a total of 12, 85%. We found a decrease of 7.15% between the number of students from Generation Y and Z.

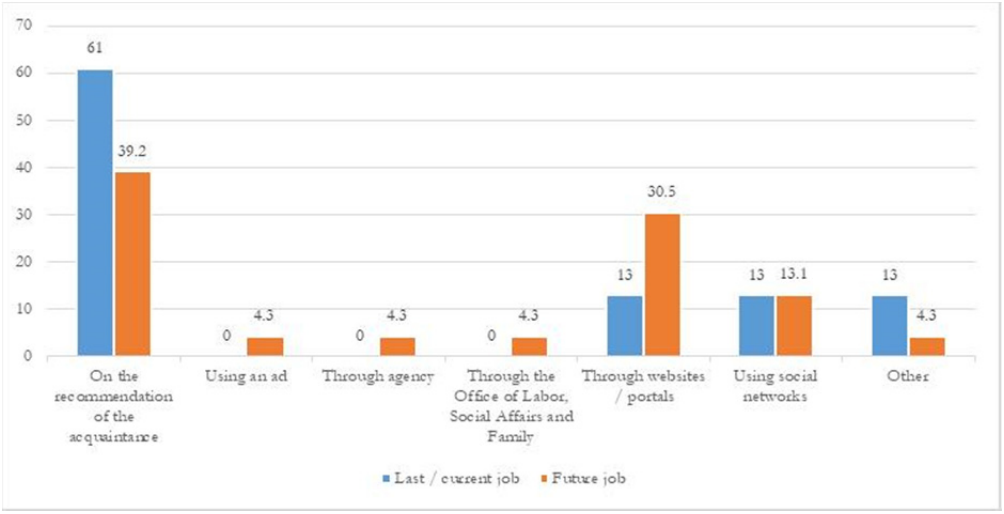


Figure 2. Method of job search by Generation X
Source: Own processing based on survey results

Figure 2 shows the forms used by X generation respondents to find their last job position, as well as the forms they would choose to find a new job at the present time. The aim was to find out the preferences of different generations in search of employment. How we can see Generation X prefers to find work through their acquaintances. 61% of respondents (42) from generation X have found their last job with their acquaintances, but in the search for a new job, this form would only use 39.10% (27). 13% of X generation respondents used the web site to search for their latest work, and 30.50% of surveyed X generation respondents would use the new job using web sites or job portals. 13% of respondents used social networks for the last job, and the same number of respondents would also looking for new work through social networks. People born between 1956 and 1981 are not social media friends to the extent of the Y generation, so we assumed that the forms they used to find their last job will be through acquaintance or advertised forms. We confirmed, through the answers of 69 respondents, that Generation X people prefer to find work with their acquaintances..

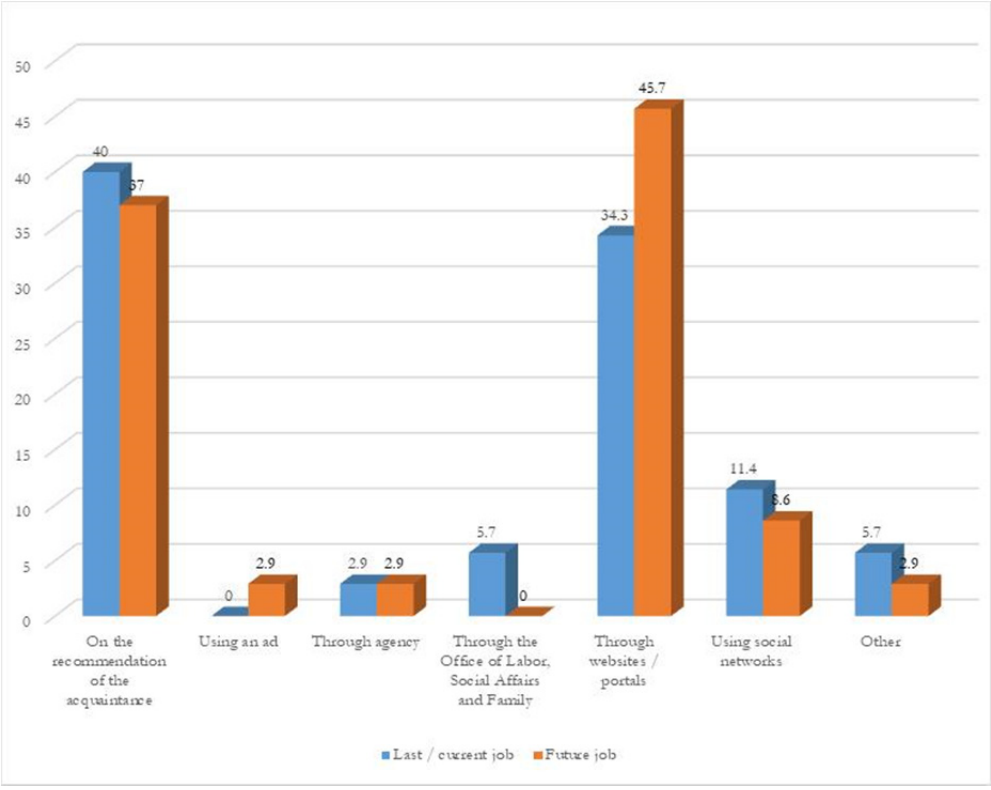
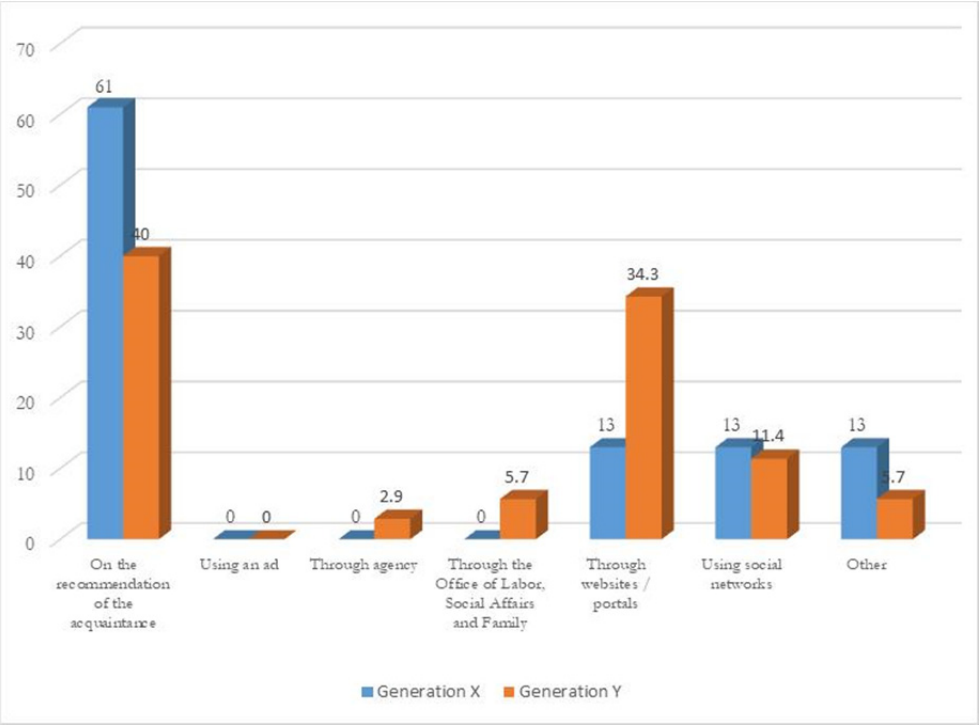


Figure 3. Method of job search by Generation Y
Source: Own processing based on survey results

In Graph 3, we see preferences for job-seeking forms of Generation Y. People born between 1982 and 1995 prefer a form of job search through websites or job portals, which also confirmed the outcome of our questionnaire. 34,30% of Generation Y respondents found their last job through websites and 45,70% of Y generation respondents, looking again for new jobs on websites and job portals. We noticed an increase in interest in the form of job search through web sites in generations Y by 11, 40%.

40% of respondents from the Y generation responded to their acquaintances when searching

for their last job. Almost equal percentage of respondents would use this option to find a future job (37, 10%) again. 11.40% of Y generation respondents found their work using social networks, but only 8, 60% of respondents would now use this form to find a new job offer. This form of job search occurred in generations Y drop by 2, 80%.



Graph 4 The process of finding the last working position - generations X and Y
Source: Own processing based on survey results

Chart 4 describes the comparison of the forms in the search for the last job position for our respondents from generation X and generation Y. In this observation, we skipped the last generation of Z, in which only 4.28% of the total surveyed respondents are employed. Due to the fact that the generation Z is still preparing for the labor market, we had notl not paid attention to it in the following comparison and examination.

We noticed that the same number of X and Y generation respondents found their last job through their acquaintances. We consider this form effective because they can help us often when we are looking for a new job. This form is used in the vacant position in the company, the acquaintance can talk and give the recommendation to his boss often.

We have found the biggest difference between generation X and Y in the form of looking for a job using a website. While respondents in generation X searched for their latest job positions, they used the site in a percentage of 8.04%, generation Y respondents used web pages to search for the latest work in percentage terms of 34.30%.

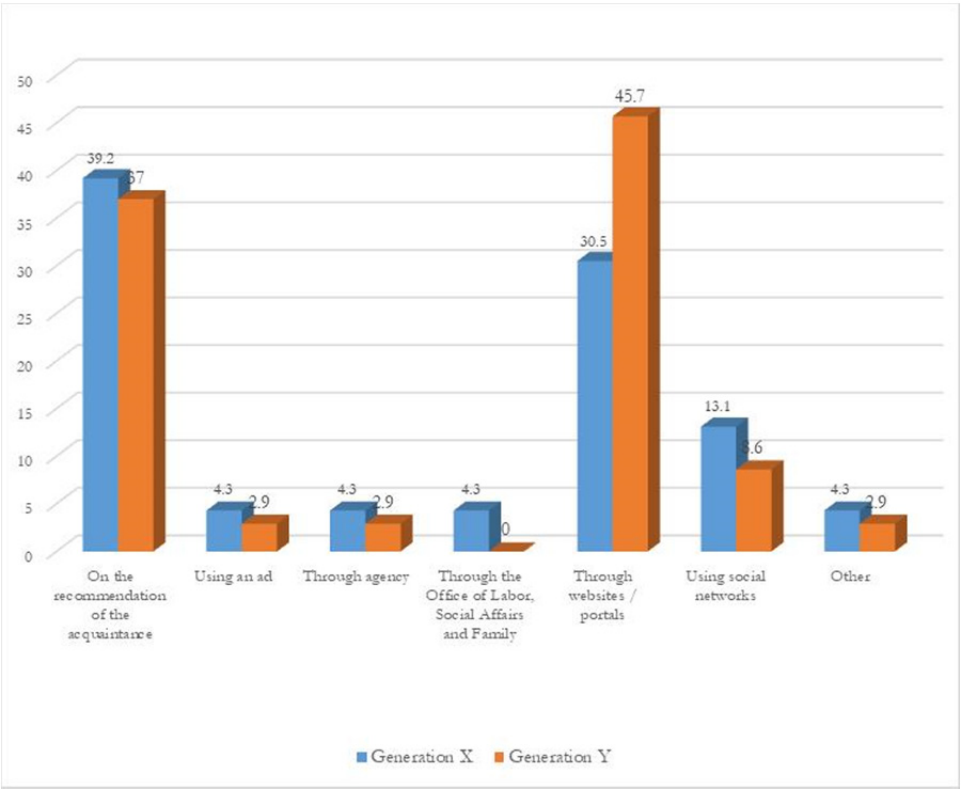


Figure 5. The process of finding the new working position now - generations X and Y
Source: Own processing based on survey results

In Graph 5, we depict forms of job search that would be chosen by different generations if they had to look for a new job in the near future.

The greatest difference between generations was observed in the form of job search through websites. Respondents in Generation X have selected 10% of all respondents in the site and respondents of generation Y have selected this form in a percentage of 22.86%. The same percentage of respondents in generation X and generation Y chosen to find new work using social networks, with a percentage of 4.30% of all respondents.

We see a different view in the form of looking for work through acquaintance. 12.85% of generation X respondents would use the help of their acquaintances in finding a new job. Respondents generations Y are more interested in finding a new job than generation X in this form. 18.57% of generation Y respondents prefer to find work by acquaintance. This represents the difference between generation X and generation Y by 5.72%.

5. Conclusion

We surveyed the views and attitudes of respondents on the impact of social media on job search through a questionnaire survey. By evaluating the questionnaire, we found that only 41.40% of respondents found work through social media or social networks. Social media and social networks are widespread, and they are part of our everyday life, we supposed that most of our respondents have at least once in their life found work through social media or social networks. Our estimate was not confirmed, as even half of the randomly selected respondents did not find work through social media.

It is interesting that a very low percentage of all respondents use job search Office of Labor, Social Affairs and Family. Maybe it was just there the possibility to introduce a mobile application. Finding work for unemployed people will be simplified, while improving contact between authorities and job seekers by linking the institution to the mobile application. Recommendation of knowledge, references and experience will probably be among the priorities in finding a job always. At the same time, the importance of websites is growing. Nowadays, when companies lack workforce, it is also necessary to use new communication technologies to search for the workforce, for example through different social networks and applications.

We consider the important use of social media to find a job in today's modern and informative time. Therefore, it is necessary to continuously improve the social media and social networks.

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Summary: The article provides the setting of recruitment and selection of talents depends on speed and accuracy, and HR professionals need to find a better solution to process the application faster while still being able to select the best candidates. To that, many companies use online knowledge management systems to hire employees, also known as E-recruitment, which fully takes advantage of the resources of the internet. The main focus of the paper is to analyze how the new technology influenced the recruitment process as a whole by answering the questions of how the introduction and use of e-recruitment affect the design of traditional recruitment processes and what are the disadvantages and advantages of e-recruitment versus traditional management. In the end, the result has given that the typical paper-based recruitment process is no longer a fit in this world, which e-recruitment brings the benefit of time savings, cost production, and reaching a broader audience. Furthermore, the benefits of e-recruitment can differentiate between organizations by implementing different strategies and setting different objectives.

Relevance: The article is relevant to the topic by describing the new technologies for recruiting and retaining talent, and assisting HR professionals better in processing applications. The topic has a strong connection between management and communication practices.

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NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

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Abstract. Well-conducted recruitment and selection process is extremely important for the organization, permitting in-depth and objective verification of candidates in terms of meeting employer's expectations and leads to their employment. Up to now, there has been little research on the impact of e-recruitment on the recruitment process as a whole. The present study fills part of this gap by investigating the effect of e-recruitment on the design of the recruitment process. Therefore, the main purpose of the paper is to analyze how new technology has influenced the recruitment process as a whole. The recruitment process will be presented on the example of ItutorGroup. The paper considers the possibilities of including modern technologies in the recruitment and selection strategies of the organization based on a case study method. The case study describes the project of cooperation of the Work Service personnel consultancy with the international organization ItutorGroup. Its selection and recruitment strategy was based on video-recruitment. The findings indicate that e-recruitment transforms the traditional recruitment process into a time- and space-independent, collaborative hiring process. The most significant changes are recorded in the sequence and increased divisibility of main recruitment tasks. For management, the main task is now that of communicating with candidates. Recruitment and selection strategy based on modern technologies requires an experienced and competent team, two unquestionable benefits are: limiting the length of the process in time and possibility to decrease the costs.

Keywords: Recruitment; selection process; internet based technologies

JEL Classification: M12, M15

Introduction

Recruitment and selection, like every other aspect of business today depends on speed and accuracy. With increasing numbers of qualified applicants chasing a decreasing pool of jobs, HR professionals need to find ways to sort through applications quickly, while accurately selecting the best candidates. The help may come through the use of new technologies, which may speed up the process.

One can risk a statement that the area of new technologies and personnel policy are trying to keep up with new trends change at a surprising and convergent pace (Wiernek 2006, p. 76). Changing the role of human resource management in an organization requires adjusting the whole enterprise strategy to it (Jabłoński 2011, p.157).

Personnel selection includes three key steps: recruitment, selection and implementation for work (Listwan 2010, p.80). Well-conducted recruitment and selection process is extremely important for the organization, because it permits for in-depth and objective verification of candidates in terms of meeting their employer's expectations and leads to their employment. The main task and purpose of the personnel selection team is not the process itself, but the final choice of a person who meets all criteria and is unambiguously suitable for a given position.

An increasing number of practitioners from the HR area recognize that their hard and often repetitive work can be supported or even completely replaced by tools from the area of modern technologies. A lot of companies use online knowledge management systems to hire employees, exploiting the advantages of the World Wide Web. These are termed as e-recruitment systems and automate the process of publishing positions and receiving CVs (Faliagka, 2012, p. 523).

E-recruitment systems have seen an explosive expansion in the past few years (De Meo et al., 2007), allowing HR agencies and HR departments to target a very wide audience at a small cost. Several e-

recruitment systems have been proposed with an objective to automate and speed-up the recruitment process, leading to a better overall user experience and increasing efficiency.

Up to now, there has been little research on the impact of e-recruitment on the recruitment process as a whole. Moreover, much of the research tend to focus on the design of corporate recruitment websites (Selden & Orenstein, 2011). Moreover, little attention has been given to the impact of technology on the recruitment process as a whole (Parry & Tyson, 2009). Despite the apparently widespread use of e-recruitment, however, a gap seems to have emerged between research and practice (García-Izquierdo, Aguinis, & Ramos-Villagrasa, 2010), possibly because scholars are struggling to keep up with the sheer pace of change (Anderson, 2003).

Therefore the main purpose of the paper is to analyze how new technology influenced the recruitment process as whole. The case study method will be utilized. The case study analysis will be based on one company called I-tutor group. The reason to select this company can be explained by the fact that Itutor project was the first one on the Polish market that involved employing 1500 potential employees through e-recruitment process.

The research problem constitute two main questions: (1) How does the introduction and use of e-recruitment affect the design of the traditional recruitment process? and (2) What are the advantages and disadvantages of e-recruitment versus traditional recruitment?

The paper is structured as follows: the first part deals with the literature review related to recruitment and selection with a detailed description of video-recruitment. Then, the methodology is explained. Findings are presented that relate to presenting the changes in the design of the recruitment process followed by advantages and disadvantages of e-recruitment. Finally, the conclusions are drawn.

Literature review – recruitment and selection

Personnel recruitment includes practices and activities carried out by an organization for the purpose of identifying, attracting, and influencing the job choices of competent candidates (Ployhart, 2006).

For an outsider who is not involved in the employee's employment process, lack of knowledge of the industry and its peculiarities, recruitment and selection seem to be two convergent concepts; while on the basis of human resource management, they should be distinguished from each other.

It is worth mentioning that amongst theorists and practitioners of human resource management, there is not always agreement in this field, because the selection of employees is often very ambiguous. Very often, selection is regarded as one of the stages of recruitment, where it is understood as carrying out a full personal selection. Others treat it as a completely independent process, which follows the recruitment activities and embraces selecting the best candidate for the given position from among those presented (Pocztowski 2007, p. 142). The following paper takes the second solution, that is, treating the selection and recruitment process as two separate, though interpenetrating each other at the level of the results obtained.

Among various HRM activities, recruitment is one of the human resource (HR) functions that has changed dramatically, from traditional paper-based process to digital or electronic recruitment process, commonly referred to as e-recruitment. A popular form of e-recruitment is video recruitment. It is a tool that gathers all the candidates obtained, permitting to systematize the project. However, the most important factor is time saving, which for the business side plays a significant role in planning the recruitment and selection strategies.
Video recruitment influenced the standard recruitment through the possibility to create and present employers with CVs of job applicants in the form of a video. It is currently a very popular method in Western Europe, and also in Poland, because unconventional approaches are increasingly appreciated (Puls HR, Video CV 2017).

Video recruitment is to help the human resource management team in less time-consuming but reliable verification of incoming applications. There are two types of video recruitment: an automatic (asynchronous) form and a live form (Kluza, 2015, p. 88). The live form is much more popular because companies have been using it for a long time, mainly involving a tool like Skype. It is associated with a

direct interview and few aspects distinguish it from the same. The most important of them is the possibility to organize it without the need to visit a candidate in the recruiter's office. It can take place independent of the place where both parties are staying.

Whilst Skype was and is being used to interview candidates, particularly for international recruitment, very few HR teams were familiar with "one-way" video interviews, where candidates record their answers to the questions asked and the employers reviews them at a later time. Today, the term "video interviewing" is a hot topic amongst many innovations in HR technology and whilst the term encompasses "live" video interview, there is a growing demand for the asynchronous model (Rupert, 2014). It involves building a platform on which incoming applications are collected. Interview questions are generated by the system, the answers are recorded, archived and sent to the person responsible for the selection.

One-way pre-recorded interviews save considerable time and are more convenient. As there is scheduling required, candidates can record their interviews when it suits them – without any disruption to their working day (Rupert, 2014).

Video recruitment is still a controversial and relatively new way of personnel recruitment. Nevertheless, its development is inevitable and probably in the future, it is forecasted that all phases of the selection process will be transferred to the online environment. It is worth emphasizing that the use of this tool does not mean saving time and costs by lowering the efficiency and quality of the recruitment project. On the contrary, it is more transparent, generates wider pool of candidates and helps to select better candidates (Buckley et al. 2004). Video recruitment has many supporters in Western Europe, is very dynamic in the United States and although it is only taking its first steps in the Polish market, it has great potential to remain a key determinant of most recruitment and selection processes.

Methodology

Qualitative research design was considered the most suitable for the purpose of investigation, since it permits the use of multiple data sources (Creswell, 2009), which could provide the necessary insights into a new area of research. One of the authors of this paper has participated as a recruitment specialist in the project of recruiting English teachers for ItutorGroup, which allowed access to many valuable insights of the project. We used the recruitment process as the unit of analysis and focused only on the business process. We were thus looking for possible changes in the tasks, subtasks and activities of the business process of recruiting, which could be attributed to the use of electronic recruitment, compared with the process presented. The data collection process was therefore designed to capture the entire recruitment process in the case organizations in as much detail as possible, which would permit comparative analysis for each step of the recruitment process. Thus, a mix of qualitative methods, techniques, and data sources available at the time of the research was utilized during the study. A short presentation of I-tutor is followed to give an overview of the studied company. The following paper is based on a case study method.

ItutorGroup

ItutorGroup is a global leader in the provision of educational services, mainly focused on learning English through online mechanisms, which began its activity in 1998. The company specializes in an individualized and personalized way of reaching and learning users spread around the world – this applies to both teachers and students. The company operates very dynamically on the American market, from where it officially originates, while recently the management board recognized the potential on the Chinese market, which is more open for cooperation with the Western countries and, consequently, speaking English seems to be a must. Itutor group platform also serves as a vibrant recruitment and HR tool. The creation of application was possible due to the use of Big Data methods and implementation of advanced algorithms connecting students, teachers, co-workers and available content remotely to deepen knowledge in the field of a foreign language. Itutor group strongly believes that they managed to bring about a revolution in the teaching sector by introducing a platform and service from which users can use any available device (including mobile) 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The project aimed to recruit English teachers for a Chinese market. The recruitment of English teachers by Itutor group was facilitated by Work Service Group- an intermediary on the Polish market. The management board of Itutor decided to contact the Polish company due to the fact that among European countries Poland is one of the leaders, when it comes to the number of people who speak English very well. In addition, it still remains a country with significantly lower costs of human capital than the rest of Europe, yet it still has a well-qualified and willing workforce (Kubisiak, 2016).

Results

The project commissioned by the Itutor Group was based on the support of recruiting and selecting 1500 English language lecturers living in Poland and ready to take on the challenge of working remotely with a client from China. Recruitment agents were not looking for potential candidates with teaching background (although it was beneficial) but for English fluency.

Due to strategic transformations, the project was suspended in June 2017 and until that time, about 700 English teachers were recruited. Work Service has established a specially dedicated team of consultants headed by the HR Manager, who were responsible for recruiting English teachers for ITutor. The group consisted of 7 people: 2 Project Managers, 2 Consultants and 3 Recruitment Assistants.

The recruitment process consisted of five stages presented in Figure 1. Although it seems that the activities are sequential, at a later stage a difference in comparison with traditional recruitment will be presented.

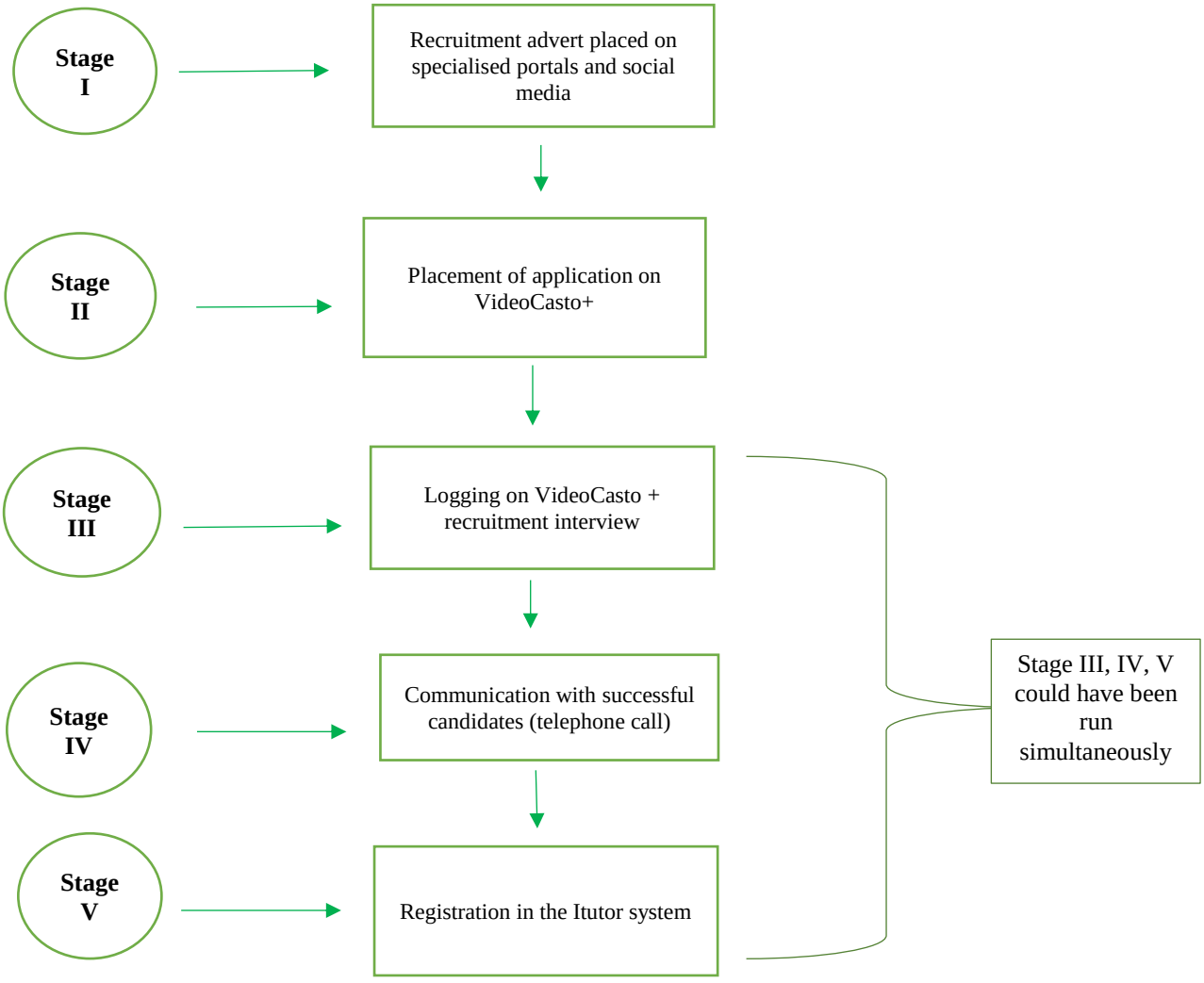


Fig. 1. Recruitment process of Itutor project (Source: Own development)

Attracting applicants

1. The first phase included recruitment activities, that is, creating an appropriate message addressed to potentially interested candidates and placing it on professional advertising portals like: Pracuj.pl, Infopraca.pl, Praca, pl, Gazetapraca.pl or Goldenline.pl, Gratka.pl and OLX.pl. The process of attracting applicants was by far the most reliant on e-recruitment sources. It must be stated that very good English teachers, who were not Internet users, were excluded from this project. A marketing recruitment campaign worked extensively in social media by preparing the sponsored posts or searching for a target group based on relevant algorithms and defining the place where potential candidates could be found. Social portals were regarded as an auxiliary channel.

Application placement

2. The second phase included the placement of the application form with necessary details by using the application prepared by VideoCasto. After the placement of the application on the platform, each person received an automatically sent e-mail with information about the project, registration in the VideoCasto application and the method for the first login enabling participation in the project. Time was already saved at this stage, because with many received applications (the project aroused great interest), even contacting with selected persons would probably last several months.

Video recruitment

3. The potential candidate logged on VideoCasto platform to take part in the automated recruitment interview. The third stage started, assessed by the Work Service team was regarded as the most crucial one. The potential candidate recorded a video interview in English, during which he answered five questions. He had about two minutes for each of them and only one approach. The questions were recorded beforehand by one of the Work Service team members. Interview questions verified mainly the knowledge of English, but also the freedom to work in front of the camera, the ability to use every day work tools and personality traits. The candidate had three days from the date of receiving the e-mail to record a video call.

Communication with successful candidates

4. Telephone call to successful potential candidates. During the call, the recruitment consultant, facilitated registration in the Itutor system. Then, with the support of the Work Service team, the user refined his profile, uploaded a language certificate, passed the equipment test and signed the contract online. For each hiring cycle, the task of communicating with applicants started at the same time as that of attracting applicants. Due to the automation features of the e-recruitment systems, candidates were often notified immediately that their job application had been received. Rejected candidates were also informed promptly about the result of the pre-screening even before the vacancies were formally filled. ITutor considered this to be an advantage for the applicants, since it meant that recruiters did not have to keep them waiting unnecessarily just to hear that they had not been selected for further assessment.
5. Registration in the I-Tutor system. 2 hours online training. Formal employment of candidates.

It is worth to compare the traditional and e-recruitment process, as presented in Figure 2.

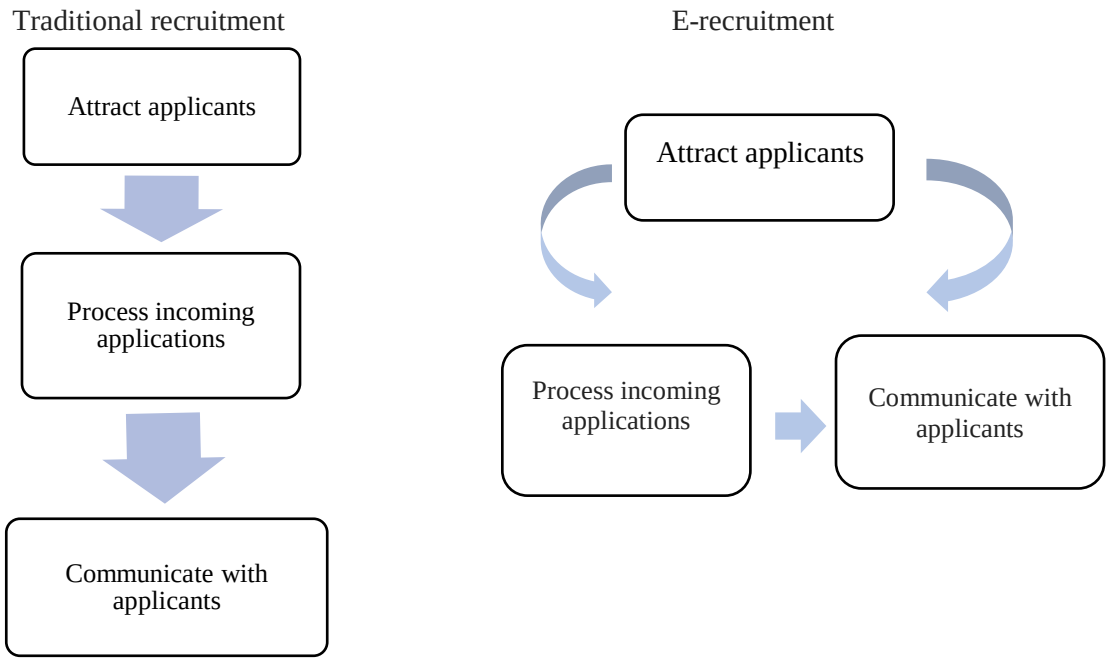


Fig. 2. The design and sequence of tasks in traditional paper-based recruitment versus e-recruitment (Source: Own development)

The main changes in the recruitment process design using e-recruitment versus traditional paper based recruitment process were in the sequence of the process tasks. Unlike in the traditional recruitment process, the task of communicating with applicants and processing incoming applications was performed simultaneously with the task of attracting applicants suggesting a major change in the traditional recruitment. The process that demanded a lot of work was the one concerned with communicating with applicants and became a focal task.

The evaluation of the method and tools used regarding ItutorGroup is not unequivocal and depends on many factors. Although the Work Service team and the Itutor organization define the project completion as unquestionable success, it is worth taking a closer look at the advantages and disadvantages of the method used.

Time, so extremely important nowadays in every business process, has been largely saved due to internet based recruitment. At each stage, the possibility of implementing individual elements at the same time for a dozen or several dozen candidates would not be the case with standard solutions. Additionally, the quality of the recruitment process was maintained throughout the whole duration of the project. Candidates felt cared for, regardless of the time in the recruitment process. Despite the lack of direct meetings, they did not have the impression of being left alone.

The added value, often emphasized by the client's side, was lack of chaos due to the VideoCasto platform, which verified the status of not only the entire project, but also individual groups or individual candidates. Reporting took place regularly and did not require long and tedious preparations from Work Service.

The least tangible, but equally important factor was the opportunity to strengthen the image – a company that copes well with new challenges in the HR environment using modern technologies both for ItutorGroup and Work Service. So far, not a single company on the Polish market from the HR industry has used such advanced technology with limited interference of the human factor. The project ended with success and caused interest from other companies that were impressed with the solution and wondered to what extent it could have been introduced and adapted to their requirements.

Video recruitment doesn’t offer only positive benefits. The peculiarity of the process, its remote character and the lack of direct contacts (face to face) meant that the relationship with the candidate was

very poorly built. Currently, HR practitioners emphasize the need to focus on the recruitment as a business partner in order to be sure not only to complete the process successfully, but also to build employer branding associated with positive experience.

Due to the peculiarity of the project, but also the position and the workplace, the employees did not feel any integration with the future employer. Very often, after completing the recruitment the process, people emphasized that they treat their duties as additional tasks, an additional source of income for what they do on a daily basis. Very few employees finally decided to devote all their time and effort to teaching through the Itutor system.

Ultimately, e-recruitment bears a threat of data infringement. Any attempt to break into or access to them by undesirable persons could have adverse effects.

Table 1. Advantages and disadvantages of e-recruitment (Source: Own development)

Advantages	Disadvantages
Savings (considering time and money)	Poorly build relationship with candidates
Strengthening the image of company introducing new challenges	Lack of integration of candidates with future employees
Reaching a broader audience of potential candidates	A threat of data infringement

Using new technology, Itutor was able to employ 1500 English teachers with the help of seven recruitment specialists. Our research is in line with Maurer and Liu (2007) who confirmed that digital recruitment reduces hiring costs by about 87 per cent as compared to the traditional recruiting through newspapers and magazines.

An extremely important aspect of the recruitment and selection processes highlighted by HR specialists is the process of building a relationship with the candidate and ultimately a potential employee. Very often, not only theorists, but also practitioners emphasize that the phenomenon of "candidate experience" in the time of development of the HR market will play an increasingly important role and the use of modern solutions will certainly have a great impact on it, but it is very difficult to clearly assess whether positive or negative. Research in this area is relatively at an early stage and none of the researchers has yet dared to make a decisive voice (Morgan J. 2017, pp. 30–43). In case of Itutor project, building a relationship with a candidate – potential employee was not implemented sufficiently. Due to remote contact and limited interference of the human factor and lack of direct meetings. Employees of Itutor did not feel part of the company, they treated the job as a form of additional income.

Conclusions

It has been shown that companies can increase the efficiency of the recruitment process and significantly cut costs, by integrating e-recruitment systems in their HR management infrastructure.

On the basis of the conducted research, we can conclude that the use of modern technologies in the recruitment and selection process is not only a guarantee of completion with the intended effect of a given project, but also causes a real improvement in the recruitment process, which allows, in particular for the business sector to reduce costs and time.

The results suggest that the typical paper-based recruitment process is no longer present in its original form and design. The most significant differences identified were attributed to changes in the sequence of tasks and the nature of the related activities. E-recruitment techniques and related technology were observed to be used, in the tasks of attracting applicants, processing incoming applications and communicating with candidates.

Introducing a new technology in the recruitment process can have many benefits for organizations in the recruitment process but research about this is scarce. The possible benefits include time savings, cost reduction, reaching a broader audience and more accurate and detailed information about applicants.

Benefits of e-recruiting can differ between organizations, because every organization has its own strategy, and recruitment objectives should support that strategy.

Finally, we can follow the statement of Ford (2015, p. 83) that the use of modern technologies in the recruitment and selection processes is not just another trend in the changing environment, but it will permanently appear in the area of human resources. Admittedly, this will not involve complete resignation from the recruiters' work, but any actions that can be supported by algorithms, solutions from the borderline of artificial intelligence will be most welcomed (in this case, the most frequently mentioned is the analysis and verification of the applications received, providing feedback to candidates or even replacing first contacts with the purpose of basic selection) (Ford 2015, pp. 83–86). Though it sounds like a vision of the future filled with solutions that will significantly simplify the work of human resource management teams; however, quite a large percentage of specialists are still wary of entrusting the decision-making process to machines. The significant potential in the field of artificial intelligence and machine learning has been proven many times, but there is still a long way to go for the HR industry to fully use them or just to convince them to be used in an appropriate way (Morgan J. 2014, p. 6–10).

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Summary: The article has taken the context of Industry 4.0, in which Generation Z is entering the labor market with the full qualities to be effective in an Industry 4.0 enterprise. Through conducting a survey, the author aimed to identify the work motivation factors relevant to Generation Z due to the expectation of understanding young people's expectations, values, and preferences regarding work. The result of this study will provide valuable guidance for employers in shaping sustainable human resource management strategies along with being able to identify the gap between the requirements of the labor market and the skills possessed by young workers. The author finds out that Generation Z mostly considers the importance of having a friendly working atmosphere, recognition from superiors, and opportunities for professional development. The result has brought a challenge for employers to attract young talent and keep the current employees in the labor market highly engaged, At the same time, employers also need to recognize and utilize the life experience of older workers and the benefit of working in multicultural teams.

Relevance: The article emphasized the role of organizational leaders in shaping employees' commitment to work, which strongly presents the change in management practice under the influence of Generation Z.

Place in the paper: Literature review

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Article

Determinants of Motivation to Work in Terms of Industry 4.0—The Gen Z Perspective

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Abstract: The mentality of Generation Z differs markedly from the approach to social and economic issues presented by earlier generations. These young people have had access to the internet and other innovative technologies since birth. A tape recorder or a floppy disk is a museum exhibit for them. They are unfamiliar with the everyday problems that citizens of Central and Eastern Europe faced during the socialist era, such as the lack of necessities on the shelves. The aim of this article is to present the results of the authors' survey on the identification of work motivation factors relevant to Generation Z. The survey involved 649 respondents, young Poles who are currently entering the labor market. It was also an interesting research task for the authors to compare the results of surveys among young Poles with the results of international surveys. The research provided insight into young people's expectations, values, and preferences regarding work. The results of the survey can provide valuable guidance for employers in shaping sustainable human resource management strategies. In addition, studying the competences of Generation Z can identify the gap between the requirements of the labor market and the skills possessed by young workers. The study conducted by the authors is among the first of its kind in Poland after the pandemic, emphasizing the growing trend in remote work. Earlier research was undertaken in a different economic climate. The current investigation took place following the COVID-19 outbreak and amidst heightened military operations in Ukraine. It also takes into account the effects of recent technological progress related to the rapid development of Industry 4.0. Notably, the questionnaire used in this study is unique as the authors categorized motivational factors into three essential groups, highly relevant in today's markedly altered labor market.

Keywords: Industry 4.0; motivation to work; motivational factors; sustainable HRM; Gen Z

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1. Introduction

By 2025, 27% of the workforce in OECD countries will be Gen Z [1]. This generation has a different set of priorities, caring more about flexibility, values, and diversity than others that came before them [2]. A tape recorder or a floppy disk is a museum exhibit for them. Generation Z includes young people born from 1997 onwards who are open to green transformation and remote working and are creative and ambitious. Thanks to their mobility and language skills, they can establish relationships with people from various parts of the world. They have been brought up in a world where modern technology has become popular, making this generation's representatives inclined to develop technical competence [3]. Generation Z is characterized by tolerance for multiculturalism and diversity, self-confidence, and acceptance of a certain instability in career paths. For them, the need to adapt to change and a willingness to expand their competences are the norm [4].

The authors conducted this research with the intention of identifying crucial factors that hold significance for individuals from Generation Z, particularly in the aftermath of

the COVID-19 pandemic and within the context of the emerging economic reality (marked by inflation, intensified military operations in Ukraine, and progressive technological advancements). The authors' primary aim was for the findings of this study to be valuable in formulating human resource management (HRM) strategies for businesses operating in the contemporary economic and social landscape.

The basis for effective human resource management is for employers to have properly motivated employees. The effective selection of motivational factors can bring about the desired behavior of employees, from their point of view, thus playing a key role in the success of the organization [5,6]. From the point of view of the future, Generation Z, which is currently entering the labor market and has the qualities to be effective in an Industry 4.0 enterprise, seems particularly relevant [7]. It seems that this generation will adapt most readily to the new reality, will accept the necessary changes, will most readily accept automation and digitization, and will be willing to develop the competences necessary to obtain information about the problems that occur and the ways in which data can be collected and analyzed, allowing for rational decision making [8,9].

In this context, the authors decided to conduct a study aimed at identifying the work motivation factors relevant to Generation Z. Furthermore, it was an interesting research task for the authors to compare the needs regarding working conditions that young Poles have with the results of international surveys. This research is a continuation of the authors' project on young people's perception of the new professional reality created by Industry 4.0. The results of this research were described in 2022 in the journal *Sustainability* [10].

In their research, the authors chose to focus on Generation Z's perceptions of the competences of the future for several reasons. Firstly, it allows us to understand young people's expectations, values, and preferences regarding work. Indeed, Generation Z has a different approach to this area of life than previous generations. The results of the survey can, therefore, provide valuable guidance for employers in shaping sustainable human resource management strategies (approaches to recruitment, development programs and the design of incentive systems, and the effective use of employee potential). In addition, studying the competences of Generation Z can identify the gap between the requirements of the labor market and the skills possessed by young workers. It was decided that a questionnaire survey would be the appropriate research method to achieve the above-mentioned goals.

It will be possible to achieve the stated objectives through global literature studies and surveys to verify the following research hypotheses:

H1. *The key motivators for representatives of Generation Z in Poland are high salaries and the possibility of promotion.*

H2. *There is a clear difference between the motivators indicated by residents of large cities and smaller towns and villages.*

H3. *For women in Generation Z, low stress levels and a good working atmosphere are important motivating factors, while for men, a correspondingly high salary is important.*

H4. *A high self-assessment of the quality of the work conducted and motivation to work correlates with the expectation of professional development opportunities.*

H5. *Those who rate their professional competence highly emphasize the role of intangible factors.*

2. Literature Review

Generation Z is characterized by goal orientation, openness to change, dynamism, high self-esteem, good digital and language skills, the ability to take on different roles (multitasking), innovation, and logical, out-of-the-box, and creative thinking [11,12]. These young people are focused on seizing opportunities and new experiences and, therefore, seek a workplace that allows them to develop their passion and provide professional growth. Keeping them in the organization requires creating opportunities for personal development

and working conditions that they will accept [13]. Significant importance should be attributed to the ability of managers to select motivators that will induce Generation Z to develop their competences and adapt them to the requirements of Industry 4.0 [1,14].

Keeping an organization competitive requires digital transformation. This is possible when companies employ staff with the right skills. In addition to technical competences, social skills are also important, including developed interpersonal skills, conditioning effective cooperation with others in the new economic reality. International cooperation requires employees to be proficient in foreign languages and open to other cultures and political and religious beliefs. A company's ability to succeed is contingent on an orientation towards the values hidden in intangible assets, which has a direct impact on competitiveness in Industry 4.0 [15].

Germany Trade and Invest (GTAI) recognizes Industry 4.0 as a paradigm shift driven by technological developments that condition product–machine communication. This means that the machine no longer processes the product, but that the product communicates with it to tell it exactly what to do [16]. H. Kagermann sees Industry 4.0 as a network of resources used in manufacturing processes that can adapt flexibly to situations and can configure themselves. For this, they need, among other things, the ability to use knowledge and modern solutions [17]. Industry 4.0 requires the in-depth digitization and automation of processes [18]. Thus, cyber security and workforce competence should be considered as key challenges to be addressed in the future.

A report by the World Economic Forum shows that 43% of organizations are looking to cut costs by reducing their workforce using innovative technology solutions. However, 34% plan to increase it for the same reason, hiring people with the required competences [19]. The jobs being created require professionals capable of finding their way in the new conditions. Artificial intelligence specialists and data analysts are currently in demand.

An Industry 4.0 employee should have analytical, problem-solving, and decision-making skills. It should be characterized by flexibility, resilience to stress, self-organization, and self-control [20]. With the implementation of the principles of the Industry 4.0 concept, new tasks have been set for leaders who must manage human resources knowing that in Enterprise 4.0, decisions are increasingly made by algorithms. Significant importance is attributed to flexibility and autonomy. Their aim becomes to take action that conditions employee engagement [21]. This requires the creation of an organizational culture oriented towards mutual trust, drawing on diversity and multiculturalism and eliminating discrimination and inclusive measures.

The issue of work motivation is one of the classic research areas in management science. Nevertheless, new concepts are emerging in the field of HRM to expand the HRM context. Such a concept is sustainable human resource management, the aim of which is not only to achieve the economic objectives of the company, but also to balance intergenerational needs in the long term and thus prevent serious environmental and social problems from occurring in the future. Skilled employees of Industry 4.0, who understand and apply the principles of sustainability in their work, play a significant role in transforming companies into sustainable organizations [22,23].

Motivation is a process that takes place in the human consciousness or subconscious that intensifies the desire to act. It is the willingness to try to achieve the organization's goals. This means that the desire to satisfy individual needs drives people to make an effort [24]. Today, it is becoming evident that employee motivation has an impact on productivity losses, while increased levels of work motivation, organizational commitment and job satisfaction are linked to the level of productivity among employees. Improved attitudes and increased levels of work motivation limit the decline in employee productivity [25].

Research shows that salaries, promotions, bonuses and other types of rewards are used in organizations to improve employee satisfaction and performance [26]. Material benefits affect an employee's standard of living. Their award is often conditional on the position held, which further enhances the status of the person who receives them. However, a motivator in the form of money is only able to influence an employee in an effective way

up to a certain point [27]. Over time, its motivational function loses its importance, which means that organizations should look for new factors to increase employees' commitment to tasks, making their work more effective [28].

In addition to the timely payment of salaries or bonuses, job security, work atmosphere, the competence of colleagues, the content of tasks performed, and leadership style are important [29]. Among employees in Central and Eastern European countries (Slovakia, Lithuania, and the Czech Republic), the level of employee motivation is influenced by the atmosphere at work, remuneration, additional benefits and the attitude of the supervisor, a fair employee appraisal system, a good team, communication in the workplace, and safety [30]. Attention is also given to personal development and career aspirations, including competence, career advancement, social benefits, education, and personal development. However, respondents in all three countries identified basic salary as a key factor. At the same time, the authors found that its importance was high regardless of gender and age.

Research conducted by Kovačević et al. [31] shows that interesting work, adequate supervision and leadership, scope of responsibility, influence over decisions, a sense of involvement in relevant issues, security, and a sense of fulfilment are significant. For young employees, opportunities for promoting, development, and improving their competences are important. It is important to promote a culture based on trust and cooperation, resulting in increased solidarity, kindness, willingness to help, and altruism. It is expedient to strive for teamwork and orientation towards common goals, which is effective for the development of the organization [32].

An analysis of the domestic and international literature allowed us to conclude that many surveys have been conducted without structuring the motivational factors. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, the authors arranged the motivators into three groups: tangible factors (financial and job security), intangible factors related to a positive organizational climate, and intangible factors related to career development opportunities. The conclusions drawn from the analysis of the research of the predecessors allowed us to develop their own questionnaire referring to these three threads. This made it possible to identify the ways of emphasizing motivational needs by representatives of Generation Z.

3. Materials and Methods

The survey was conducted in 2022 and 2023 among 649 people aged 19–28 years. More than 60 percent of respondents came from cities, with the largest centers with more than 500,000 inhabitants having the highest proportion (Table 1). In 76% of cases, respondents had work experience and their length of service was usually up to 5 years.

Table 1. Breakdown of respondents by gender and place of residence.

Sex	City (Population in Thousands)			Village	Total	
	<100	100 to 500	>500		Persons	%
Female	58	35	152	158	403	62.1
Male	42	20	96	88	246	37.9
Total	100	55	248	246	649	100

Source: own research.

The following statistical methods were used to analyze the results of the study: Kendall's concordance coefficient, Cronbach's consistency coefficient, chi-square test and Mann–Whitney U test, as well as mean values and measures of variation (coefficient of variation based on standard deviation). Statistica 13.3 software was used. A pilot study was conducted before the survey to test the reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.86$).

The purpose of the survey was to answer the question of which factors, according to the proposed factors, most motivate effective work in the 4.0 enterprise, and to determine the importance of these factors. The following characteristics of the respondents were considered: gender, place of residence, length of service, level of self-assessed motivation

to work and self-assessed competence to work in Industry 4.0. The set of motivational factors included three groups: tangible factors (financial and job security), intangible factors related to a positive organizational climate, and intangible factors related to career development opportunities.

4. Results

Referring to the results of the survey conducted by the authors, among the factors proposed in the survey, a friendly atmosphere at work, chosen by 12.3% of respondents, ranked first among the number of indications. The opportunity for professional development was mentioned in second place, with around 11.5% of respondents selecting this option. In third place, with 10.5% of indications, was adequate remuneration. In total, these three characteristics accounted for around 34% of the responses and differed significantly in the number of choices from the other factors proposed by the researchers in the survey.

In addition to these three factors, a low stress index was also indicated by respondents, which was selected by 8.4% of respondents. Of these four key motivators for employees in Industry 4.0, significant differences can be seen by gender. While a friendly working atmosphere and low stress levels were indicated more often by men, the opportunity for professional development and a correspondingly high salary were indicated more often by women. This may be indicative of the continuing discrimination against women in the work environment and the problem of achieving career advancement and wage discrimination against men. On the other hand, this may also demonstrate that women are more responsible and committed to their professional lives than men [33]. However, for all responses and based on the chi-square test, it cannot be concluded that gender significantly differentiated responses about motivation to work, apart from the three most frequently indicated factors.

Regarding the lowest rated motivating factors for Generation Z to work in Industry 4.0, public praise from superiors or a diploma (only 8% of respondents) and the opportunity to work on different workstations (rotation) (15%) were indicated (Figure 1).

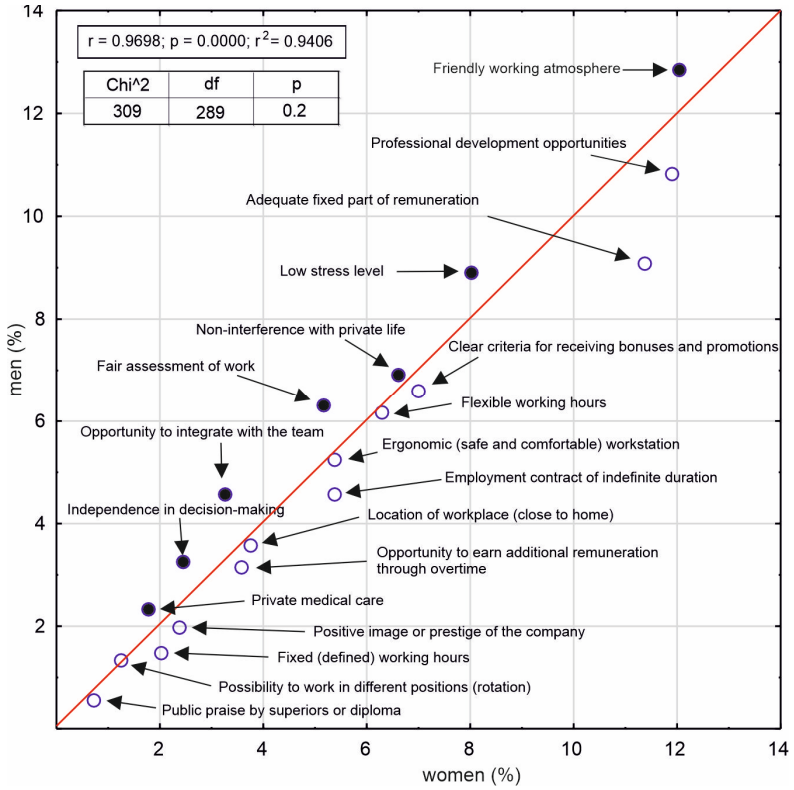


Figure 1. Proportion of responses on motivation to work effectively in Enterprise 4.0 by gender of Generation Z respondents. Source: own research.

Also in the case of place of residence, it cannot be considered that there is a statistical difference between the share of responses on the motivation to work effectively, due to the place of origin of the respondents. For rural residents, respondents attached greater importance than urban residents to factors such as public praise from superiors or a diploma, the possibility of additional remuneration through the realization of overtime, fixed working hours (defined working hours) or a fair job evaluation. Urban residents, on the other hand, were more likely to indicate a positive image or prestige of the company, private medical care and the opportunity to integrate with the team. However, these were factors of lesser overall importance.

In the case of small-town residents, they also attached greater importance to public praise from superiors or a diploma, an ergonomic (safe and comfortable) workstation and the opportunity to work on different workstations (rotation). While residents of large cities more frequently indicated private medical care, the possibility to earn additional remuneration through the realization of overtime, and autonomy in decision making and the opportunity for professional development (Table 2).

Table 2. Share of responses on motivation to work effectively in Enterprise 4.0 by type of residence.

Factors	City (Thousand Inhabitants)			City	Village	City < 100/City > 500	Village/City
	<100	100 to 500	>500				
Friendly working atmosphere	13.46	13.65	11.39	12.22	12.55	1.18	1.03
Professional development opportunities	10.77	12.18	12.23	11.86	10.88	0.88	0.92
Adequate fixed part of remuneration	10.35	9.96	10.64	10.47	10.54	0.97	1.01
Low stress levels	8.70	8.12	8.21	8.32	8.45	1.06	1.02
Clear criteria for receiving bonuses and promotions	6.42	5.90	7.96	7.29	6.11	0.81	0.84
Non-interference with private life	7.04	6.27	6.20	6.42	7.20	1.14	1.12
Flexible working hours	6.42	4.43	7.12	6.57	5.69	0.90	0.87
Fair assessment of work	5.38	7.01	4.44	5.03	6.53	1.21	1.30
Ergonomic (safe and comfortable) workstation	6.83	5.17	4.61	5.24	5.44	1.48	1.04
Employment contract of indefinite duration	4.35	5.54	4.61	4.67	5.69	0.94	1.22
Opportunity to integrate with the team	4.14	4.06	4.02	4.06	3.26	1.03	0.80
Location of workplace (close to home)	3.93	2.95	4.19	3.95	3.26	0.94	0.83
Opportunity to earn additional remuneration through overtime	2.07	2.58	3.02	2.72	4.52	0.69	1.66
Independence in decision making	2.90	1.11	3.35	2.93	2.43	0.87	0.83
Positive image or prestige of the company	2.28	5.17	2.26	2.67	1.51	1.01	0.56
Private medical care	1.24	2.21	2.76	2.31	1.42	0.45	0.62
Fixed working hours (defined working hours)	1.86	1.11	1.59	1.59	2.18	1.17	1.37
Possibility to work in various positions (rotation)	1.24	1.85	1.01	1.18	1.42	1.24	1.20
Public praise by superiors or diploma	0.62	0.74	0.42	0.51	0.92	1.48	1.79

Source: own research.

In order to test whether gender and place of residence influenced the answers given on motivation, the chi-square test was applied at the significance level (0.05), where the critical value for a given number of freedom was 7.8. As can be seen in Table 3, only two factors, clear criteria for receiving bonuses and promotions and an ergonomic (safe and comfortable) workplace, showed a relationship between gender and place of residence. The following also had higher values, although not statistically significant: public praise from superiors or a diploma and the location of the workplace (close to home).

Table 3. Chi-square test results by response on motivation to work effectively in Enterprise 4.0 by place of residence and gender.

Factors	Chi Value
Clear criteria for receiving bonuses and promotions	48.438
Ergonomic (safe and comfortable) workstation	14.982
Public praise by superiors or diploma	5.786
Location of workplace (close to home)	5.767
Opportunity to earn additional remuneration through overtime	4.893
Flexible working hours	4.765
Opportunity to integrate with the team	2.918
Possibility to work in various positions (rotation)	2.586
Friendly working atmosphere	2.408
Fair assessment of work	2.027
Private medical care	1.847
Independence in decision making	1.801
Non-interference with private life	0.893
Employment contract of indefinite duration	0.830
Fixed (defined) working hours	0.702
Professional development opportunities	0.691
Adequate fixed part of remuneration	0.641
Low stress level	0.371
Positive image or prestige of the company	0.052

Source: own research.

Also considering the seniority of the respondents, it cannot be concluded that there are statistically significant differences in the answers given on the motivation to work in Industry 4.0. Both Kendall's concordance coefficient and chi-square testify to the high concordance of the answers given, regardless of the length of work experience (concordance coefficient = 0.93, p = 0.00000). Similarly, no statistically significant differences could be found in the answers given when assessing their professional competence (concordance coefficient = 0.94, p = 0.00000) (Table 3).

In a further survey, Generation Z was asked to rank the numerous factors influencing motivation to work effectively in Industry 4.0. The reliability analysis of the test showed a high (Cronbach's α = 0.86) consistency of the scale used. The results of the survey can therefore be considered dependable. Respondents assigned points from 5 (the highest value) to 1 (the lowest value) to individual employee motivation proposals.

According to the average value, motivators such as a high fixed salary (4.51) and the opportunity for professional development (4.47), respectively, were rated highest. These variables had the same mean values at the 95% confidence level. Another group with remarkably similar average values were a friendly working atmosphere, clear criteria for receiving bonuses and promotions and a fair job evaluation (around 4.3). Also, a similar average value was given to the factor of undisturbed private life (4.26); however, its variability in responses was much greater than for the previous three responses. In total, the first five indications account for 29.2% of the total points, which is above quartile (Q1) of the total of all values. The lowest-rated as motivators were public praise from superiors or a diploma (3.27) and the opportunity to work on different workstations (rotation) (3.3) (Figure 2, Table 4).

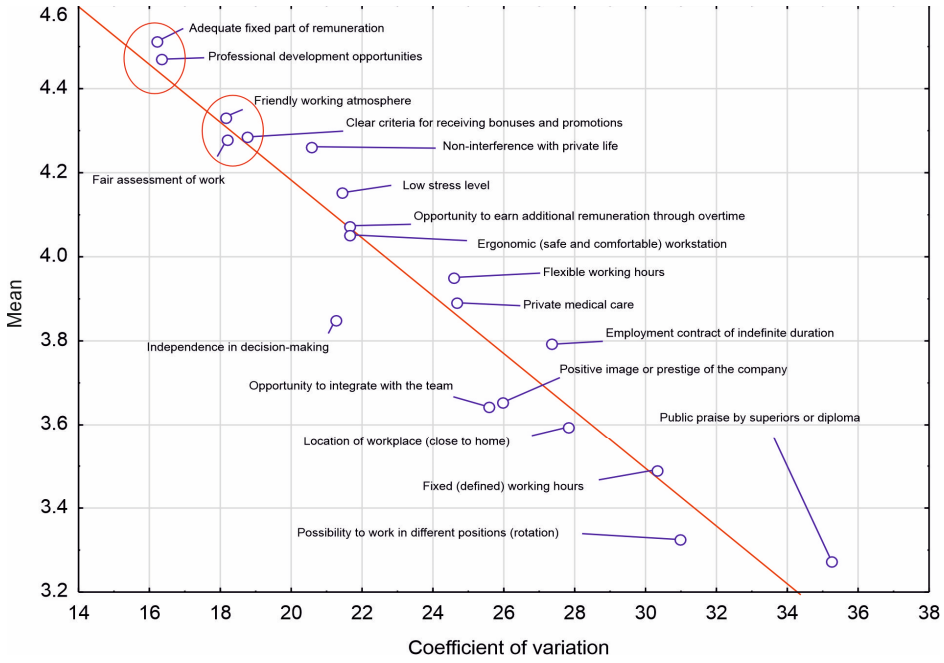


Figure 2. Average response score and coefficient of variation on motivators to work in Industry 4.0 in Generation Z. Source: own research.

Table 4. Mann–Whitney U test results based on questionnaire results on factors influencing work motivation compared to selected characteristics of respondents.

Factors	Sex	Residence	Seniority	Quality of Work	Motivation to Work	Competence
Ergonomic (safe and comfortable) workstation	−2.26 *	1.49	2.27 *	2.92 *	1.73	1.62
Low stress levels	−1.96 *	0.99	1.63	0.79	−0.20	−0.80
Opportunity to integrate with the team	−1.87	0.84	−0.01	1.72	0.49	0.16
Friendly working atmosphere	−1.44	1.17	0.46	1.55	0.60	0.75
Employment contract of indefinite duration	−4.69 *	−1.71	−2.10 *	0.97	2.17 *	−0.50
Professional development opportunities.	−4.90 *	0.66	0.13	2.13 *	2.55 *	0.13
Clear criteria for receiving bonuses and promotions	−4.92 *	0.68	0.56	2.00 *	2.66 *	0.92
Fair assessment of work	−4.01 *	1.47	0.54	2.83 *	1.51	0.17
Location of workplace (close to home)	−3.21 *	1.41	−0.22	0.73	0.26	−0.51
Adequate fixed part of remuneration	−3.76 *	1.11	0.29	0.25	1.67	1.28
Opportunity to earn additional remuneration through overtime	−3.07 *	−0.79	1.17	0.44	2.02 *	−0.38
Independence in decision making	−1.53	2.67 *	−1.80	3.18 *	3.08 *	3.13 *
Non-interference with private life	−2.85 *	1.08	0.53	1.36	1.95	1.01
Positive image or prestige of the company	−3.64 *	−0.22	−0.33	−0.08	1.59	−0.21
Flexible working hours	−0.79	2.25 *	1.01	0.20	0.78	1.81
Fixed working hours (defined working hours)	−2.69 *	−1.68	−0.54	1.17	0.00	−1.39
Possibility to work in various positions (rotation)	−3.09 *	0.83	−0.71	2.38 *	1.89	0.67
Private medical care	−2.89 *	0.63	−0.11	1.60	2.35 *	0.60
Public praise by superiors or diploma	−4.56 *	0.23	−0.16	0.97	1.27	1.50

* for statistical significance level 0.01. Source: own research.

At the end of the analysis, the results of the obtained values of the individual factors were compared with the characteristics of the interviewees using the Mann–Whitney U test (Table 4; red indicates the values are statistically significant). Of the selected respondent characteristics, the strongest responses were linked to the gender of the respondents. Factors such as the opportunity for career development, clear criteria for receiving bonuses and promotions, and an indefinite employment contract were the most strongly linked. That is, these were motivators that were chosen differently by women and men.

By place of residence, only two characteristics showed a correlation with the answers given. These included the opportunity for independent decision making and flexible working hours. The seniority of the respondents, in turn, influenced the choice of two motivational factors: an ergonomic workstation (those with long seniority) and an indefinite contract (those with short seniority).

Those who are convinced of the decent quality of their work highlighted the following factors: autonomy in decision making, an ergonomic (safe and comfortable) workstation, fair job evaluation, the possibility to work on different workstations (rotation), the opportunity for professional development and clear criteria for receiving bonuses and promotion. On the other hand, in terms of feelings about initiative taking at work, respondents indicated the following factors: autonomy in decision making, clear criteria for receiving bonuses and promotions, opportunities for professional development, private medical care, an indefinite employment contract and the possibility of obtaining additional remuneration through the realization of overtime. When it comes to feeling highly competent professionally, only independence in decision making was indicated by the respondents at a high level.

The detailed statistical analysis of the research results presented above allowed a verification of the research hypotheses mentioned in the Introduction. Hypothesis H1, stating that the key motivators for Generation Z representatives in Poland are high remuneration and the opportunity for professional development, was verified positively. According to the average value, motivators such as a sufficiently high fixed salary and the opportunity for professional development were rated highest. The third most crucial factor motivating young Poles is a friendly atmosphere at work. At the same time, the majority of respondents most often chose a friendly working atmosphere and the possibility of promotion.

Hypothesis H2, stating that there is a clear difference between the motivators indicated by residents of large cities and smaller towns and villages, is also true. For rural residents, respondents attached greater importance than urban residents to factors such as public praise from superiors or a diploma, the possibility of additional remuneration through the realization of overtime, fixed (defined) working hours or a fair job evaluation. Urban residents, on the other hand, were more likely to indicate a positive image or prestige of the company, private medical care and the opportunity to integrate with the team. However, these were factors of lesser overall importance.

Hypothesis H3 that low stress levels and a good working atmosphere are important motivating factors for women of Generation Z, while a correspondingly high salary is important for men, was verified negatively. While a friendly working atmosphere and low stress levels were indicated more often by men, the opportunity for professional development and a correspondingly high salary were indicated more often by women.

Hypothesis H4, indicating a relationship between a high self-assessment of the quality of work performed and motivation with the expectation of professional development opportunities, was found to be true. At the same time, those who are convinced of the decent quality of their work also emphasize the prominent role of autonomy in decision making, ergonomics, rotation, as well as clear criteria for receiving bonuses and promotion. Those with high levels of work motivation also indicated a prominent role for autonomy in decision making and private medical care.

Hypothesis H5, that those who highly evaluate their professional competence accentuate the role of intangible factors, was not confirmed. Indeed, the research showed that, when it came to having a belief in their own high professional competence, only independence in decision making was indicated by the respondents at a high level.

5. Discussion

The results of the research conducted by the authors of this article are partly convergent and partly divergent from the results achieved by other Polish and international research teams.

According to research conducted by Dolot [34], the following are of particular importance to Generation Z: the atmosphere at work, including their well-being at work, created, among other things, by their coworkers; the amount of remuneration and job security (employment contract); experienced and friendly management; factors related to development (for example, training); and the compatibility of the tasks performed with the employee's interests and passion. Less important to them are nonstandard and unprecedented motivational factors, such as a meal consisting of fruit. According to the survey, the most prioritized factor for respondents appeared to be the working atmosphere—93%. In second place was the material factor—the amount of remuneration—with 91%. Analyzing the respondents' answers, their expectations, in terms of non-wage factors, were high. In third place was the factor related to job stability (88% of respondents). This choice indicates that young people want to feel safe and secure in the workplace. Respondents ranked nonstandard benefits in the form of, for example, going to the spa, fruit at work or massage at work as the factor having the least impact on their motivation to perform their job (60%).

Also, research conducted by Ratajczak [35] before pandemic shows that representatives of Generation Z pay attention to adequately high remuneration, a good working atmosphere, employment stability, respect for the employee and job constancy. Access to training, a contract of employment or flexible working hours and work–life balance were mentioned less frequently.

On the other hand, research conducted by Gajda [36] shows that high salaries, access to modern technologies and work–life balance are important for representatives of Generation Z. In general, they expect their employer to respect them and provide opportunities for development, adequate remuneration, and flexible working hours, which strongly influence their level of motivation. What is important to them is creative thinking and the ability to learn quickly, as well as performing unusual, innovative tasks. Generation Z employees want to collaborate rather than compete and value relationships with colleagues, expecting to be taken seriously and recognized. Even though representatives of Generation Z expect opportunities for self-fulfillment, for the majority of respondents, work is mainly a way to earn money.

Kukla and Nowacka's [37] research shows that financial independence is important to Generation Z employees as the main reason for taking up employment. It should also be noted that respondents consider starting their own business since they can earn more than in another organization and that they are independent.

Research conducted by Domagalska-Gędys [38] shows that for Generation Z, self-fulfillment, interpersonal relations and atmosphere at work, remuneration, as well as the ethics of employers are important. They are looking for a workplace where they can perform their assigned tasks in a good atmosphere that supports the possibility of their self-fulfillment.

Wanting to explore the sources of employee motivation, Wolpiuk-Ochocińska [39] distinguished between employees by dividing them by seniority. The results of this research show that the dominant motivating factor for workers with longer tenure is the need to support their families and professional fulfilment. Employees with less seniority are most motivated by the desire to own their own money and gain new experience. The other motivations are at a similar level of significance and are less important for both groups.

Research by Sadlowska-Wrzesinska and Nejman [40] shows that people under 40 particularly value a reduction in stress and the opportunity for advancement. For employees with more than six years of seniority, it is important to reduce stress and opportunities for promotion. In contrast, respondents with less seniority expect praise and recognition from their supervisor. The possibility of promotion is particularly important for employees with a secondary education, while employees with a university education value stress reduction much more.

The findings of the authors of this article coincide with the conclusions of the study 'Generation Z on the labor market', which was conducted by a team from the Institute of Management and Quality Sciences at the Humanitas University. The survey was conducted in February and March 2023 on a sample of 1300 students, undergraduates and graduates from schools of diverse types. The team's research showed that Generation Z representatives prioritize personal life goals, including the pursuit of their own passions and hobbies, above career and professional success. Work and career are not a priority or goal in themselves for Generation Z representatives. Among the values most frequently mentioned by respondents were those not related to labor market activity: happiness, family, the opportunity to pursue passions, ecology, and freedom. Generation Z representatives demonstrate a strong need for work–life balance, prioritizing the latter sphere. The ability to combine work and personal life seamlessly was the most frequently selected answer by respondents when asked about subjectively valued features of the employer's organization (indicated by up to 75 percent of respondents). This answer received more indications than attractive earnings (67 percent). The qualities that respondents value most in their employer are showing respect (66 percent of indications), individual treatment, and kindness [41].

It is interesting to see which factors motivate representatives of Generation Z according to international research. Nabahaniand and Riyanto showed that representatives of Generation Z are more likely to change jobs than previous generations. They do not feel obliged to stay in one place of employment for any length of time. The salary is important to them, but it does not come first. The most frequently cited factor is providing the employee with development opportunities. Young people aspire to acquire competences that provide opportunities for self-development and promotion. They are looking for work that enhances their skills and abilities, to gain experience and practice. It may come as a surprise to some that Generation Z representatives also value having a supportive workplace, as well as good relationships between colleagues [42].

We can also see confirmation of the importance of remuneration for Generation Z in the research compiled by Dwidienawati and Gandasari [43]. The results of the survey clearly confirm that Generation Z representatives in Indonesia, in addition to salary, expect job security and satisfactory employment conditions. The study confirms that Generation Z expects stability and security when looking for a job.

A study by Fratričová and Kirchmayer [44] showed that young people expect to gain experience and enjoyment from their work, which is determined by the right team atmosphere.

The findings of the authors of this article on the expectations of Polish representatives of Generation Z are partly consistent with the global research conducted by Deloitte [45]. Surveys were conducted in 44 countries around the world, including Poland. Globally, 22,856 people took part, of which just over 60 percent represented Generation Z (born between 1995 and 2004) and the remaining almost 40 percent Generation Y (born between 1983 and 1994). Deloitte's [45] research showed that the rising cost of living, rising unemployment and climate change appeared to be the biggest concerns of the younger generations. Financial insecurity can have a direct impact on mental health, which is proving to be a particularly important topic for young people. Although mental problems, caused by excessive workloads, are becoming more common, young people are more likely to look for extra work. In Poland, 30 percent of Generation Z earn their basic salary. The desire to gain another source of income is the biggest motivation for workers from Poland and other countries to take on additional work. More than half of those surveyed admit to living very modestly (5 percentage points more than the previous year). Work–life balance is particularly important for the younger generations: 26 percent of Generation Z representatives identified the ability to balance work and life priorities as the trait they most admire in their peers. As many as 77 percent of Generation Z representatives who work from home said they would consider seeking new employment if their employer asked them to return to the office full-time.

Also, research by the World Economic Forum [2] has shown that Generation Z values salaries less than any previous generation and sees remote working as a top priority. Young

people from this generation are also the most diverse and are not as willing to compromise as other generations of workers in a workplace that does not match their values. The WEF [2] research is also in line with the results obtained by the authors of this article regarding attitudes to autonomy and work–life balance. Around half say they would quit their job if it interfered with their work–life balance.

Research on the role of work in the lives of Generation Z was also conducted in 2022/2023 by the world's leading data, insights and consulting company Kantar [46]. Kantar Global Office in London conducts research in more than 90 markets. This research was conducted online among 10,055 full or part-time workers (whose job function could be performed remotely at least part-time) across ten global markets: US, UK, France, Germany, India, Singapore, Spain, South Africa, Mainland China, and Brazil. According to the Kantar study, younger generations who are at key points in their careers are driven by opportunities for employee development and advancement. In contrast, older generations value productivity-based qualities. Generation Z is twice as likely as their older counterparts to consider looking for work and to perform additional work to earn extra income. On average, 40% of Generation Z representatives have at least two jobs, while boomers (21%) and Generation X (30%) are less likely to have more than one job. On the topic of the proposed move to a 4-day working week, 7 out of 10 Generation Z representatives believe that work can be completed in less than 5 days a week.

6. Conclusions

One of the requirements for effective work in a sustainable development environment, on which the concept of Industry 4.0 is based, is the employment of competent employees, oriented towards organizational learning, innovation, and diversity. Today, employees are expected to have the ability to work together in international teams and an appreciation of green transformation. Thus, the social aspect of sustainable development becomes extremely important. Such work requirements are hitting the right ground, which is Generation Z.

The authors' findings show that the expectations of young Poles generally do not differ from the results of research conducted by international teams. A friendly working atmosphere, recognition from superiors, and opportunities for professional development are important to them. Slightly more important, compared to some global surveys, is their base salary. This can be linked, on the one hand, to the income disparities that still exist when compared with Western European countries. On the other hand, young people are aware of the possibility of easily finding employment abroad, which is made possible by membership of the European Union and good knowledge of foreign languages.

The presented results of our own and third-party research show the large generational differences that exist in the way employees think, feel, and behave in relation to new ways of working. An important task for today's employers is to attract young talent and keep the employees who are currently entering the labor market highly engaged. Companies aspiring to be attractive workplaces should adapt as best they can to the expectations of younger generations. What is needed is a commitment on the part of business leaders to skillfully tap into the potential of youth that Generation Z possesses. It is also important to recognize and utilize the life experience of older workers and the benefits of working in multicultural teams. This approach will allow employers to benefit from the advantages of diversity.

In further research, the authors will try—at least to some extent—to overcome the limitations of overlooking the factors that demotivate Generation Z to work. The analysis of demotivators, conducted as part of our own survey and extended by the analysis of the results of European and global research teams, will be the subject of the next publication of the authors.

The authors' further plans include also research on the role of organizational leaders in shaping employees' commitment to work. Criticism of the Industry 4.0 concept focuses on emphasizing the role of digitization at the expense of appreciating human efforts. It seems that the role of leaders will be crucial in the process of developing a competitive advantage, considering greater care for people, which is one of the pillars of Industry 5.0.

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Citation:

Zaki, A. (2024, April 15). 68% of Gen Z workers would take an unwanted job for good pay: Report. *CFO*. https://www.cfo.com/news/68-of-gen-z-workers-would-take-an-unwanted-job-for-good-pay-report/713156/

Summary: The article highlights a significant amount of Generation Z would prioritize higher salaries over job satisfaction, and tend to accept jobs that they do not like if the compensation meets their need. This point reflects a focus on financial security due to rising living costs and inflation. Generation Z highly puts their attention on work-life balance, flexibility, and professional purpose but often prioritizes pay to cover bills.

Relevance: The article shows relevance to the topic by giving an understanding of Generation Z's perception based on the factor of salary, which partly relates to management practices.

Place in the paper: Introduction

CFO

68% of Gen Z workers would take an unwanted job for good pay: Report

Gen Z employees are looking for higher salaries and more work-life balance, according to new research from dcdx.

Published April 15, 2024



Adam Zaki
Reporter

Wavebreakmedia via Getty Images

Being able to understand and work with Gen Z employees is a requirement for any CFO who envisions long-term growth. Finance leaders should be prepared to deal with young professionals who have graduated into an economically harsh, technology- and social media-driven environment.

Gen Z, those born between 1997 – 2012, are slowly taking a closer look at accounting careers, according to recent data from the job platform, Handshake. The survey found about 2.5% of Class of 2025 bachelor's degree students on the platform are majoring in accounting, up from 2.1% of the Class of 2023.

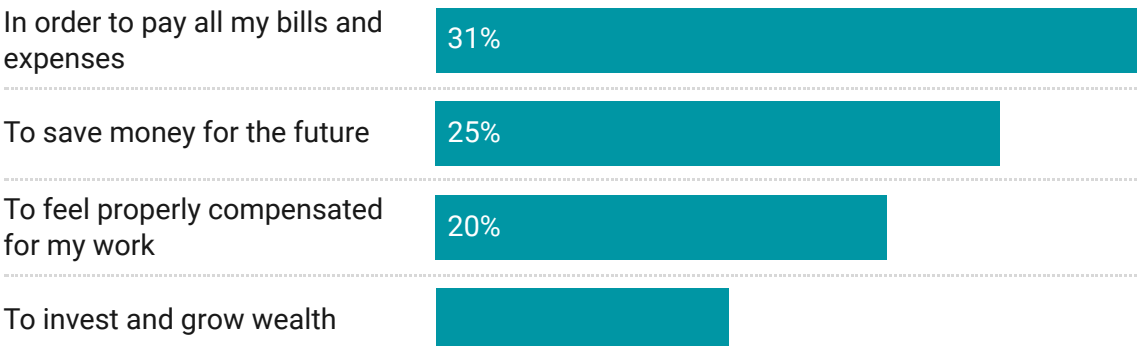
Young accounting prospects face career barriers to entry that, while ensuring the integrity of the profession, have also resulted in a decline in matriculating talent. When considering new research from Gen Z consulting and research firm dcdx, these factors will deter young people from pursuing accounting and further exacerbate the shortage among qualified professionals.

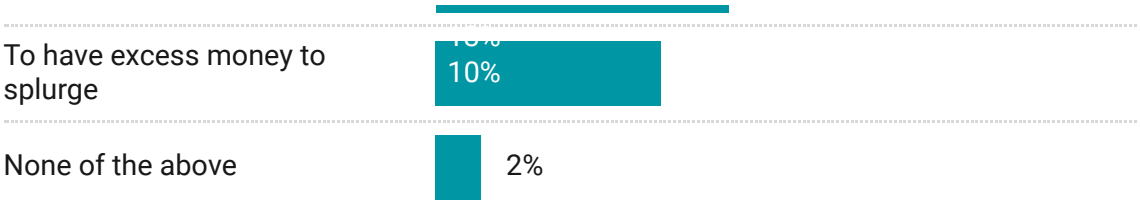
Dcdx research found that Gen Z is looking for compensation relative to their costs of living. Since those costs have been increasing due to persistent high inflation, a career in finance and accounting, although not the most desirable to many Gen Z'ers, may be an answer to their problems. Dcdx data found that 68% of Gen Z workers said they would accept a job they didn't like in exchange for a higher salary.

A desire from younger workers to earn high salaries early in their careers is a desire based on needs and not wants, data suggests. When asked about the main reasons for compensation increases, 31% said to pay for all their bills and expenses and 25% said to save money for the future.

Why Gen Z wants a raise

Younger employees want more money to combat rising prices and make ends meet, according to dcdx data.





Source: dcdx • Get the data • Created with Datawrapper

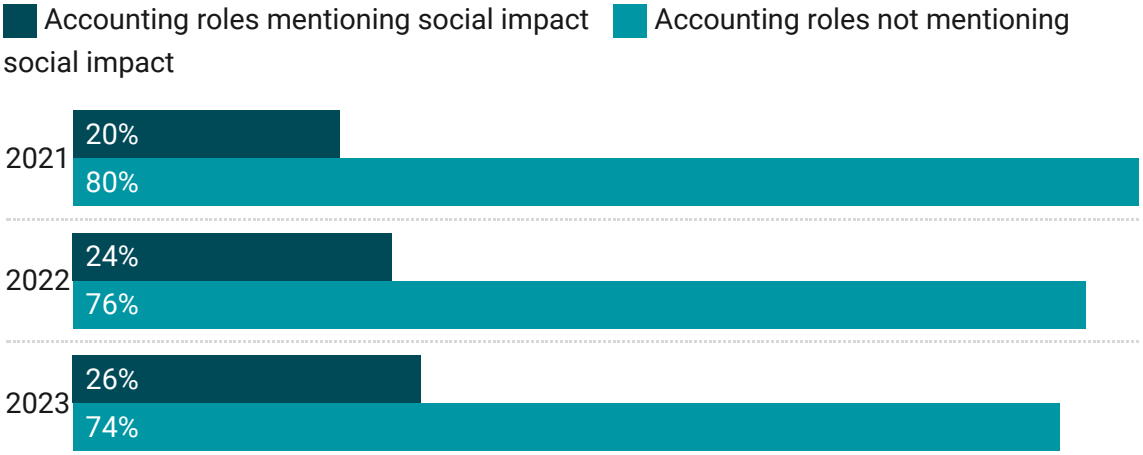
While a fifth (20%) said they want to feel properly compensated for their work, presumably feeling underpaid, the desire to earn more to upgrade their lifestyle isn't prevalent. Only 10% said they want more money to "splurge on things."

Professional purpose and happiness

Happiness and purpose at work are elements that both reports credit as important to Gen Z workers when it comes to workplace connection and longevity.

Accounting job ads increasingly mention social impact

Over the past few years, more accounting roles have mentioned how their employees can have a social impact through their work, presumably to attract Gen Z candidates.



Source: Handshake • Get the data • Created with Datawrapper

According to dcdx research, 36% of Gen Z employees said they would be happier if they had a feeling of purpose from their work. Those looking for accountants may already be aware of this, at least slightly according to Handshake, whose data projects a 6% rise in accounting roles mentioning social impact keywords in their job posts.

This, Handshake suggests, may make their role more appealing to a worker looking to find purpose within their accounting duties.

Flexibility and work-life balance, something CFOs have credited with the expansion of their personal and professional lives, is another extremely important factor to Gen Z workers.

The most important element of work environment flexibility is the autonomy to choose work days. While those surveyed were somewhat split, the most popular answer was the ability to choose the days on which they worked (37%), followed by choosing the hours worked (33%) and work location (25%).

With initiatives like a four-day work week and the controversial push for right-to-disconnect laws in the realm of possibility, desired workplace flexibility, at least to Gen Z standards, may be more than just a pipe dream for entry- and mid-level workers.

Dcdx methodology*: Commissioned by Abode and surveyed 588 Gen Z'ers from March 5 to March 7, 2024, in the U.S. All Gen Z respondents worked either full-time, part-time or on contract work, with nearly one in three paid on salary and one in three*

paid hourly. Seven percent reported being self-employed. Sixty-seven percent of respondents earned less than $75,000 per year.

Handshake methodology: *Application and job post trends are based on Handshake platform activity between December 2019 and December 2023. The chart displayed in this story references findings from December 2021 to December 2023.*

Source 49 (Not Scholarly)

Citation:

Carnegie, M. (2023, June 28). *Why Gen Z are so pay-motivated*?

https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20230530-why-gen-z-are-so-motivated-by-pay

Summary: The article explores the reason Generation Z is motivated by salary and financial security, particularly when compared to previous generations. The reason is Generation Z entering the workforce facing rising living costs, inflation, and student debt, which drives their focus on prioritizing high-paying jobs early in their career. This explanation indicates that Generation Z is not influenced by materialism. At the same time, Generation Z workers are willing to take multiple jobs to boost their income quickly. According to the expert's suggestion, Generation Z's salary demands could lead to broader discussions on pay equity and fairness.

Relevance: The article shows relevance to the topic by addressing how the salary level of employers strongly influences Generation Z employment decisions.

Place in the paper: Literature review

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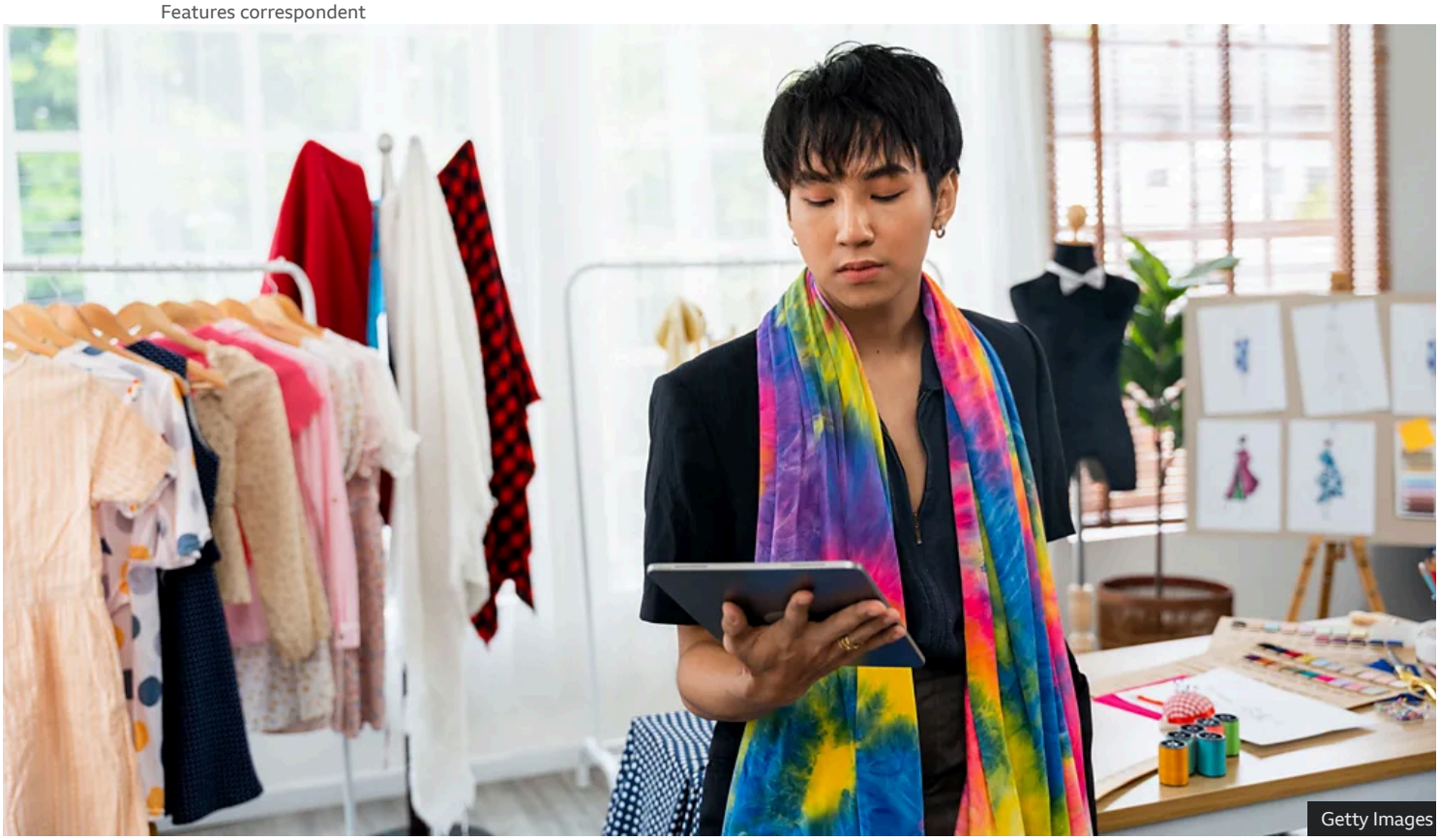
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Why Gen Z are so motivated by pay

28 June 2023

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Megan Carnegie
Features correspondent



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Young workers want to be compensated well from the get-go. Their quest to make higher salaries isn't simply a money grab.

The oldest Gen Zers have had money on the brain since they first entered the workplace –and many have been dissatisfied with their pay packets. Data shows that as Gen Z enter and rise through the workforce, they're highly pay motivated – and perhaps more than any other generation right now.

The laser-focus on pay is not wholly new – 2016 data from jobs site Monster showed 70% of American Gen Zers named salary as their top work motivator, along with health insurance – but several years on, experts say the economic squeeze has made these young workers even more wage-conscious. In the past year, surveys show their salary expectations have skyrocketed: many are targeting six-figure salaries early in their careers.

This is in no small part due to the fact that Gen Z have found themselves in a unique position among generations. They've grown up watching their parents, **largely Gen Xers**, struggle with money amid economic downturns; now, they've graduated into their own economic turbulence, and are worried about securing their futures. As a result, they're **demanding more remuneration from their employers than ever**, and at earlier stages in their career – and experts say many young workers are willing to walk for better-paying opportunities.

To some people, Gen Z may seem salary 'obsessed'. In some cases, say experts, it may be hard for older generations to understand why young workers have such an intense focus on pay. "At Gen Z's age, older people worked 40 hours a week, and made enough money to buy a house and have barbecues on the weekend," says Corey Seemiller, an educator, researcher and TEDx speaker on Gen Z. "Gen Z works 50 hours a week at their jobs, and another 20 hours a week side hustling, yet still make barely enough to cover rent."

But there's more to the story than just **the human desire to make as much as possible**. And what's more: their quest for higher salaries could benefit everyone.



Largely, Gen Z is looking for stability so they can pay for essentials such as rent (Credit: Getty Images)

Downturns and turbulence

Most of Gen Z, generally defined as born between 1997 and 2012, grew up against a backdrop of multiple global recessions and economic downturns. For some, instability is all they've known.

"They were raised around their parents' conversations about not having enough money and the bad things that happened because of that – homes were re-possessed, and savings decimated," says Seemiller.

Although money stress may have been abstract to many of them, observed largely through their parents' experiences, the economic instability of the past few years has hit them personally – and head on – as they've entered the workplace.

Many of these young workers graduated into the workforce or were in their very first roles during the Covid-19 pandemic. Along with being professionally stunted and unable to climb the salary ladder, they also **became susceptible to layoffs** – according

to some data, more than other generations. "Such experiences have shaped their values, and that fear of not having enough runs deep," says Seemiller.

They are also on entry-level salaries in extremely tough economic times, which has compounded their financial worries – and **made them a feature of daily life**. Spiking inflation has raised the cost of living; and as education costs have bloated, many young people are also carrying student loans. Bank of America data from 2022 shows a significant portion of **Gen Z has reported the inability to save and pay down debt** in the current climate.

> *At Gen Z's age, older people worked 40 hours a week, and made enough money to buy a house and have barbecues on the weekend – Corey Seemiller*

In short, they're extremely worried about their finances, and often more than other generations. A Cigna survey of 12,000 global workers showed **39% of Gen Zers cite financial insecurity as their leading stressor**, compared to 34% of millennials and 29% of 50-to-64-year-olds. Younger workers are particularly worried about the rising cost of living and how it will impact their futures.

"Both from the data and anecdotally, Gen Z workers clearly want to be fairly compensated and recognised for the value they bring to the workplace, but also seek stability," says Sam Chen, the Gen Z founder and CEO of US-based job-matching site Fetti. Indeed, a 2022 survey from early-career jobs community Handshake shows 74% of 1,400 2023 US graduates surveyed said **they prioritise stability and salary from employers**, outweighing factors including a known employer brand (41%), a fast-growing field (39%) or overall benefits (66%).

Essentially, says Seemiller, Gen Z are seeking high pay packets to ensure that security. "They want to be able to live off their salaries and not worry about paying their bills," she says. "My studies have shown that being happy and fulfilled, and making enough to live comfortably top the most important features in Gen Z's ideal careers – not being rich and travelling the world."

So, it's not necessarily that Gen Z are greedy or money-grabbing; the majority, say experts, just want to cover their costs. Workers in locations with higher cost of living – mostly major cities – are particularly angling for higher pay; for example, by some estimates, the **average entry-level salary for US workers in late 2022** was $55,260 (£44,627), yet a single adult living in San Francisco would need to be earning over $74,280 (£59,978) – after tax – to cover their costs.



As Gen Zers search for job opportunities, salary is top of mind (Credit: Getty Images)

While, of course, all generations are experiencing the cost-of-living strains, Gen Z aren't as far ahead in life stages, and are therefore less secure. Millennials, for example, have been in the workforce longer, and made more money cumulatively, with some able to buy homes before prices surged and Covid-19-inflation hit.

"Gen Zers simply won't be able to have a comparable life, in terms of financial stability, compared to older generations when they were entering the workforce," says Seemiller. "Other generations, apart from perhaps millennials who entered the workforce during the recession, didn't face these circumstances when they were young adults."

The right conditions for pay rises?

Will Gen Z get the higher pay they want, then? In some cases, signs are positive. Current job-market conditions are setting up a good situation for young workers. Although hiring has cooled since its pandemic high, **the jobseekers' market is still "red-hot"** in many countries, which means workers still have the power to make demands on potential and current employers.

Experts say this means that Gen Z are more confident in demanding a higher pay packet; emboldened by the intense competition for talent, some studies show that they're feeling positive about getting their needs met. The Handshake data shows that

more than 80% of survey respondents believe they can find a job that pays well – and fulfils them personally, to boot.

There is a caveat, however. Data from recruitment-industry platform Sonovate, which surveyed 500 UK small- and medium-sized business owners that have increased salaries to get and keep talent, shows **54%doubt they will be able to keep up this pace of wage rises for long**. Simply, even the most hopeful of young people may find themselves disappointed with their employer's offer down the line.

> *Gen Z workers clearly want to be fairly compensated and recognised for the value they bring to the workplace, but also seek stability – Sam Chen*

Many Gen Z employees may instead have to move companies if they want higher pay. And some Gen Zers are also taking the drive to make more into their own hands, especially if they're not going to get what they need directly from their employers. In the face of pay that fails to keep up with inflation, they're seeking new sources of income at a higher rate than older generations, with **Gen Z most likely to take on a second role** (30%) and increase their hours (32%) – significantly higher than Boomers, at 17% and 13%, respectively, according to Randstad's 2023 Workmonitor Report.

A rising tide

Seemiller says older generations may stand to benefit from this salary motivation. Yes, Gen Z are trying to shore up their financial futures, but Seemiller also believes their salary quest is largely linked to their fine-tuned radars for fairness and equity.

"They're a generation who call things out, speaking up when they feel the work they're doing isn't fairly paid," she says. "By doing this, they're drawing attention to the issues and getting other generations to feel empowered to ask for a fairer share, greater flexibility or more suitable hours."

Many companies are already feeling these changes. The April 2023 Beamery data shows 91% of 700 UK business leaders surveyed believe **the needs and expectations vocalised by younger employees could have a positive impact onallgenerations**.

Ultimately, even as some older workers grumble about Gen Z's hefty pay demands, salaries are becoming more important to *all* generations. Gallup has been tracking American jobseekers' priorities since 2015, and salary has climbed from the fourth highest priority (with 41% claiming it very important) to **the number one priority (64%)**.

As for whether salary will continue to be a priority for Gen Z, Seemiller finds it hard to imagine them reneging or staying static once they reach a certain pay grade. "Our indicators point to a generation that cares about happiness, meaningfulness and fulfilment over a high salary just for the sake of it," she says. "Either way, they're hyper focused on equity and will continue to be the first to speak up if they're not getting what they think should be."

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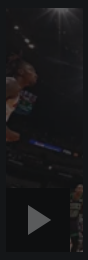
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All that glitters is not always gold when it comes to restaurants with multi-million-dollar waterfrontages, but Sydney caters sublimely to those in the market for splashing out.

Source 50 (Not Scholarly)

Citation:

Robinson, B., PhD. (2024, May 28). Gen Z careers are the worst to manage, 45% of hiring managers say. *Forbes*. https://www.forbes.com/sites/bryanrobinson/2024/05/26/gen-z-careers-the-worst-to-manage-45-of-hiring-managers-say/

Summary: This article discusses the challenges faced by employers in managing Generation Z employees, based on a 2024 study by Resume Genius. According to the report, 45% of hiring managers find Gen Z the most difficult generation to work with, citing issues like their strong adherence to personal rules, opposition to traditional corporate structures, and perceived lack of reliability and flexibility. Despite these criticisms, many Gen Z workers argue that they bring a fresh perspective, advocating for healthier work-life balance, creativity, and professional etiquette.

Relevance: The article depicted the challenge of Generation Z in employers' management, which is relevant to understand how Generation Z pushes organizations to change both management and communication practices to create a positive working atmosphere.

Place in the paper: Literature review

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Gen Z Careers The Worst To Manage, 45% Of Hiring Managers Say

Bryan Robinson, Ph.D. Contributor
author of Chained to the Desk in a Hybrid World: A Guide to Balance.

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May 26, 2024, 06:00am EDT

Updated May 28, 2024, 11:43am EDT



A new study concludes that 45% of hiring managers say Gen Z are the most difficult to manage, but ... [+] GETTY

As Gen Z graduates enter the workplace, some wonder how their older, skeptical coworkers will receive them. Their earlier peers, feeling misunderstood and vilified, are getting a bad rap

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from other generations and business leaders. The younger workers are criticized for having too many rules, refusing to comply with corporate demands, being oppositional and lacking etiquette, reliability and flexibility.

Gen Z argue that they possess unique perspectives and skills that could be interpreted as healthier or more creative and productive. They push for greater flexibility, work-life balance and living healthier than the traditional "work-until-you-die" labor styles of previous generations. Recent research paints a picture of a younger generation that believes in professionalism, maintains good etiquette and cares about their work life, raising the question: Are Gen Z really as difficult as people claim?

Putting The Gen Z Debate To The Test

On May 24, 2024 Resume Genius asked 625 U.S. hiring managers which generation is the most challenging to work with. The results, issued in their 2024 Gen Z Workers Report, found that just as Boomers had concerns about Millennials, Gen Z is now encountering similar criticism. Nearly half (45%) of hiring managers name Gen Z as the most challenging generation to work with. Even 45% of Gen Z hiring managers share the same sentiment. Here's the breakdown:

- Gen Z (45%)
- Millennials (26%)

- Gen X (13%)
- Boomers (9%)
- Not sure/Doesn’t matter (7%)

A quote by American writer and essayist Mark Twain puts these findings in perspective: “When you find yourself on the side of the majority, it’s time to pause and reflect.” Perhaps finding themselves on the opposite side of the majority is the greatest value Gen Z bring to the workplace and leveraging those unique strengths and excelling can reverse negative perceptions.

Geoffrey Scott, senior hiring manager at Resume Genius adds,"Gen Zers might have a bad rep, but they have the power to transform workplaces for the better,” he states. “Gen Z has already shaken things up, but they're not here to break things. They bring a unique blend of talent and bold ideas that can rejuvenate any workforce.”

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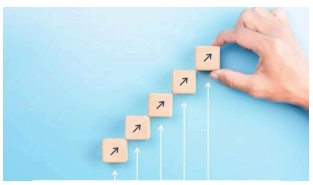
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1. *Flex your digital muscles.* McKinsey & Company call Gen Z professionals "true digital natives" with a natural familiarity with the internet, allowing them to quickly learn and master new digital tools. Whether skilled in social media, content creation, coding or cloud computing, Resume Genius recommends that you position yourself as a valuable asset to employers by highlighting your tech skills on resumes, cover letters and during interviews.

2. *Know (or build) your personal brand*. Morning Consult Pro says 67% of Gen Zs believe in the importance of building a personal brand, and 61% either have a personal brand or are interested in developing one. If you're a Gen Z job

seeker, Resume Genius suggests doing research on companies you're interested in to understand the skills and experiences that are valued, followed by showcasing your findings on social media or personal blog.

3. ***Adapt your communication style to older generations.*** Resume Genius suggests that Gen Z job seekers who tailor their communication approach have a higher chance of connecting well with interviewers across different generations. Although a Baby Boomer might prefer to meet in person, a Gen Xer might choose email. A Millennial boss might like a mix of in-person and digital communication (e.g., emails, text messages), while a Gen Z colleague might prefer instant messaging.

To gauge a potential employer's communication style, it's important to read the job posting and any emails from the recruitment team to determine if the company's tone is formal, casual or a mix of both. Checking a company's social media profiles or websites can reveal whether it presents a corporate image or a more relaxed, startup-like atmosphere.

4. ***Show initiative and a growth mindset.*** Employers highly value proactive workers who have a growth mindset, according to Resume Genius. For Gen Z workers, actively seeking new projects and demonstrating a willingness to learn and contribute are key strategies for success. Volunteer for projects. Express interest in taking on additional

responsibilities. Offer assistance to colleagues if they request help. Attend training sessions or workshops. Participate in team meetings and brainstorming sessions.

"To counter any misconceptions that Gen Z lacks independence, always propose solutions and be resourceful," advises Samuel Johns, recruiting manager at CV Genius. "Do your research first. Use Google or other resources to ensure you can back up what you're talking about. By demonstrating your ability to find and implement solutions, you show employers that you're self-motivated and capable of driving projects forward without constant supervision."

5. *Avoid publicly bashing former employers.* Be cautious about what you post on social media, even if you're settled into your job. Trends like #QuitTok, where people share dramatic stories of quitting, can be entertaining but might harm your career. Resume Genius recommends that Gen Z regularly review and remove potentially problematic content online, adjust privacy settings or maintain separate professional and personal accounts to protect your reputation.

6. *Build bridges—not walls—with colleagues.* Gen Z employees can actively contribute to fostering collaboration and innovation within their team. You can serve as spokespeople for companies targeting younger audiences and recommend tools (like generative AI) to your employer to enhance efficiency. You can assist by creating standard operating procedures (SOPs)

and providing tutorials for these tools or suggesting inclusive team-building activities, such as virtual escape rooms or online gaming sessions to strengthen team cohesion.

A Final Wrap-Up

"Despite facing flak and making headlines for the wrong reasons in recent years, Gen Z brings tremendous value to the workplace," concludes Eva Chan, lead career expert at Resume Genius. "Even after spending over two years quarantining away from their peers, Gen Z has shown resilience by staying connected and effectively using available resources to establish themselves as competent contributors in today's digital workforce." With time, Chan is optimistic that this generation will overcome initial skepticism from their older colleagues and make significant contributions to organizations they work for and the overall economy.

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Bryan Robinson, Ph.D.

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