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Generation Z's Approach to Searching for and Performing Work

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The main purpose of the article is to identify the most significant factors influencing Generation Z's approach to work. The priorities that guide individuals of this generation in looking for and performing work were established and then assessed.

Research Design & Methods: The paper conducts a critical review of the literature before presenting quantitative research. The basis for the empirical research was a two-part questionnaire. The first one was a data sheet used to characterise the sample, while the second contained closed questions that respondents rated on a 5-point Likert scale. The collected empirical material was coded and converted into numerical data for detailed analyses of the population. The scale enabled us to determine the strength and direction of the impact of each variable. Due to the multidimensional and multifaceted nature of the problem, factor analysis procedures were used. The decisive factor for choosing this procedure was the individualised and subjective nature of most responses. Calculations were done with Statistica StatSoft 13.3, using descriptive statistics,

correlations, and multivariate analyses. The survey was conducted in late 2022 and early 2023 on a sample of 428 representatives of Generation Z.

Findings: The results showed that Generation Z's approach to work is pragmatic and confrontational. In their search for and performance of a job, they consider standard factors such as: salary adequate to the commitment and the position, various employee benefits, and the relationship and atmosphere in the workplace. At the same time, they strive for independence, prefer flexible working hours, seek understanding, forbearance and empathy and, above all, lack of exploitation and being overloaded with tasks.

Implications/Recommendations: Demographic changes in today's world have forced companies to change their employment policies. In many cases, the methods have not met expectations, which has been a factor in the widening employment gap. Our research could help entrepreneurs understand Generation Z and fashion job offers that are attractive to Gen Z as it enters the labour market. They should also help Gen Z navigate the labour market, particularly regarding employer expectations and conditions.

Contribution: The results of the study are a voice in the discussion on the behaviour, expectations, approach and commitment of Generation Z in the labour market. The factors confirm other research and underscore the dynamic changes this generation is exhibiting as it carves out its place in socio-economic life.

Article type: original article.

Keywords: Generation X, Y, Z, attitude to work, lifestyle, behaviour, expectations.

JEL Classification: J24, M54.

1. Introduction

The factors that influence the approach to work of professionally active people are in constant flux. Such factors are based on economic, social, demographic, political and legal changes. The development of technology, including artificial intelligence, virtual reality, the Internet of Things, cloud, robotics, and biometrics has had a significant impact on the attitude of individual generations to perform professional duties. It has brought about the need for individuals to continuously improve their qualifications, acquire new skills and navigate changes in communication as the workplace evolves from traditional to digital (Beer & Mulder, 2020).

Each generation sees the world in new ways; each also acquires knowledge, uses new tools and masters emerging applications with its own speed. Each one is also guided by different values, rules and principles, which should be understood as the foundation basis for choices that affect the standard and quality of life. Different priorities, goals and lifestyles contribute in the organisation to the creation of "intergenerational conflicts," which must be properly managed (Urlick *et al.*, 2017). Therefore, it becomes extremely important to know in detail the priorities of indi-

vidual generations, as doing so allows you to create specific job offers that take into account the values professed.

Currently, Generation Z (people born in the years 1995–2012) is entering the labour market. Gen Zers' perception of the world is conditioned by the development of the digital world, computerisation, virtual reality and artificial intelligence. It follows a diametrically different approach to work, centered around work-life balance, than the generations that preceded it (Kovacheva, 2012; Sirgy & Lee, 2018).

“Quiet quitting” is another labour market trend of recent years, with employees performing only the minimum requirements of their job, avoiding excessive engagement or taking on additional responsibilities (Öztürk, Arikan & Ocağ, 2023). Largely, this is a response to the lack of balance between work and personal life, as well as increasing employer demands without appropriate remuneration or recognition (Mahand & Caldwell, 2023). Quiet quitting is particularly noticeable among younger generations, including Generation Z, which prioritise work-life balance and avoid excessive work-related stress. This approach can boost productivity and team dynamics, suggesting employers should pay attention to their employees' needs and strive to create more balanced working conditions (Ochis, 2024). Understanding and addressing the causes of quiet quitting can help a company retain talent and improve overall job satisfaction within the organisation.

The study sought to identify the most important factors that influence Generation Z's approach to work. The study has a qualitative and a quantitative component. First, the priorities followed by people representing this generation in the process of looking for and performing a job were examined. They were then verified using factor analysis.

2. Generation Z on the Labour Market – Theory

There are currently five generations on the labour market. The largest is Gen X (people born in 1965–1980), millennials, i.e. Generation Y (1981–1996), is the second largest. Baby boomers (BB) (1946–1964) is the third largest but it is slowly leaving the labour market. Generation Z (1995–2012) rounds out the list (Tsetsegmaa, Enkhbayar & Altanchimeg, 2019).

Generation Z has been called the “i” generation (iPad, iPhone) (Kukla & Nowacka, 2019). They are also referred to as digital children, Internet children, dot-coms, the .com generation or Founders, Centennials, instant online (Levickaitė, 2010; Magano *et al.*, 2020). They have grown up and gained experience in a digital world that has come to be dominated by virtual reality and artificial intelligence, where behaviour, interpersonal communication and interactions were based on modern information technologies (Georgieva & Atanasova, 2015; Lanier, 2017). They believe the workplace should be equipped with modern technologies, which, along with technical progress, must be updated regularly. Using modern technol-

ogies, they can multitask while at the same time lacking the ability to focus on a specific problem, which can be treated superficially or vaguely.

Using social media, Gen Z has become open, comments and evaluates on current events, shares information and expects feedback (Dolot, 2018). Communication is usually informal, individual, two-way, fast and extremely direct (Benítez-Márquez *et al.*, 2022). Therefore, a well-developed system of communication with superiors is necessary. They should provide information in real time, and not during scheduled meetings or assessments.

From the point of view of modern enterprises, Gen Z is particularly important, especially given the decline in the birthrate and workforce. To remain competitive and provide a high level of customer service, companies must employ them in appropriate positions, with an environment and working conditions that suit them. Recognising the essential features, preferences, goals and dreams that distinguish this generation is an important challenge (Racolta-Paina & Irini, 2021).

The needs, values, lifestyle, and preferences of Gen Z must be recognised. Recruitment policies, the hiring process and the incentive systems can then be modified, ultimately allowing companies to employ and retain the most valuable people (Gaidhani, Arora & Sharma, 2019). Gen Zers are not attached to the workplace; they easily change jobs and are constantly looking for alternative ways of develop (Csiszárík Kocsír & Garia-Fodor, 2018). Thus they are looking for their place and purpose, while expecting trust, support and inspiration from employers in everyday work as well as opportunities to develop professionally and take up new challenges (Workforce Institute, 2019).

Gen Z clearly does not intend to copy the work-related behaviour of their parents, Generations X and Y, for whom work has often become the purpose and meaning of life (Roach, Goodwin & Nelson, 2019). For Generation Z, work is a tool that allows them to realise their dreams, ensure development and stability. Their main goal is to strive for a balance between professional commitment and private and social life. They exhibit high self-confidence and a willingness to take risks. In addition, research indicates that Generation Z employees are resistant to standard procedures and authorities (Racolta-Paina & Irini, 2021).

Dolot (2018) found that one of the most important features of Gen Z is its high level of professional activity and the simultaneous willingness and ability to study and work. When choosing a place of work, they clearly and precisely communicate their expectations, both in terms of remuneration, duties and other working conditions, including, above all, a flexible working day. At the same time, they expect a specific promotion path, and perceive success through the prism of progress at work. They emphasise that the position and ranking at work should not be conditioned by seniority or age, but by a contribution that should be analysed through the prism of ideas, initiatives and commitment.

Atmosphere at work, a properly selected team, its age and composition, and the process of managing and implementing tasks are all crucial to Gen Zers. They also understand that the education system may not fully prepare them for the labour market (Bridges, 2015; Zheley & Iliev, 2023). A desirable employer is therefore one who offers various types of training, courses, internships and workshops, while also providing the latest technical equipment (Bieleń & Kubiczek, 2020).

An important feature that should be taken into account by the future employer is Gen Z's desire for sustainable development, which is manifested in high social tolerance and responsibility for the wasteful use of natural resources (Mihelich, 2013). In addition, they accept different behaviours, differences related to race, religion, gender, ethnic origin, and barriers related to cultural differences (Kapil & Roy, 2014; Chillakuri & Mahanandia, 2018).

3. Research Method

An empirical study identifying factors determining Gen Z's approach to work was conducted as part of broader observations on changes occurring in human resource management. It was conducted in 2022, in two stages, on a sample of 428 students. The first stage identified 26 factors which were subjected to quantitative verification. A research questionnaire consisting of two parts was used. The first was a metric that made it possible to characterise the sample. In the second, the respondents assessed the variables on a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 meant that a given factor was not of great importance in the process of seeking or performing duties resulting from the employment relationship, while 5 meant the issue was of great importance. The empirical material was coded and then converted to numerical form, which enabled detailed analyses of the population. The Likert scale allowed us to determine the strength and direction of the influence of each variable by calculating the arithmetic mean. It also enabled us to build a ranking of the factors determining Gen Z's approach to work. Parenthetically, the arithmetic mean is an intuitive and easy-to-understand indicator, as it allows for a quick understanding of the overall trend in respondents' answers to a given question. Further, it provides a comprehensive picture of the given group's opinions. This is crucial in social research, as it allows for the comparison of results between various aspects of the topic under consideration. In this study, this average was defined as the significance coefficient N of a given factor and serves as an auxiliary measure in further research.

Due to the multidimensional nature of the problem, factor analysis was adopted as an additional research method. It was chosen because the answers to the research questions were individualised and subjective. Factor analysis is used in situations where a given phenomenon is studied using a number of variables that may have interdependencies. High correlation means that the information contained in them

is duplicated many times. Factor analysis also makes it possible to eliminate insignificant variables from the primary research, the value and importance of which are difficult to determine in the initial period. The calculations were made using Statistica StatSoft version 13.3, using several modules including descriptive statistics, correlations and multivariate analyses.

Table 1. Characteristics of the Test Sample

Characteristic	Number of Indications <i>n</i> = 415	Share (%)
Sex		
Female	326	78.5
Male	89	21.4
Work experience^a		
None	50	12.0
1–2 years	226	54.5
3–5 years	95	22.9
6–10 years	29	7
Over 10 years	15	3.6
Job change^a		
None	101	24.4
1–2	174	41.9
3–5	113	27.2
6–10	23	5.5
Over 10 times	4	1
Competences		
Consistent with the work performed	201	48.4
Inconsistent with the work performed	119	28.7
Difficult to determine	95	22.9
Subjective attitude to work		
Simulating and pretending work	0	0
Only performing assigned duties (with the least possible involvement)	25	6
Doing one's job without commitment (I work as much as I have to)	98	23.6
I am committed – I do more than the work I am assigned	167	40.2
I show initiative, looking for new ideas, ways, opportunities for development	125	30.1

Table 1 cont'd

Characteristic	Number of Indications <i>n</i> = 415	Share (%)
Priorities in life ^b		
Work	39	9.4
Career	118	28.4
Social promotion	60	14.4
Self-development	181	43.6
Family	261	62.9
Health	181	43.6
Living in accordance with nature	21	5.1
Wealth	95	22.8
Travels	143	34.4
Hobbies and developing passion	120	28.9
Dream come true	152	36.6
Fame	8	1.9

^a Included seasonal work, contract work, holiday work, etc.; ^b more than 3 answers could be indicated. Source: the authors.

The selection of entities for the study was based on non-random, purposeful selection of typical units. The basic criterion was belonging to Generation Z. The study involved 428 full-time and part-time students, 415 of whom qualified for further analysis (9 respondents (2%) were from Generation Y and 4 (0.9%) from Generation X). Table 1 presents the detailed characteristics of the test sample.

4. Research Results

The significance coefficient *N* of all the examined variables ranges from 4.59 to 3.43, with a median of 4.1. Respondents found the following particularly important: interpersonal relationships (*N* = 4.6), lack of exploitation and excessive exploitation (*N* = 4.47), remuneration adequate to commitment (*N* = 4.5) and work in line with interests, flexible working hours, the stability of the work, and a sense of acceptance and belonging to a group (*N* = 4.3). The following aspects were less important: the need to observe an 8-hour working day (*N* = 3.43), non-wage incentive programmes (*N* = 3.8) and work in line with education (*N* = 3.8). Table 2 presents the values of the significance coefficient of all variables, as well as two positional measures – mode and median – in order to better illustrate the research results.

Table 2. Distribution of Answers on Factors Influencing Gen Z's Approach to Work

Variables	Basic Parameters			Percentage of Indications				
	<i>N</i>	<i>Me</i>	<i>Do</i>	1	2	3	4	5
1. Remuneration adequate to commitment	4.50	5	5	0	0.9	6.0	35.4	57.7
2. Extensive bonus system	4.20	4	5	0.5	2.3	22.8	25.1	49.3
3. Precise path of promotion and professional career	4.16	4	5	1.4	3.7	17.7	32.1	45.1
4. Development possibilities	4.16	4	5	1.9	3.3	13.0	40.4	41.4
5. Incentive programme (e.g. multisport)	3.81	4	5	3.7	11.2	19.5	31.2	34.4
6. Additional benefits (phone, laptop, car, parking)	3.92	4	5	3.3	12.0	13.5	29.8	41.4
7. Relationships and work ambience	4.59	5	5	0.5	0.9	5.2	26.0	67.4
8. Integration trips, employee meetings	3.87	4	5	4.7	11.6	17.7	23.7	42.3
9. Leadership style	4.19	4	5	1.9	4.2	16.7	27.4	49.8
10. Flexible working hours	4.26	4	5	0.5	4.7	13.5	31.6	49.7
11. Possibility to work remotely	4.04	4	5	3.3	6.5	18.1	27.0	45.1
11. The company's position on the market	3.89	4	5	3.7	10.2	15.3	34.4	36.3
13. Equipping the company with modern technologies	4.00	4	5	2.8	9.3	15.8	29.3	42.8
14. Team age (work in a team of peers)	3.87	4	5	6.0	8.8	13.5	34.9	36.7
15. Work in line with your interests	4.26	4	5	0.5	2.3	14.4	36.3	46.5
16. Work in line with education	3.80	4	5	6.0	12.6	14.0	30.7	36.7
17. Co-decision-making	4.20	4	5	0.9	5.6	11.6	36.3	45.6
18. A detailed list of duties and tasks	4.15	4	5	0.5	2.3	14.4	36.3	46.5
19. No overburdening the workplace with tasks	3.98	4	5	1.4	7.9	23.7	25.1	41.9
20. No exploitation or over-exploitation	4.47	5	5	0.9	5.6	11.6	36.3	45.6
21. A sense of acceptance and belonging to a group	4.26	4	5	1.4	3.7	20.0	28.4	46.5
22. Work stability	4.3	4	5	0.0	2.3	9.8	43.7	44.2
23. Additional healthcare	3.9	4	5	3.2	11.2	14.9	33.5	37.2
24. Company policy consistent with our worldview	3.86	4	5	2.8	12.5	17.7	29.8	37.2
25. Working conditions (premises, lighting, noise, etc.)	4.11	4	5	0.0	6.5	21.4	27.0	45.1
26. Compliance with the 8-hour working day	3.43	4	5	8.8	18.6	21.4	23.3	27.9

Notes: *N* – significance coefficient, *Me* – median, *Do* – mode; 1 – no significance, 2 – little importance, 3 – medium importance, 4 – very important, 5 – great importance.

Source: the authors.

The significance coefficient of as many as 16 of the 26 variables reached a value above 4. A small range of values makes it impossible to carry out a detailed interpretation and indicate those aspects that fundamentally affect Generation Z in the process of looking for a job and performing professional duties. In addition, identifying and assessing the factors that shape the approach to work is a highly complex, labour-intensive undertaking, and is not always reflected in practice. This problem can be addressed by reducing the original variables, while assigning them the appropriate ranks. This process drew on factor analysis, which simplified the complex structure to one that made it possible to assess the problem using a limited number of factors. For the procedure, a correlation matrix was built (Table 3), and then subjected to observation and further analysis. As a result, it was found that a large number of variables show interdependence with other variables. In practice, the correlation between two variables is assumed to be indistinct if $r_{xy} \leq 0.3$, medium when $0.3 < r_{xy} \leq 0.5$ and clear if $r_{xy} > 0.5$ (Ignatczyk & Chromińska, 2004, p. 170).

Analysis of the data in the matrix showed that a special degree of interdependence occurs between such variables as:

- extensive bonus system with a defined promotion and career path (0.48), financing education, courses, workshops as a means to development (0.43) and additional benefits resulting from the position held (0.32),
- defined path of promotion and professional career with the possibility for development by means of financing education, courses, workshops (0.46), the company's position on the market (0.3) and job stability (0.3),
- development by means of financing education, courses, workshops, with incentive programmes (0.47), additional benefits resulting from the position held (0.43),
- incentive programmes with additional benefits resulting from the position (0.54), integration trips and non-company employee meetings (0.34), and additional health care (0.37),
- additional benefits with integration trips and non-corporate employee meetings (0.34),
- relationships and atmosphere at work with integration trips (0.39), management style (0.4), sense of acceptance and belonging to a group (0.4) and company policy in terms of consistency with one's worldview (0.36),
- leadership style with the company's position on the market (0.31), the ability to co-decide about the company's development (0.31) and physical working conditions (0.33),
- flexible working hours with the possibility of remote work (0.58), equipping the company with modern technologies (0.34), the possibility to work on a team of employees of similar age (0.34),
- option of working remotely and the level of technology in the company (0.34),

- the company’s position on the market and the level of technology it uses (0.5), work in line with education (0.33), physical working conditions (0.3),
- equipping the company with modern technologies and the possibility of working on a team of employees of a similar age (0.42), additional health care (0.36),
- specific list of duties, and no excessive workload (0.38) and no exploitation or excessive exploitation (0.4),
- lack of excessive burden from workplace tasks, and the lack of exploitation or excessive exploitation (0.55), sense of acceptance and belonging to a group (0.31), job stability (0.36), physical working conditions (0.3) and compliance with 8-hour working day (0.3),
- lack of exploitation or excessive exploitation with a sense of acceptance and belonging to a group (0.33), job stability (0.45),
- sense of acceptance and belonging to a group, job stability (0.4) and company policy in line with one’s worldview (0.35),
- company policy consistent with one’s worldview and physical working conditions (0.37).

A high and medium correlation means that the information contained in individual variables is duplicated numerous times. It also suggests that there is a hidden structure between the original elements that affects the individual factors. Factor analysis helped us reduce many primary variables to those which, from Gen Z’s point of view, have had the most significant impact on their behaviour in seeking and performing work. These factors contain synthetic information derived from the factors subjected to the original quantitative study.

Table 4. Eigenvalues of Synthetic Factors Obtained as a Result of Factor Analysis

Synthetic Factor	F ₁	F ₂	F ₃	F ₄	F ₅	F ₆	F ₇	...	F _n
Eigenvalue	5.72	2.02	1.93	1.7	1.53	1.38	1.05	...	26
% of explained variance	22.02	7.77	7.42	6.56	5.91	5.33	4.05	...	100
Cumulative eigenvalue	5.72	7.74	9.69	11.38	12.92	14.31	15.6	...	–
Cumulative % of variance	22.02	29.8	37.23	43.79	49.71	55.05	59.10	...	100

Source: the authors.

From Table 4, seven factors containing cumulative information, whose eigenvalue exceeds 1, will be qualified for further work. The first isolated factor explains over 22%, the second almost 8%, the third over 7%, and the next four a total of 21.8% of the total variance. This means that the seven isolated factors together explain over 59% of the discussed phenomena, and the remaining 19 ones about 41%. It can therefore be assumed that the analysis of other factors is unnecessary. To confirm the correctness of the selection of seven factors, Cattell scree criterion

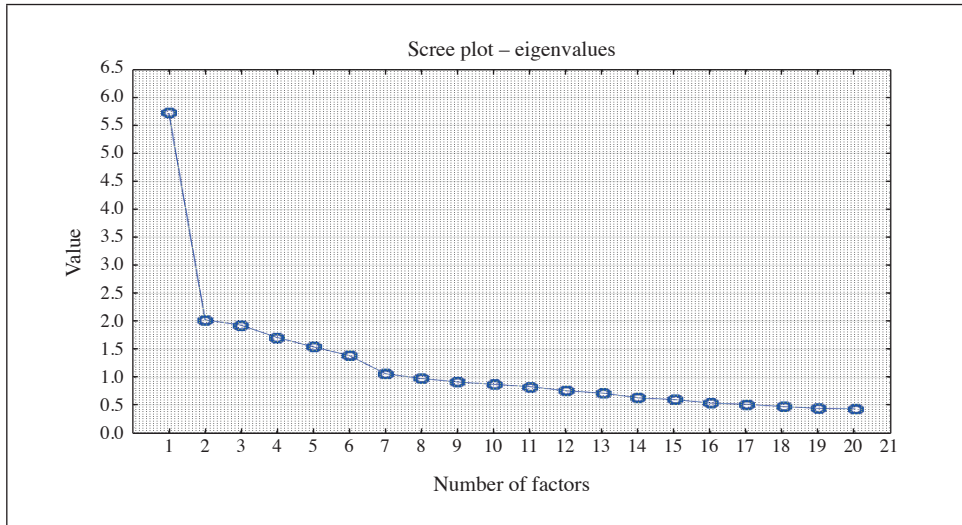


Fig. 1. Cattell Scree

Source: the authors.

was used, and graphically determines the selection point (Fig. 1). A mild decrease in the eigenvalues means that the other factors constitute the so-called factorial scree.

Transforming the original correlation matrix yielded a new matrix of raw factor loadings. It was then rotated using the Varimax method. Using principal components, the factors were extracted in such a way that successive factors with cumulative information were responsible for a smaller and smaller range of variance. This procedure made it possible to reduce the primary variables (subjected to the study) to the group of seven most important factors – those that are taken into account by Generation Z in their search for and performance of work. All the selected factors are characterised by a very high charge value (correlation), which ranges from 0.89 to 0.97. The values of rotated factor loads are presented in Table 5.

The analysis shows that the most important factor Generation Z considers when looking for and performing a job is flexible working hours ($R = 0.92$). It should be emphasised that this factor's eigenvalue is 5.7 and it explains over 22% of the problem. Having flexible working hours means being able to adjust working hours to one's individual needs and preferences. In practice, three options can be used. The first specifies the time period in which the employee must start work. The second specifies the different start and end times of work. And the third specifies the number of hours that must be worked in a week or month. Many Gen Zers do not necessarily want to work in a specific location, but to do hybrid work or work remotely from anywhere in the world. The respondents indicated that such an option allows them to maintain a balance between their professional and private lives. They also believe

Table 5. Matrix of Factor Loadings after Rotation

Variable	Rotated Factor Loads						
	Factor						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Remuneration adequate to commitment	0.01	0.02	0.00	0.97	0.01	0.00	0.06
Extensive bonus system	0.08	0.06	0.12	0.14	0.05	0.05	0.04
Precise path of promotion and professional career	-0.02	0.07	0.08	0.08	0.03	0.08	0.10
Development possibilities (funding of studies, courses)	0.06	0.08	0.19	0.07	0.08	0.12	0.10
Incentive programme (e.g. multisport)	0.01	0.03	0.25	0.02	0.04	0.15	0.01
Additional benefits (work phone, laptop, car, parking, etc.)	0.03	-0.02	0.92	0.00	0.06	0.09	-0.04
Relationships and work ambience	0.05	0.07	0.06	0.01	0.92	0.02	0.09
Integration trips, employee meetings	0.06	-0.04	0.13	-0.01	0.16	0.05	-0.01
Leadership style	0.04	0.06	0.01	0.07	0.17	0.05	0.09
Flexible working hours	0.92	0.01	0.03	0.01	0.05	0.00	0.02
Can work remotely	0.29	0.09	0.08	0.03	0.04	-0.01	0.07
The company's position on the market	0.07	-0.04	-0.02	0.12	0.04	0.12	0.07
Equipping the company with modern technologies	0.13	0.02	0.02	0.12	0.02	0.14	0.03
Team age (work in a team of peers)	0.12	0.04	0.04	-0.06	0.03	0.10	0.11
Work in line with your interests	0.02	0.03	-0.03	0.06	0.08	-0.04	0.95
Work in line with education	0.05	0.01	-0.03	-0.03	0.04	0.11	0.08
Co-decision-making	0.07	0.02	0.01	0.07	0.00	0.05	0.05
A detailed list of duties and tasks	0.00	0.15	0.06	0.05	0.02	0.03	0.05
No overburdening the workplace with tasks	0.02	0.24	0.06	0.00	0.06	0.10	0.05
No exploitation or over-exploitation	0.01	0.89	-0.02	0.02	0.08	0.03	0.03
A sense of acceptance and belonging to a group	-0.03	0.11	0.04	0.01	0.17	0.08	0.04
Work stability	0.01	0.17	0.00	0.01	0.09	0.12	0.01
Additional healthcare	0.00	0.03	0.10	0.00	0.03	0.91	-0.05
Company policy consistent with our worldview	-0.01	0.05	0.05	0.02	0.14	0.10	0.13
Working conditions (premises, lighting, noise, etc.)	0.09	0.06	0.03	0.05	0.04	0.04	0.09
Compliance with the 8-hour working day	0.06	0.06	0.06	-0.09	0.05	0.07	-0.07

Notes: Numbers in bold indicate loads above 0.85.

Source: the authors.

that flexible working hours should improve productivity as it enables time management, mobility and reduced absenteeism. Relaxing strict working hours also affects psychological comfort, improved well-being, and causing less stress.

The second factor, with an eigenvalue of 2 and explaining almost 8% of the problem, concerns the fear of excessive exploitation by employers ($R = 0.89$). Most of the participants in the study have work experience, mainly in trade and services, where they encountered a range of discrimination – from lowering the salary, requiring unpaid work or low-paid overtime, and giving additional duties not related to the work performed, to name three. It is very difficult to fight against such behaviours as there are no appropriate institutions would deal with such matters quickly and actively. Therefore, when looking for a job, this has caused Gen Zers to collect and exchange information about potential employers. Where reviews are negative, they look for further offers that suit their remuneration and other needs.

Various types of non-wage benefits constituted another important factor ($R = 0.92$). The eigenvalue here was 1.92, with the factor explaining 7.5% of the variance. The respondents indicated that electronic gadgets, such as a branded business phones and laptops, as well as co-financing for formal education and other trainings that will help improve qualifications, are particularly important. They are followed by a car, parking lot, healthcare, and insurance. These elements help boost the loyalty of Gen Z, which generally does not forge long-term relationships with employers.

Adequate remuneration ($R = 0.97$), with an eigenvalue of 1.7, is in fourth place, and explains 6.5% of the variance. The qualitative study did not indicate specific salary ranges, but it was noted that remuneration must adequately reflect the work performed. It should also be sufficient to enable self-development, dreams to be pursued, a hobby or physical activity. At the same time, when looking for a job, members of this generation tends to consider only those offers that clearly specify the level of remuneration and the scope of duties. Finally, one threat that may destabilise the Polish employers' market is the relatively high interest Gen Z has shown in economic emigration.

Another important factor Gen Z considers when looking for and performing work is relationships and the atmosphere at the workplace ($R = 0.92$). With an eigenvalue of 1.53, the factor accounts for 5.5% of the variance. According to the respondents, the atmosphere at work should be relatively loose, ensuring that employees have freedom and independence in performing their work. Relations between people should be based on trust, commitment, cooperation, lack of unhealthy competition, and a sense of belonging to a group. In addition, Gen Z counts on receiving mutual help, kindness, understanding and appreciation. They also emphasised that the atmosphere and relationships fundamentally contribute to engagement at work, thus increasing productivity.

Additional healthcare is the sixth factor ($R = 0.91$), with an eigenvalue of 1.38. This factor explains the problem in more than 5%. It is worth noting that this factor is treated individually by the surveyed group, as one of the previous factors was additional benefits, which also include healthcare. The importance of the factor may

be due to the fact that the study was conducted after the pandemic, during which many people became aware of health risks and dangers.

The last factor with an eigenvalue above 1 was work in line with one's interests ($R = 0.95$), though it accounted for only 4% of Gen Z's most pressing concerns about work. Work in line with one's interests means that the scope of the duties assigned will be compatible with activities or actions that contribute to satisfaction, self-satisfaction and, in many cases, alignment with non-professional interests. In practice, however, it is difficult to provide all employees with work in line with their passions and hobbies. This can mean that Gen Zers are relatively rarely attached to the workplace, change jobs frequently and do not identify with the company much at all.

5. Conclusions

Each generation entering the labour market has unique preferences which encourage it to undertake professional activity. It may be a tendency to consume, or a propensity to save and raise capital, or to strike a balance between one's professional life and work. The differences are to some degree attributable to the conditions the generation grew up with, what they learned and how they gained experience. From the point of view of modern enterprises, today's youngest generation, Generation Z, is particularly important. It is replacing the baby boomers, which is currently exiting the labour market. Gen Z's approach to work differs radically from previous generations. It has forced companies to constantly analyse their behaviour, implement ongoing changes, and adapted recruitment and motivation to its needs and preferences. If they are not monitored, the company may have problems with filling positions, because no one will want to work in an unsuitable or unfavourable environment. This is because Gen Z values freedom, mobility and flexibility as fundamental values. The study presented in this paper showed that three factors are particularly important: flexibility (especially the ability to work in hybrid mode or remotely), a strictly defined scope of duties (one that prevents excessive exploitation) and other benefits, primarily of a technological nature. Remuneration, atmosphere at work, healthcare and work in line with interests were found to be less important factors. These factors to some extent correspond with other studies conducted in different centers.

At the same time, the research presented herein is not without limitations. Primarily, the study was conducted on a sample of 428 students, which may limit the ability to generalise the results to Generation Z as a whole, especially as students have limited professional experience. This factor may have influenced their perceptions and priorities regarding work. Including individuals with more diverse and extensive professional experience could provide a more comprehensive understanding of Generation Z's approach to work.

Another limitation was the non-random and purposive sampling method, which may have affected the representativeness of the results. The survey was mainly based on participants' self-assessment using a 5-point Likert scale, which may introduce subjectivity and limitations related to the interpretation of individual issues. Variable assessments focus on respondents' declarative preferences and expectations, which may differ from actual labour market behavior, where various factors may influence decisions and attitudes in a more dynamic and comprehensive way.

The geographical and cultural contexts of the study also posed a significant limitation. It was conducted in a specific region and time, which may not reflect differences and changes in other regions or in the future. Additionally, the study might have been influenced by the specific social and economic conditions of the post-pandemic period, which may not be fully representative of long-term trends.

The data analysis was conducted using factor analysis, which, while allowing for the reduction of the number of variables, may lead to a loss of some information and the complexity of the actual impact of the factors under consideration. Furthermore, the study assumed that a high correlation between variables indicates their interdependence; however, some relationships may be more complex and not always linear, which can limit the interpretation of the results.

Due to certain methodological limitations, the results obtained in the study do not provide a basis for generalising these results to all representatives of Generation Z. They apply only to the group under consideration. Therefore, some factors may not have been recognised or their impact may differ from that indicated in the study. Further research is necessary, including qualitative studies on more diverse samples with greater professional experience, and conducted in various geographical and cultural contexts. It is also worth mentioning that in a few years Generation Alpha will enter the labour market. The behaviours, entitlement, directness and digital mobility of its members will be of keen interest to various research groups.

Authors' Contribution

The authors' individual contribution is as follows: Dariusz Nowak 40%, Emil Nikolov 30%, Joanna Wiśniewska 30%.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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