

# THE EXAMINATION OF MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS OF CHOSEN GENERATIONS

DOMINIKA VLACSEKOVÁ - SILVIA TÓBIÁS KOSÁR

---

## Abstract

The motivation research has undergone by spectacular development in recent years. An increasing number of books, booklets, magazines are dealing with the motivation, as a notion. Every organization wants to be successful and achieve its objectives as efficiently as it is possible. It is essential without the willing and dedicated staff. The motivation plays a big role in each activity in the work. It is also important to maintain motivation and further motivate the staff as well. The ranges of motivational tools are very diverse, and therefore the organizations can widely apply these in everyday life. The main aim of the scientific paper is an examination of the motivational tools that influence the representatives of different generations in practice. The scientific paper presents the specific characteristics of chosen generations and characterizes the purpose of the research. The paper contains the results of research and conclusions.

**Key words:** motivation factors, motivational tools, The Baby Boomers, The Generation X, The Generation Y

**JEL Code:** L26, O15

---

## Introduction

Several managers' researches emphasize that the human resources and human capital are considered as the greatest value in the life of a company (Bencsik, Juhász, Machová, 2014). That is why every company should try to keep good working employees. Leaders can accomplish this by motivation. To motivate someone means that one person directs the other towards a specific goal, while taking into account the needs of motivated individual (Vysoká, 2010). The leader can motivate the individual as a member of the group. In this case the leader must develop an individual motivational program, where a thorough knowledge and understanding of employee is essential. In other cases, the leader may motivate the work team. In this case, group motivation program will be developed where the needs and motives of the group should be taken into account (Blašková, 2003).

Nowadays companies mostly motivate by money and by monetary acknowledgment, despite the fact that many research indicates that this type of motivation may not be enough incentive for employees (Scheiner, 2015). Beside the monetary motivation the leader can chose from a number of motivational tools, such as the recognition of creative tasks or sharing of responsibility to subordinates, career, etc. (Blašková, 2003).

Since multiple generations work in the workplace, the leader aims to use the competences of different generations as efficiently as possible to achieve the organization's goals. Regarding this, characteristics of each generation groups should be taken into account, their interpretation and age-related issues (Pritchard, Whiting, 2014).

## **1 Description of chosen generations**

In this scientific paper we examined three generations, which were the Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y. The following three sub-chapters describe in details the three generations.

### **1.1 The Baby Boomers**

The life of the members of Baby Boomers was characterized by relative scarcity, so they learned how to farm frugally. Discipline, respect, perseverance characterizes them. They are bounded to employment. Their lifestyle revolves around the fact that they live to work. They are hard-workers, loyal and committed towards the company. They feel honored if they can share their experience with younger generations. They like to maintain professional relationships with colleagues. It is a challenge for them to broaden their skills and participate in projects. This is a significant point between them and the newer generations, that they expect others to have the same work ethic and work the same hours (Hegedűs, 2015; Carlson, 2015). In their life power and position at workplace plays a big role. They should be endowed with responsibility and if they perform well their job should be acknowledged and also their efforts should be praised publicly. The praise should be supported by a personalized reward. For them a feedback once a year is not enough. The leaders must keep the channels of communication open. Efforts should be made in the open, regular, face-to-face communication (Hegedűs, 2015; Carlson, 2015).

### **1.2 Generation X**

The Generation X, born between 1946 and 1980, was the first generation grown up with high rate of blended families. They witnessed their parents sacrifice greatly for companies. They

saw how many families have fallen apart because of work and money, beside that their parents rarely achieved real success. As a consequence, they developed behaviors of independence (Lissitsa, Kol, 2016). For this generation the balance between private life and work is highly important. Their work, their life is basically determined by the web (Hegedűs, 2015). The members of Generation X prefer organizations that provide them flexible working hours, and also have great autonomy at work and have challenging work with an opportunity to gain experience (Javitch, 2010). Motivational tools for Generation X are: cultural program tickets, theater tickets, health insurance funds, pension plans, life insurance, cafeteria and various benefits, year-end bonuses (Király, 2014). They need clear targets, but they need enough space to achieve the goals. During these tasks, they gain knowledge (Carlson, 2015).

### **1.3 Generation Y**

The Generation Y, born between 1981 and 2000, is significantly different in terms of compared to previous generations. Millennia's have been shown to hold different work values, different expectations related to work preferences (Kuron, Lyons, Schweitzer, 2015). The Generation Y is the first wave of digital generation, internet is always present in their life. They have constant experience with online world that sometimes affect their problem solving abilities. They communicate rather online than face to face (Javitch 2010). The Generation Y's job choosing preferences are various from previous generations. For them the balance between the work and private life is important. They want to feel good at workplace; they want to be successful, gain respect and they want this as fast as it is possible. They greatly appreciate freedom and a work, what is free from formality. They like to multi task and to work mostly on smart phone or on laptop. If something is not okay for them with working conditions, they quit. They don't have emotional connection to workplace (Hegedűs, 2015; Szeghegyi, 2012). It acts as a motivator for them, when they are charged with several tasks, but not more than they could deal with. They like challenges and changes, which has a positive effect on them. It is important for them to feel good at workplace, because that is the only way how they can work. If they make progress, or they have reached a long-term outcome, they must be rewarded and often need positive feedback (Javitch, 2010). Digital devices, festival tickets, vouchers, sports, fitness lease are motivational tools for the Generation Y. However, not only tangible assets can motivate them, but also organizing parties, flexible working hours, tasks matching their skills, professional challenges, career programs and friendly work environment (Király, 2014).

## 2 Description of the empirical research

The primary aim of the research was to assess the motives of different generational groups in the work environment and give suggestions on how representatives of a generation can be more effectively motivated on their workplace. We have examined three-generation groups at the research: the Baby Boomers, the Generation X and the Generation Y.

Before carrying out the research we have analyzed a variety of secondary data. This included topics written in national and international literature, reviewing and organizing the collected funds. To perform the quantitative empirical research we have chosen a basic method, the questionnaire. 150 people participated in the questionnaire survey. The same number of representatives was asked from each generation group. The empirical research was carried out in three Slovak administrative districts early spring 2016. From the sampling techniques we used the random sampling method and from that the stratified sampling. While carrying out the questionnaire we used interviewers, to eliminate potential misunderstandings. We have coded and recorded the filled questionnaires and identified the outstanding values and selected the correct statistical method. The program Microsoft Excel was used for evaluating the results from research. During the analysis of hypothesis we used univariate- and multivariate statistics. In the scientific paper we examined a hypothesis, which were analyzed with statistical methods. Used statistical methods are described in the next subchapter.

### 2.1 Used statistical methods

In the scientific paper we used univariate analysis and multivariate analysis. The univariate analysis is the simplest form of analyzing data. We used average, also known as the mean. Average is the most common measure of central tendency. Average is the sum of all the observations divided by the number of observations (Aaker, Kumar, Day, 2001).

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N} \quad (1)$$

The standard deviation is a measure of how spread out numbers are. A low standard deviation indicates that the data points tend to be close to the mean of the set, while a high standard deviation indicates that the data points are spread out over a wider range of values. In the formula the X means the value in the data set, the  $\bar{X}$  means all values in the data set, and the N means the number of values in the data set (Aaker, Kumar, Day, 2001).

$$\sigma = \sqrt{\frac{\sum (X - \bar{X})^2}{N}} \quad (2)$$

During the analysis of hypothesis multivariate statistical analysis was used, concretely the cross-tabulations. It is also called cross-tabs, cross-classification, and contingency table analysis. The contingency table analysis is for studying the relationship among and between nominal variables. From the possible solutions of the statistical analysis we have selected the Chi-Square test (Pearson Chi-Square) and the Cramer's V. Chi-square test is a statistical test commonly used to compare observed data with data we would expect to obtain according to a specific hypothesis (Aaker, Kumar, Day, 2001).

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(\text{observed} - \text{expected})^2}{\text{expected}} \quad (3)$$

Cramer's V is a measure of association between two nominal variables, giving a value between 0 and +1. The Cramer's V was used to measure the strength of the relationship between variables. In the formula the N means the number of cases, the k means the smallest of number of rows or columns (Aaker, Kumar, Day, 2001).

$$V = \sqrt{\frac{\chi^2}{N(k - 1)}} \quad (4)$$

## 2.2 Description of the study area

The research was carried out in three Slovak administrative districts: Dunajská Streda District (Okres Dunajská Streda), Komárno District (Okres Komárno) and Nové Zámky District (Okres Nové Zámky). General information about the three districts can be found in Table 1.

**Tab. 1: General information about the three districts**

	<b>Dunajská Streda District (Okres Dunajská Streda)</b>	<b>Komárno District (Okres Komárno)</b>	<b>Nové Zámky District (Okres Nové Zámky)</b>
<b>Region</b>	Trnava Region (Trnavský kraj)	Nitra Region (Nitriansky kraj)	Nitra Region (Nitriansky kraj)
<b>Area</b>	1 074,59 km <sup>2</sup>	1 100 km <sup>2</sup>	1 347 km <sup>2</sup>
<b>Population</b>	112 384 persons	108 556 persons	149 594 persons
<b>Center</b>	Dunajská Streda	Komárno	Nové Zámky

Source: Okresy Slovenskej republiky, 2016

**Fig. 1: The three districts located in Slovakia**



Source: Okresy Slovenskej republiky, 2016

Based on data from the Slovak Statistical Office (Štatistický úrad Slovenskej Republiky), the lowest unemployment rate in 2015 was in the Dunajská Streda District (Okres Dunajská Streda) (8.82%). The unemployment rate in the Nové Zámky District (Okres Nové Zámky) was 10.16 % while in the Komárno District (Komarno Okres) was 13.26%. The highest average nominal monthly wage in 2015 was in Dunajská Streda District (Okres Dunajská Streda) (€ 801). In the Komárno District (Komarno Okres) the average nominal monthly wage was € 787, while in the Nové Zámky District (Okres Nové Zámky) was € 775.

### 2.3 The results of empirical research

The questionnaire was completed by 150 people from the three-generation group. During the research we dealt with the use of corporate motivational tools, basically with those that companies use regularly.

We listed sixteen statements in the questionnaire showing which motivational tools were presented at the workplace of respondents. Closed-response questions were used, where two alternatives were supplemented with a neutral one (“Yes”, “No”, “I do not know”). The respondents made one choice from a list of possible responses. Responses were averaged. The respondents’ answers were indicated with „1”, if the statement did not apply to them, and were indicated with „2”, if so. The neutral answers were indicated with „0”. Therefore the obtained values were between 0 and 2. The higher the value is, the motivational tools are more likely represented in the life of the companies. Values in parentheses represents the averages obtained. The following table shows the average and standard deviation of answers.

**Tab. 2: The average and standard deviation of the answers**

Motivational tool	N	The Baby Boomers		The Generation X		The Generation Y	
		Average	Standard deviation	Average	Standard deviation	Average	Standard deviation
I get challenging tasks	150	1.48	.6757	1.69	.5222	1.53	.6116

I can put my knowledge into practice and upgrade it	150	1.38	.8057	1.60	0.6414	1.31	.8077
I have a chance to step forward	150	1.07	.6914	1.37	.897	1.16	.7949
I am satisfied with my boss	150	1.31	.7924	1.49	.6490	1.34	.8143
I can turn to my boss at any time	150	1.41	.6704	1.29	.7772	1.50	.8292
I am in good relationship with my colleagues	150	1.79	.6091	1.77	.5897	1.81	.5830
I get respect at my workplace	150	1.48	.8146	1.60	.7251	1.53	.7900
Before making any decision they listen to my opinion	150	1.38	.6110	1.37	.5897	.91	.7228
Senior management supports the grassroots initiatives	150	.48	.4997	1.06	.7149	.59	.6548
I have high degree of autonomy in decision-making	150	.93	.6396	1.17	.6088	.91	.5220
I get the recognition for my work	150	1.62	.4852	1.20	.7483	1.31	.7262
The recognition is visible on my salary	150	.86	.5068	1.26	.5525	.94	.5555
A high level of motivation characterizes my workplace	150	.90	.7117	.91	.6916	.72	.5720
The motivation of employees' gets a lot of attention	150	.86	.5708	.83	.6088	.94	.4961
I get all the necessary information and support to carry out	150	1.59	.6704	1.14	.6821	1.53	.7064
I feel important in the life of the company	150	1.31	.6999	1.11	.7845	1.13	.7395

Source: Own processing based on questionnaire survey

The answers of Baby Boomers shows that they are in a very good relationship with their colleagues (1.79). Furthermore, they feel that they receive the recognition of the work carried out (1.62), they get the necessary support and information to perform their jobs well (1.59). However, based on the responses senior management does not support the initiatives of the grassroots (0.48), and the company does not pay enough attention to motivate employees (0.86). For this reason, employees are low motivated (0.90). They do not feel the recognition on their salaries (0.86), nor they had a high degree of autonomy in decision-making (0.93). However from the values of standard deviation we can see that respondents compared to average do not always behave the same way.

The members of Generation X also have a very good relationship with colleagues (1.77). They feel that they get challenging task according to their position (1.69), they can use and improve their acquired knowledge (1.60). They feel that they get the respect from their colleagues and principals (1.60). Based on their responses in the workplace they do not pay enough attention to employee motivation (0.83), therefore the motivation of employees is low. However, the responses show a high standard deviation value from which we can conclude that the opinion of respondents greatly scatters around the average. Consequently, the responses cannot be regarded as homogenous.

The members of Generation Y are also in a very good relationship with colleagues (1.81). They feel that they get challenging task according to their position (1.53), the respect from colleagues and principals (1.53) and the necessary support and information to perform their work well (1.53). Based on the responses the senior management does not support the initiatives of the grassroots (0.59), in the workplace they do not pay great attention to employee motivation (0.92), because of this the employees are lowly motivated (0.72). They feel that they are not being listened before decision making (0.91) and do not have a high degree of decision-making autonomy (0.91), and that recognition is not visible on their payment (0.94). However from the values of standard deviation we can see that respondents compared to average do not always behave the same way.

*Hypothesis: There is a connection between corporate practice of motivational tools and employee satisfaction.*

To confirm the hypothesis, we used crosstabs, also called contingency table that displays the frequency distribution of the variables. In this hypothesis, we examined whether



there is a connection between employee satisfaction and motivation tools or not. Two questions were taken into account to prove the hypothesis: how satisfied are employees in their current workplace and what motivational tools are used by the companies to motivate the employees. From the possible solutions of the statistical analysis we have selected the Chi-Square test (Pearson Chi-Square) and the Cramer's V.

**Tab. 3: Chi-Square test**

Motivational tool	Pearson Chi-Square Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Cramer's V
I get challenging tasks	18.358	8	.000	.285
I can put my knowledge into practice and upgrade it	20.729	8	.000	.303
I have a chance to step forward	12.427	8	.000	.234
I am satisfied with my boss	20.905	8	.000	.304
I can turn to my boss at any time	24.332	8	.000	.328
I am in good relationship with my colleagues	10.151	8	.000	.212
I get respect at my workplace	25.925	8	.000	.339
Before making any decision they listen to my opinion	13.639	8	.000	.246
Senior management supports the grassroots initiatives	11.549	8	.000	.226
I have high degree of autonomy in decision-making	10.280	8	.000	.213
I get the recognition for my work	14.770	8	.000	.256
The recognition is visible on my salary	13.500	8	.000	.244
A high level of motivation characterizes my workplace	6.366	8	.000	.168
The motivation of employees' gets a lot of attention	11.702	8	.000	.228
I get all the necessary information and support to carry out	19.866	8	.000	.296
I feel important in the life of the company	26.129	8	.000	.340

Source: Own processing based on questionnaire survey

The  $\chi^2$ -statistic is for measuring the statistical significance of the cross-tabulation. It helps to determine whether there is a systematic relationship between the two variables. The resulting distribution is called the chi-square distribution. The chi-square distribution is characterized by a parameter called the degrees of freedom (df) which determines the shape of the distribution (Aaker, Kumar, Day, 2001).

**Tab. 4:  $\chi^2$  critical points**

df	.250	.100	.050	.025	.010	.005	.001
8	10.2	13.4	15.5	17.5	20.1	22.0	26.1

The value of  $\chi^2$  critical point at 0.05 significance level and at 8 degree of freedom is 15.5. The Cramer's V value can change between 0 and 1. A high value of V means strong connection, but does not indicate the direction of connection between the variables (Aaker, Kumar, Day, 2001). Based on the table's data we can state that there is a strong significant connection between the variables. It follows that the level of employee's satisfaction is greatly influenced by the existence of different motivational tools in the company where they work. The conclusion from the results is that there is a significant connection between employee satisfaction and motivation. According to this we accepted the hypothesis.

## **Conclusion**

The facts summarized in theoretical part during the research were proved to be true. The members of Baby Boomers are hard-workers, loyal and committed towards the company. The members of the Generation X are still more loyal than the Generation Y. If something is not okay for them with working conditions they quit. They are not emotionally connected to workplace. From the respondents the members of Generation Y were those who were able to change their job in the past five years more than three times. They are ready for immediate change, to quit without compromise. They do not stick to a company and they do not worry that they don't have fix salary. Leaders must be more flexible and use such tools which have been believed that are not needed.

Companies should focus on of fringe benefits. The Baby Boomers can be motivated with various contributions to insurances for example: pension insurance, life insurance, personal accident insurance, individual health insurance. The Generation X can be motivated with cultural program tickets, theater tickets, insurance, contributions to pension insurance, various cafeteria benefits, year-end bonuses and spa facilities. The motivational tools to Generation Y should be digital devices, festival tickets, vouchers, sports, fitness, lease, etc.

The most important motivational factor for the Baby Boomers is monetary recognition after this comes the recognition for a well-made job. The research has proven this again as it was written in the theoretical part. Responsibility should be given to them and if they perform well their job must be recognized and their efforts publicly praised. The praise should be

supported by a personalized reward either as with previously mentioned non-wage benefits or by cash bonuses.

Recognition by money is also an important motivating factor for the Generation X and the recognition for the well done job is also important. They like those organizations where they get challenging tasks and opportunities to develop. Managers need to give them the opportunity to be creative. Because they try to keep the balance between the job and private life leaders can motivate them with flexible work time.

The Generation Y is the only generation where money does not pay the principal motivating factor, but for them more important is to get recognized for good work. They want to feel good at workplace and work in good working condition. They feel motivated when they can do several tasks at the same time but no more than they could deal with. The Generation Y in first place can not only be motivated by financial and material means, but with organizing parties, challenges and with friendly work environment, above all with positive feedback. Career and self-fulfillment in the workplace is very important in their life. Leaders should make possible for them to step forward and in accordance with their attitude to life so quickly, as quickly as possible.

The leaders should pay more attention to motivate employees, because all of the respondents stated that the companies do not pay much attention to their employees' motivation and therefore low motivation is present in the workplace. Since especially the leaders responsibility is to motivate the employees, leaders must be trained and develop themselves in this area. Companies can organize trainings to achieve this or send the leaders for trainings.

## **References**

Aaker, D. A., Kumar, V., Day, G. S. 2001. Marketing research. Seventh edition. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. pp. 445-460. ISBN: 0-471-36340-5

Bencsik, A., Juhász, T., Machová, R. 2014. Mentoring Practice on Behalf of Knowledge Sharing in the light of Education. In Web of Science. In Acta Polytechnica Hungarica. Journal of Applied Sciences. Vol. 11, Issue Number 9. pp. 95-114. ISSN: 1785-8860

Blašková, M. Riadenia a rozvoj ľudského potenciálu – Uplatňovanie motivačného akcentu v procesoch práce s ľuďmi. Žilina: EDIS. ŽU. 2003. pp. 1-211. ISBN: 80-8070-034-6

Carlson, C. et al. 2015. Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y (and Generation Z) Working Together. What matters and how they learn? How different are they? Fact and fiction. New York, NY: United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund. Talent Management Team. pp. 1-13

Hegedűs, H. 2015. XXI. századi kihívások. HR-megoldások a köz-és a versenyszférában. Hadtudomány. A Magyar Hadtudományi Társaság Folyóirata. Vol. XXV. No. 2015. pp. 102-107. ISSN: 1588-0605

Javitch, D. G. 2010. Motivating Gen X, Gen Y workers. 2010 [online] <http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/206502>

Király, Cs. 2014. Generációk változása a munka világában, avagy hogyan tudjuk motiválni az X és az Y munkavállalóinkat. [online] <http://www.hrportal.hu/hr/generaciok-valtozasa-a-munka-vilagaban-avagy-hogyan-tudjuk-motivalni-az-x-es-y-munkavallaloinkat-20140411.html>

Kuron, L., Lyons, S. T. - Schweitzer, L. 2015. Millenials' work values: differences across the school to work transtion. In Web of Science. Vol. 44. Issue 6. pp. 991-1009. ISSN: 0048-3486

Lissitsa, S., Kol, O. 2016. Generation X vs. Generation Y - A decade of online shopping. In Web of Science. Vol. 31. pp. 304-312. ISSN: 0969-6989

Okresy Slovenskej republiky. 2016 [online] <http://www.slovakiasite.com/sk/okresy.php>

Pritchard, K., Whiting, R. 2014. Baby Boomers and the Lost Generation: On the Discursive Construction of Generations at Work. In Web of Science. Vol. 35. Issue: 11. pp. 1605-1626. ISSN: 0170-8406

Scheiner, CW. 2015. The Motivational Fabric of Gameified Idea Competitions: The Evulation of Game Mechanics from a Longitudinal Perspective. In Web of Science. Vol. 24. Issue: 2. 2015. pp. 341-353. ISSN: 0963-1690

Szeghegyi, Á. 2012. Emberi erőforrás menedzsment. C Tanterv. Budapest. Óbudai Egyetem. pp. 1-170

Vysoká, A. 2010. Motivácia pracovníkov. Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci. Filozofická fakulta. Katedra sociológie a andragogiky. Bratislava. pp. 1-58

## Contact

Mgr. Dominika Vlacseková

PhD. candidate at J. Selye University, Faculty of Economics, Department of Economics

Bratislavská cesta 3322, 945 01 Komárno, Slovak Republic

[dominika.baka@gmail.com](mailto:dominika.baka@gmail.com)

PhDr. Tóbiás Kosár Silvia,

assistant professor, J. Selye University, Faculty of Economics, Department of Management;

PhD. candidate at Széchenyi István University, Doctoral School of Regional and Economic Sciences

[kosars@ujs.sk](mailto:kosars@ujs.sk)