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MOTIVATION IN THE WORKPLACE – GENDER PERSPECTIVE

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Purpose: The purpose of this paper is to recognize employee motivation considering gender differences. Specific aims include evaluating the levels of motivation and understanding perceptions of both material and non-material motivational factors.
Design/methodology/approach: The empirical research discussed in this article is part of a broader study on work motivation. This study utilized a quantitative approach, employing an online survey questionnaire created with Google Forms as the research tool. The empirical research was conducted in 2023, using purposive sampling to target 120 participants. The questionnaire was disseminated electronically. The theoretical framework was developed using data sourced from the Scopus database, which was analyzed with Scopus AI and VOSviewer software tools. Statistical analysis was conducted using PS Imago Process.
Findings: The empirical research results revealed no statistically significant differences between women and men regarding their level of motivation. However, significant differences were found in terms of material motivational factors between genders. Non-material motivational factors were categorized into organizational and psychological tools. While there were no statistically significant differences between women and men concerning organizational motivational factors, significant differences emerged in the context of psychological motivational factors.
Originality/value: The research findings can serve as a foundation for evaluating motivation systems implemented in organizations during post-pandemic conditions. The empirical studies have underscored differences in the motivation levels of women and men. Future research should prioritize the study of women in the labor market, as understanding their unique needs is crucial for comprehending their motivations and sources of inspiration, which differ from those of men. These research results may be of interest to scholars investigating motivation systems, management students, and organizations.
Keywords: motivation, gender, women.
Category of the paper: Research paper.

Introduction

The highly competitive landscape of modern organizations demands engaged and well-motivated employees. Research shows a link between motivation and factors such as job stability, employee commitment, job satisfaction, improved teamwork efficiency, and increased productivity and performance. As such, understanding employee motivation is vital for the success, growth, and even survival of today's organizations (Amor, 2023; Gagné et al., 2014; Imran et al., 2017; Mahmoud, Reisel, 2014; Rusu, Avasilcai, 2013; Syahchari, 2019; Tudorache, 2013).

Motivation is a crucial element in people's professional lives, often described as the process of psychological regulation that stimulates and directs behaviors consciously or unconsciously (Chodkowski, 2019). Pritchard and Ashwood (2008) defined motivation as the "process used to allocate energy to maximise the satisfaction of needs".

In the literature exploring motivation, various theories attempt to explain human behavior in organizations. Therefore, the topic remains current and continually seeks sources of human motivation (Gajdek, 2015). Two approaches to motivation theory can be distinguished: needs theories (content theories) and process theories. Needs theories seek to identify what motivates people to work, while process theories explore methods of motivating people at work (Kilian, 2020).

In numerous scientific studies, motivation is categorized as either intrinsic or extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation originates from within an individual, meaning that a person engages in an activity by choice, interest, or pleasure, often with considerable effort and engagement. Conversely, extrinsic motivation involves individuals taking actions to achieve a reward or benefit. This type of motivation also includes conscious influence exerted on employees by supervisors through penalties, rewards, salaries, and various non-financial methods (Shevchenko et al., 2023; Żukowska, 2017).

Various tools, also known as motivators, factors or instruments, are used. These instruments are categorized based on how they influence employees and include: coercive tools (e.g., prohibitions, regulations, directives), persuasion (training and courses, consultations), and incentives (economic and non-economic). Among the material (economic) factors, one can distinguish: wage, primarily including salaries, and non-wage measures, aimed at shaping and stimulating human motivation by offering employees various additional benefits, such as social benefits, training funding, or insurance. Non-material (non-economic) factors, on the other hand, consist of various additional benefits (Kaczyńska et al., 2015; Knap-Stefaniuk et al., 2018; Strojna, 2015).

Research indicates that there are gender differences in motivation, with women often displaying higher levels of autonomous and intrinsic motivation compared to men. Additionally, females may experience higher levels of anxiety related to achievement

motivation. Women and men may also differ in their perceptions of motivational tools. However, it's important to note that the specific types of motivation and the extent of gender differences can vary across different contexts (Butler, 2014; Iwaniec, 2019; Samir, Krishnasamy, 2019; Sharma et al., 2020).

Exploring gender disparities in motivation is vital for contemporary organizations. Understanding women's motivation enables customized interventions that empower them, cultivating inclusive work environments. Recognizing women's distinct needs helps in grasping their drivers and sources of inspiration, which may vary from those of men. This comprehension guides workplace policies that bolster retention, career progression, and job satisfaction, consequently impacting the outcomes achieved by organizations (Cabrera, Quesada, 2020; Pino-Juste et al., 2021; Rezamahalleh et al., 2020).

Despite extensive literature on motivation, further research appears necessary due to changes in the business environment. Researchers examining work motivation highlight changes in this area due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Chala et al., 2022; Goh, Baum, 2021). Findings suggest that pandemic-related restrictions have reshaped the motivational profiles, emphasizing values like self-awareness, health maintenance, work-life balance, and personal growth.

The main objective of the research is to recognize employee motivation considering gender differences. Specific objectives include assessing levels of motivation and understanding perceptions of material and non-material motivational factors. The research results can provide a foundation for contemplating motivation systems applied in organizations under post-pandemic conditions.

Theoretical background

The empirical studies discussed in this paper represent one aspect of research into work motivation that concerns generational distinctions. The theoretical background is based on the Scopus database and consists of two stages: the analysis of publications in the areas of motivation and generation and, in the second stage, the analysis of publications in the areas of motivation and gender. In the first stage, publications were searched for using the keywords "motivation" and "generation", and the results were limited to English-language journal articles, with a total of 6321 articles being obtained. To present the current topics addressed within management sciences in the field of motivation in the context of generation, the database was limited to the scientific areas of business, management, and accounting. A database of 210 publications from the years 2010 to 2024 was obtained.

The co-occurrence analysis for all keywords was performed using VOSviewer software. It was assumed that the minimum number of occurrences for a keyword should be 4. Figure 1 illustrates the connections between the topics of motivation, generation, and other keywords. Four primary research areas (thematic clusters) were identified and are highlighted in the figure with different colors: Innovation and Knowledge (red), Current Problems (green), Generation (blue), and Motivation (yellow). One research area focuses on motivation by generational affiliation (X, Y, Z). These studies also take into account the issue related to gender (blue cluster). The number of occurrences of each keyword and the strength of its connections are presented in Table 1.

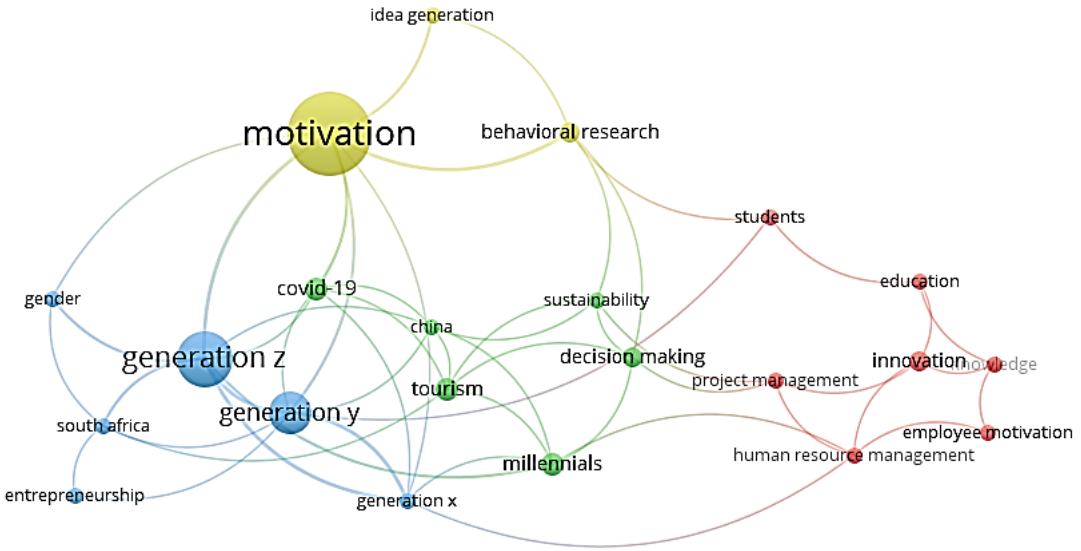

Figure 1. The research areas related to motivation in the context of generations (VOSviewer).
Source: Czerwińska-Lubszczyk, Jankowiak, 2024.

Table 1.
The number of occurrences of each keyword and the strength of its associations for the selected thematic cluster (blue)

Key word	Occurrence	Total link strength
Generation Z	18	17
Generation Y	13	13
Generation X	4	10
South Africa	4	6
Gender	4	4
Entrepreneurship	4	2

The authors address current socio-economic issues such as: robotized workplaces (Turja et al., 2022), agile companies (Revutska, Maršíková, 2021), women in STEM (Bhore, Tapas, 2023), employee-driven innovation (González-González, García-Almeida, 2021), and pandemic (Chala et al., 2022; Goh, Baum, 2021; Mahmoud et al., 2021). The research is carried out using quantitative methods (Turja et al., 2022) or qualitative methodologies (Lechler, Huemann, 2024).

Motivation at work

The authors adopt different perspectives on motivation and concentrate their research on various factors influencing motivation at work. Peñalba-Aguirrezabalaga et al. (2021) classify motivation into intrinsic and extrinsic types. Their findings highlight the importance of intrinsic motivation, where individuals engage in activities because they find them inherently interesting and derive spontaneous satisfaction from the activity itself. In contrast, extrinsic motivation involves engaging in activities for instrumental reasons (Gagné et al., 2010).

On the other hand, González-González and García-Almeida (2021) measured motivation by intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation (direct rewards), and the perception of the presence of motivating suggestion systems (extrinsic motivation; heeded suggestions). Turja et al. (2022) categorized workplace needs into material basic needs and psychological needs (such as feelings of competence, autonomy, and relatedness). Easton and Steyn (2022) focused on work values. Extrinsic work values include aspects such as salary and compensation growth, career advancement opportunities, flexible work practices, engaging and challenging tasks, job role autonomy, and fewer constraints. Intrinsic work values encompass personal development, recognition, work-life balance, alignment with employer values and ethics, and the opportunity to contribute through innovative ideas.

The researchers highlight the necessity of considering the characteristics of the motivated individuals, such as generational affiliation or gender (Chala et al., 2022; Boyle, 2022; Lechler, Huemann, 2024). Mahmoud et al. (2021) found that Generation Z shows higher sensitivity to amotivation compared to Generation X and Generation Y. Their study revealed that Generation Z finds extrinsic regulation-material particularly significant for overall work motivation. In contrast, Generation X values extrinsic regulation-social, while Generation Y values introjected regulation. Both Generation X and Generation Y employees value identified regulation as a source of overall work motivation, unlike Generation Z. Additionally, intrinsic motivation plays a more substantial role in motivating Generation Z employees compared to Generation X and Generation Y. Boyle (2022) observed in their research that millennials demonstrated increased adaptability, self-drive, and intrinsic motivation following their transition into the workforce, distinguishing them from previous generations.

Motivation and gender

Gender plays a significant role in determining motivational factors. While work motivation is a universal concern, gender differences can influence how individuals perceive and respond to various organizational strategies aimed at improving these outcomes (Kamil et al., 2024). Doerwald et al. (2021) focused on generativity at work, which involves both the motivation and behavior to support and guide younger generations and benefit future ones. Their findings indicate a positive association between the generativity motive and personal factors such as gender. Lašáková et al. (2023) examined motivating and demotivating factors for both genders.

Their results show that Gen Z women prioritize social aspects of workplace relationships, intrinsic factors related to ideal job scenarios, minimal routine, job success, and the need for recognition. In contrast, Gen Z men prioritize making a meaningful impact at work through altruism, extrinsic benefits, and aspects of a satisfying personal life free from work-related stress. Bhore and Tapas (2023) specifically studied Generation Z women, identifying factors that help organizations create policies and work environments to attract and support them in data science roles. Technical education, job opportunities, compensation, and supportive environments significantly and positively influence career decisions among Gen Z women in this field.

In the final stage of literature review, Scopus AI tool was utilized to search for publications on the topic of this study: "Motivation in the workplace – gender perspective". The generated results (publications) were subjected to analysis.

The gathered research indicates that gender plays a multifaceted role in workplace motivation, impacting variables such as job satisfaction, leadership styles, and psychological well-being (Memon, Jena, 2017; Salleh et al., 2018; Štefko et al., 2017). Lorincová et al. (2019) noted from their research conducted in Slovak enterprises that there are statistically significant differences in motivation perception based on job category and gender, particularly among blue-collar workers. Kamil et al. (2024) demonstrated that female employees generally show slightly lower levels of motivation compared to males, although this difference is not statistically significant. However, it is worth noting that some studies have found no statistically significant differences in motivation levels between genders. Ufuophu-Biri and Iwu (2014) reported no significant correlation between gender and job motivation or job performance, respectively.

Based on the literature analysis, the following hypotheses were formulated:

H1: There are differences between women and men in their levels of motivation.

H2: Women and men differ in their perceptions of material motivational factors.

H3: Women and men differ in their perceptions of non-material motivational factors.

Research methodology and sample structure

The theoretical framework relies on the Scopus database and involves two stages: analyzing publications related to motivation and generation, and subsequently analyzing publications focused on motivation and gender. The literature review for this publication was conducted in the first half of 2024.

The empirical studies discussed in this paper is a part of empirical research on work motivation that specifically examines generational differences. The study's scope included analyzing work motivation among individuals from generations X, Y, and Z. It focused on

individuals in the workforce belonging to these generations, defined by age boundaries as outlined by Sidor-Rządkowska (2018): Generation X (born between 1965 and 1979), Generation Y (born between 1980 and 1994), and Generation Z (born from 1995 onwards). The research targeted individuals currently employed in public institutions, enterprises, or other organizations, as well as those engaged in entrepreneurial activities. It also considered individuals who were previously employed but are currently not working due to reasons such as illness, vacation, maternity leave, flexible work arrangements, training participation, or other temporary absences not exceeding three months (according to GUS criteria). The empirical research was conducted in 2023.

The study utilized a quantitative approach, employing an online survey questionnaire created with Google Forms as the research tool. Purposive sampling was adopted, targeting 120 participants evenly distributed across three generational cohorts, with 40 individuals from each. The questionnaire was disseminated electronically.

Table 2.
Sample structure

	Female (N)	Male (N)	Female (%)	Male (%)
Employment contract	59	39	78.67%	86.67%
Civil law contract	15	5	20.00%	11.11%
Other	1	1	1.33%	2.22%
sum	75	45	100.00%	100.00%
Generation Z	33	7	44.00%	15.56%
Generation Y	22	18	29.33%	40.00%
Generation X	20	20	26.67%	44.44%
sum	75	45	100.00%	100.00%

The sample comprises 120 individuals from three generations (Table 2), including 75 women (62.5%) and 45 men (37.5%). The majority of the sample consisted of individuals employed under an employment contract (F: 78.67%, M: 86.67%).

The theoretical framework was formulated based on data extracted from the Scopus database, and analyzed using Scopus AI and VOSviewer software tools. Statistical analysis was performed using PS Imago Process.

Results

To assess the level of motivation, the following statement was used: Please rate the extent to which you feel motivated to work. Respondents had the option to answer on a five-point scale: 1 – I am not motivated, 2 – I feel low motivation to work, 3 – It's hard to say, 4 – I feel that I am motivated, 5 – I am very strongly motivated to work. The statistical data is presented in Table 3. The Mann-Whitney U test was used to compare the levels of motivation between

females and males and yielded the following values: Z = -1.748 and p = 0.081. Based on the adopted alpha level of 0.05, it can be concluded that there are no statistically significant differences between women and men in terms of their level of motivation.

Table 3.
Level of motivation by male and female

	Total	Female	Male
N	120	75	45
Mean	3.59	3.73	3.36
M	4.00	4.00	4.00
D	4.00	4.00	4.00
SD	1.18	1.15	1.21
Min	1.00	1.00	1.00
Max	5.00	5.00	5.00
Q1	3.00	3.00	2.00
Q3	4.00	5.00	4.00

Motivational factors are categorized into material and non-material types. which were categorized into organizational and psychological (Kaczyńska et al., 2015; Turja et al., 2022). The first group of statements were formulated: Please assess the following material motivating factors: Salary level (WYNA), Financial bonus (PREM), Performance-based pay (WYNI), Training and professional development funding (SZKO), Work phone. laptop (TELE), Company car (SAMO), Company meals (OBIA), Organizing company events (IMPR), Legal and financial assistance (DORA), Discounts on company products (ZNIŻ), Team-building trips (WYCI), Parking spaces (PARK), Benefits - e.g., multisport card. health insurance. subsidies for vacations. subsidies for education costs e.g., foreign languages, etc. (BENE). The response options included: 1 – Does not affect my motivation, 2 – Has a low impact on my motivation, 3 – I'm not sure if it affects my motivation, 4 – Has an impact on my motivation, 5 – Has a very high impact on my motivation (Czerwińska-Lubszczyk, Jankowiak, 2024). The statistical data is presented in Table 4.

Table 4.
Material motivational factors by gender (female and male)

Total	WYNA	PREM	WYNI	SZKO	TELE	SAMO	OBIA	IMPR	DORA	ZNIŻ	WYCI	PARK	BENE
N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
Mean	4.15	4.45	3.67	3.45	3.13	3.05	2.76	2.93	3.21	2.81	2.73	3.00	3.63
M	5.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	3.50	3.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	4.00
D	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	1.00	4.00	4.00	5.00
SD	1.16	0.80	1.49	1.53	1.28	1.36	1.29	1.38	1.48	1.46	1.35	1.30	1.59
Min	1.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Max	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Q1	4.00	4.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	2.00
Q3	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00
Female	**WYNA**	**PREM**	**WYNI**	**SZKO**	**TELE**	**SAMO**	**OBIA**	**IMPR**	**DORA**	**ZNIŻ**	**WYCI**	**PARK**	**BENE**
N	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75
Mean	4.13	4.47	4.01	3.60	3.00	2.67	2.99	3.11	3.32	2.99	2.96	3.05	3.93
M	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	5.00
D	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00
SD	1.18	0.74	1.38	1.50	1.21	1.24	1.28	1.33	1.48	1.44	1.39	1.25	1.50
Min	1.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Max	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00

Cont. table 4.

Q1	**4.00**	**4.00**	**3.00**	**2.00**	**2.00**	**2.00**	**2.00**	**2.00**	**2.00**	**2.00**	**2.00**	**2.00**	**3.00**
Q3	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00
Male	**WYNA**	**PREM**	**WYNI**	**SZKO**	**TELE**	**SAMO**	**OBIA**	**IMPR**	**DORA**	**ZNIŻ**	**WYCI**	**PARK**	**BENE**
N	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45
Mean	4.18	4.42	3.09	3.20	3.36	3.69	2.38	2.64	3.02	2.51	2.33	2.91	3.13
M	5.00	5.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	3.00
D	5.00	5.00	2.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	2.00	4.00	4.00	1.00	2.00	4.00	5.00
SD	1.15	0.89	1.50	1.56	1.37	1.31	1.23	1.42	1.47	1.46	1.21	1.38	1.63
Min	1.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Max	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Q1	4.00	4.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.00
Q3	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00

The Mann-Whitney U test was used to compare the differences between two independent groups: females and males (Tab. 5). Based on the adopted alpha level of 0.05, it can be concluded that there are statistically significant differences between women and men in terms of: Performance-based pay (WYNI), Company car (SAMO), Company meals (OBIA), Team-building trips (WYCI), and Benefits (BENE). It can be concluded that women tended to rate the importance of material motivational factors higher than men.

Table 5.
The Mann-Whitney U test for material motivational factors (female and male)

	WYNA	**PREM**	**WYNI**	**SZKO**	**TELE**	**SAMO**	**OBIA**	**IMPR**	**DORA**	**ZNIŻ**	**WYCI**	**PARK**	**BENE**
Z	-0.12	-0.14	-3.34	-1.22	-1.70	-4.07	-2.42	-1.73	-1.10	-1.65	-2.33	-0.52	-2.84
p	0.90	0.89	0.00	0.22	0.09	0.00	0.02	0.08	0.27	0.10	0.02	0.60	0.00

The next phase focused on examining non-material factors. The survey asked respondents to evaluate non-material motivational factors, which were divided into organizational and psychological categories. The organizational factors included: flexible working hours (ELAS); work-life balance (WLB); participation in developmental projects (PROJ); possibility of remote work (ZDAL); conveniently scheduled leave (URLO); and access to modern technologies (TECH). The psychological aspects included: self-fulfillment (SAMO); recognition (POCH); job stability (STAB); good relationships with colleagues (RELA); positive interpersonal relationships with supervisors (KONT); and trust within the company (ZAUF). The response options included: 1 – Does not affect my motivation; 2 – Has a low impact on my motivation; 3 – I'm not sure if it affects my motivation; 4 – Has an impact on my motivation; and 5 – Has a very high impact on my motivation (Czerwińska-Lubszczyk, Jankowiak, 2024). The statistical data is presented in Table 6.

Table 6.
Non-material motivational factors (organizational and psychological) by gender (female and male)

Total	ELAS	WLB	PROJ	ZDAL	URLO	TECH	SAMO	POCH	STAB	RELA	KONT	ZAUF
N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
Mean	3.28	3.89	3.73	3.30	3.39	3.28	3.77	3.30	4.23	3.60	3.43	3.87
M	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
D	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
SD	1.68	1.19	1.47	1.52	1.48	1.46	1.28	1.29	1.06	1.33	1.41	1.24
Min	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Max	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Q1	1.25	3.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	2.00	4.00	2.00	2.00	4.00
Q3	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Female	**ELAS**	**WLB**	**PROJ**	**ZDAL**	**URLO**	**TECH**	**SAMO**	**POCH**	**STAB**	**RELA**	**KONT**	**ZAUF**
N	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75
Mean	3.43	3.79	3.79	3.53	3.52	3.41	3.85	3.64	4.24	3.81	3.49	4.09
M	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
D	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
SD	1.69	1.26	1.45	1.44	1.47	1.44	1.28	1.24	1.02	1.31	1.41	1.16
Min	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Max	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Q1	2.00	3.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	2.00	4.00
Q3	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Male	**ELAS**	**WLB**	**PROJ**	**ZDAL**	**URLO**	**TECH**	**SAMO**	**POCH**	**STAB**	**RELA**	**KONT**	**ZAUF**
N	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45
Mean	3.04	4.07	3.62	2.91	3.18	3.04	3.62	2.73	4.20	3.24	3.33	3.49
M	3.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	2.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
D	5.00	5.00	5.00	1.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	2.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
SD	1.66	1.05	1.50	1.59	1.48	1.48	1.27	1.19	1.12	1.30	1.41	1.27
Min	1.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Max	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Q1	1.00	3.50	2.00	1.00	2.00	1.50	3.00	2.00	3.50	2.00	2.00	2.00
Q3	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.50	4.00

Table 7.
The Mann-Whitney U test for non-material motivational factors (organizational and psychological) by gender (female and male)

	ELAS	WLB	PROJ	ZDAL	URLO	TECH	SAMO	POCH	STAB	RELA	KONT	ZAUF	ELAS
Z	-1.35	-1.05	-0.66	-1.94	-1.29	-1.42	-1.27	-3.76	-0.05	-2.47	-0.68	-2.87	-0.05
p	0.18	0.29	0.51	0.05	0.20	0.16	0.21	0.00	0.96	0.01	0.49	0.00	0.96

The Mann-Whitney U test was used to compare the differences between two independent groups: females and males (Tab. 7). Based on the adopted alpha level of 0.05. it can be concluded that there are non-statistically significant differences between women and men in the context of organizational motivational factors. There are statistically significant differences between women and men in the context of psychological motivational factors in terms of: recognition (POCH), good relationships with colleagues (RELA) and trust within the company (ZAUF). Additionally, it can be observed that, on average, women rated the importance of both organizational and psychological motivators higher than men.

Discussion and Conclusion

The fierce competition faced by today's organizations necessitates a workforce that is highly engaged and motivated. Research consistently demonstrates a positive correlation between motivation and factors like employee commitment, work satisfaction, enhanced teamwork effectiveness, and boosted productivity and performance (Amor, 2023; Gagné et al., 2014; Imran et al., 2017; Mahmoud, Reisel, 2014; Rusu, Avasilcai, 2013; Syahchari, 2019; Tudorache, 2013). Consequently, understanding employee motivation is paramount for an organization's success, growth, and even its continued existence.

Despite extensive literature on motivation, further research appears necessary due to changes in the business environment. Particularly the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly reshaped motivational profiles.

This research aims to understand employee motivation with a specific focus on gender differences. Specific objectives include assessing levels of motivation and understanding perceptions of material and non-material motivational factors.

H1: There are differences between women and men in their levels of motivation

The empirical research results indicated that there are no statistically significant differences between women and men in terms of their level of motivation. Therefore, hypothesis H1 was negatively verified. Studies by Kamil et al. (2024) demonstrated that female employees generally show slightly lower levels of motivation compared to males. However, as indicated in the publication, this difference is not statistically significant. Additionally, the study was conducted among Malaysian public sector personnel, which could have influenced the results. The specification of the workplace can affect motivation, as demonstrated by Lechler R.C. and Huemann M. (2024).

H2: Women and men differ in their perceptions of material motivational factors

It can be concluded that there are statistically significant differences between women and men in terms of material motivational tools: Performance-based pay (WYNI), Company car (SAMO), Company meals (OBIA), Team-building trips (WYCI), and Benefits (BENE). Women tended to rate the importance of material motivational factors higher than men. The hypothesis was supported by the research findings.

H3: Women and men differ in their perceptions of non-material motivational factors

Non-material motivational tools were categorized into organizational and psychological factors. There are no statistically significant differences between women and men in the context of organizational motivational factors. However, there are statistically significant differences between women and men in the context of psychological motivational factors, specifically in terms of recognition (POCH), good relationships with colleagues (RELA), and trust within the company (ZAUF). Additionally, it can be observed that, on average, women rated the importance of both organizational and psychological motivators higher than men. The results

of the empirical research are consistent with previously conducted research by Doerwald F., Zacher H., Van Yperen N.W., Scheibe S. (2021), and Lašáková et al. (2023), who pointed out statistically significant differences in the motivation of women and men.

The research findings can serve as a background for considering motivation systems implemented in organizations in post-pandemic conditions. The study showed that non-material factors have a relatively high impact on employee motivation, with a broad range of significant factors. Conversely, the significance of material factors varied among employees. Salary level and financial bonus were highly important to employees, whereas company meals, discounts on company products, and team-building trips were rated lower by the respondents.

The empirical studies indicated differences in the motivation of women and men. Future research should prioritize the study of women in the labour market. Understanding the unique needs of women is crucial for comprehending their motivations and sources of inspiration, which differ from those of men.

The primary limitations of this study are related to the size of the sample and the specificity of the workplace context. The empirical research presented here constitutes one phase in a broader exploration of work motivation across different generations. These findings lay the groundwork for further investigation, particularly with a larger sample size.

Furthermore, the current study does not specify the industries or occupations represented in the sample. Subsequent studies should focus on employees within specific industries, as the particular characteristics of workplaces significantly impact employee motivation. It is essential to remember that the implementation or modification of a motivation system in a specific organization should take its unique characteristics into account. This point was emphasized by Lechler R.C. and Huemann M. (2024), who demonstrated that motivators have varying levels of importance in different project and organizational contexts. The motivation system should consider factors, such as the gender and generational affiliation of employees (Czerwińska-Lubszczyk, Jankowiak, 2024). Therefore, it is recommended to conduct research directly within the organization that is preparing, updating, or improving its motivation system to ensure that the motivation system is "tailored" to the specific needs of the organization.

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