MOTIVATION OF GENERATION Y AND Z REPRESENTATIVES IN THE CONTEXT OF ORGANIZATIONAL RESILIENCE

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Purpose: The article focuses on the determinants shaping the attitudes and expectations of young individuals in the labor market, analyzed through the lens of organizational resilience. The primary objective of the research was to identify which motivational factors play a decisive role in the job-seeking process among representatives of Generations Y and Z. The underlying assumption is that the needs and expectations of young employees - such as autonomy, opportunities for professional development, work–life balance, and transparency - may serve as significant drivers reinforcing adaptive and innovation-oriented processes within organizations.

Design/methodology/approach: The article reviews domestic and foreign literature on organizational resilience and the determinants of motivation among young employees in the labor market. The research hypotheses were verified using the diagnostic survey method combined with the CAWI technique. The data obtained enabled a comparative analysis of the relative importance of individual categories of motivators and their impact on sustaining motivation levels among respondents.

Findings: The research revealed that while financial factors remain an essential component of motivational systems, aspects related to professional development were evaluated as having greater importance by representatives of Generations Y and Z. Flexible forms of work organization and additional time off also play a significant role. By contrast, pro-environmental initiatives serve only a complementary function.

Research limitations/implications: The study was conducted on a purposively selected sample of young individuals entering the labor market, which limits the generalizability of the findings. Future research should be extended to larger and more diverse populations, differentiated by level of education and stage of professional career. Such an approach would enable a more comprehensive assessment of the relative importance of motivational factors in the context of organizational resilience.

Practical implications: The expectations of Generations Y and Z center around competitive remuneration, flexible forms of employment, transparent career development opportunities, and a collaborative organizational culture. Proper integration of these needs into motivational systems not only supports talent retention and enhances employee well-being but also establishes a foundation for strengthening organizational adaptability and resilience.

Social implications: The issues addressed hold social significance as they concern the quality of working life of young employees and their integration into the labor market. The findings highlight how the organization of working conditions and professional relationships may influence work–life balance, psychological well-being, and the development of social capital.
Originality/value: By incorporating the motivational perspectives of Generations Y and Z entering the labor market, the study identifies key determinants of effective human capital management.
Keywords: organizational resilience, motivation, Generation Y and Z, engagement, human resource management.
Category of the paper: Research paper.

1. Introduction

The ability of an organization to maintain operational continuity and pursue further development under conditions of increasing uncertainty and a dynamically changing environment depends not only on established structures, procedures, or advanced technologies. Growing importance is attributed to the human factor, particularly employees' motivation, level of engagement, and attitudes. In this regard, a special role is increasingly assumed by the younger generation entering the labor market, especially representatives of Generation Z, whose values, expectations, and needs differ from those of previous generations employed within organizations (Zahra et al., 2025).

Organizational resilience is often defined as the capacity to sustain or rapidly restore a desired level of functioning despite disruptions, external pressures, crises, or sudden environmental changes. In its contemporary understanding, it is conceptualized as a process encompassing three interrelated stages: anticipating and preparing for potential threats, responding effectively when difficulties arise, and learning from experience to improve procedures and strengthen resilience for the future (Duchek, 2020). Resilience understood in this way becomes a key strategic resource, as it enables organizations not only to survive under adverse conditions but also to leverage crises as opportunities for growth and innovation (Skrzypek, 2023).

Organizational resilience is shaped by diverse determinants, including, among others, organizational culture, management structure, resources, leadership, and relationships with the environment. Employee behavior also remains an important factor, the right motivation of which can determine both entry into and retention in employment. The research aimed to determine which motivational factors play a key role during job search by representatives of Generations Y and Z. Learning about these factors will allow enterprise managers to create motivational systems that will strengthen the formation of organizational resilience. The study was conducted by a diagnostic survey method using the CAWI technique on a sample of 199 respondents from Generations Y and Z.

2. Organizational resilience in contemporary management perspectives

The concept of organizational resilience has become firmly embedded in the canon of contemporary management sciences. Its significance continues to grow alongside the intensification of global phenomena that undermine environmental stability and generate numerous threats to organizational continuity. Modern enterprises and public institutions operate under conditions of dynamic technological change, globalization processes, escalating economic crises, as well as sudden and difficult-to-predict events such as the COVID-19 pandemic or geopolitical conflicts. As emphasized by R. Bhamra et al. (2011), traditional concepts of organizational stability prove insufficient in this context, while the development of adaptive capacity, learning, and the ability to leverage crises as a stimulus for growth becomes essential.

The concept of resilience does not originate in management sciences but rather in psychology and ecology. In psychology, it refers to an individual's capacity to cope with adverse experiences and to restore psychological balance after a crisis (Masten, 2001). In ecology, the term was used to describe the ability of ecosystems to regenerate following disturbances (Holling, 1973). Only later was the concept transferred into management studies, where initial attention focused on high-risk organizations such as aviation, healthcare, or nuclear energy (Enya et al., 2018). Over time, resilience acquired the status of a universal theoretical category, applied to the analysis of all organizational types.

The earliest approaches to organizational resilience were reactive in nature, focusing on surviving a crisis and rapidly restoring the pre-disruption state. L.A. Mallak (1998) emphasized that resilience involves making sound decisions under pressure, learning from mistakes, and fostering a culture of flexibility. A resilient organization continues to function despite limited resources, with its primary objective being operational continuity through loss minimization. The earliest approaches to organizational resilience were reactive in nature.

In subsequent years, the concept of resilience began to incorporate an adaptive dimension. T.J. Vogus and K. Sutcliffe (2007) argued that resilience is not only a response to crisis but also the capacity to flexibly adjust to new conditions and to sustain organizational functionality in the face of disruptions. The authors emphasized the role of cognitive, emotional, and social processes in building resilience. In this perspective, resilience extends beyond crisis procedures - it encompasses the mindset, relationship quality and organizational culture that determine whether an institution will be able to use difficulties as an opportunity to learn and improve.

A significant contribution to the development of adaptive approaches to resilience was made by C.A. Lengnick-Hall et al. (2011). They emphasized that organizational resilience results from the integration of adaptive and dynamic capabilities, which enable not only the mitigation of crisis effects but also their creative utilization. Resilience thus becomes a strategic resource

and a source of competitive advantage. It allows organizations to transform uncertainty into opportunities and crises into innovative solutions.

Contemporary research on resilience is moving toward proactive and systemic perspectives. S. Duchek (2020) conceptualizes resilience as an organizational metacompetence encompassing three interrelated capabilities: anticipating potential threats, acting effectively under conditions of uncertainty, and learning from past experiences. Her model presents resilience as a cyclical process through which organizations continuously enhance their adaptive capacities.

J. Hillmann and E. Guenther (2021) argue that resilience is based on the mobilization of resources, the implementation of resilience-enhancing practices, and the development of enduring organizational capabilities, which enable not only a quicker restoration of equilibrium but also a transformation that increases flexibility. Resilience thus serves both defensive and offensive functions. Several models have emerged in the literature, including L.A. Mallak's (1998), which emphasizes the importance of organizational culture and learning, and L. Xiao and H. Cao's (2017), which highlight the multi-level nature of resilience - from the individual, through the team, to the entire organization - grounded in optimism, trust, responsibility, social capital, and adaptive capabilities. In contrast, S. Duchek (2020) proposes a cyclical model encompassing anticipation, response, and learning, while Hillmann and Guenther (2021) stress the need to tailor resilience mechanisms to the specific characteristics of different sectors.

In Polish research, resilience increasingly appears as a prerequisite for effective management. E. Skrzypek (2023) notes that, despite the absence of a single definition, resilience has become a fundamental category for managerial practice, enabling not only the survival of crises but also improvements in efficiency and innovative capacity. Similarly, S. Zapłata (2025) emphasizes that resilience develops through the interaction of internal factors - such as organizational culture and leadership - with external conditions, including market volatility and institutional pressures. J. Woźniak (2024) adds that in risk management, resilience entails not only the minimization of losses but also the creation of competitive advantage, aligning it with the dynamic capabilities theory (Teece et al., 1997), within which organizations learn to reconfigure resources to meet the demands of a turbulent environment.

In summary, organizational resilience is not a static concept but a dynamic resource that integrates cognitive, emotional, structural, and cultural elements. Its essence lies in the ability to simultaneously maintain stability and flexibility, and its practical significance makes it one of the foundational pillars of management in the 21st century.

3. The motivation of Generations Y and X in the context of organizational resilience

From the perspective of occupational psychology, motivational mechanisms are explained, among others, by Self-Determination Theory (SDT). This theory assumes that individuals engage in professional activities when the work environment allows them to satisfy three fundamental psychological needs: autonomy in decision-making, a sense of competence, and the development of meaningful relationships with others (Deci, Ryan, 2000). A similar perspective is offered by the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model, which identifies three organizational resources as key factors fostering motivation and engagement (Bakker, Demerouti, 2007). Such resources include support from colleagues and supervisors, opportunities for skill development, recognition from the professional environment, and autonomy in task execution. These resources serve a protective function, helping to balance the demands arising from time pressure, workload, or task complexity (Demerouti, 2011). Empirical research indicates that a high level of job resources promotes motivational processes that lead to engagement, proactivity, and improved coping under conditions of uncertainty (Demerouti, 2011).

In the literature, the motivational expectations of Generations Y and Z are relatively well-defined and widely recognized. For young employees, in addition to financial considerations, significant factors include maintaining a work–life balance, attention to mental health, the ability to find meaning in their work, and opportunities for continuous learning and skills development (Faber, 2025). In the context of Polish research, the importance of collaborative relationships with supervisors, a supportive workplace atmosphere, and flexible approaches to time management is also emphasized (Paszkiewicz, Wasiluk, 2022). At the same time, Generation Z is noted to be particularly sensitive to a lack of transparency, excessive levels of control, or flexibility that is promised but not implemented - factors that can significantly reduce their engagement and loyalty to the organization (Zahra et al., 2025; Surugiu, 2025).

Comparing the above expectations with the attributes of organizational resilience, a natural alignment becomes apparent. Organizations that emphasize employee autonomy, enable participation in decision-making, ensure transparency, and foster a shared vision not only meet the motivational needs of the younger generation (Deci, Ryan, 2000; Faber, 2025; Paszkiewicz, Wasiluk, 2022), but also strengthen their own adaptive capacity (Duchek, 2020; Vogus, Sutcliffe, 2007). In this perspective, the engagement of these employees becomes a driving force for resilience processes - through their involvement, young workers provide energy for anticipatory actions, facilitate rapid learning and adaptation, and support innovation (Skrzypek, 2023).

It is worth noting the significance of organizational culture. Numerous studies emphasize that an open work culture, based on collaboration and a readiness to learn, enhances both the motivation of younger employees and the institution's capacity to cope with challenges (Lengnick-Hall et al., 2011). Organizations that create space for experimentation, knowledge sharing, and the acceptance of mistakes as a natural part of development are particularly attractive to Generation Z, which seeks opportunities to exert influence and gain experience through practice. Moreover, this type of culture enhances an institution's ability to learn from past failures, which, according to S. Duchek's (2020) concept, is the foundation of organizational resilience.

Noteworthy is the fact that a culture based on openness, mutual suport, and learning not only fosters loyalty and motivation among younger employees but also strengthens long-term organizational resilience (Georgescu et al., 2024). Companies that facilitate experimentation, knowledge exchange, and treat mistakes as learning opportunities create a work environment aligned with the expectations of Generation Z, which values the ability to independently shape their own development. At the same time, such an organizational culture supports institutional adaptive processes and learning, which, according to S. Duchek (2020), constitutes one of the key mechanisms of resilience.

It is also important to recognize the significance of intergenerational relationships in the workplace. Many organizations today include representatives of up to four generations, which makes managing this diversity a matter of openness, dialogue, and skillful integration of differing values and work approaches. Younger generations, including Generation Z, contribute digital proficiency, innovation, and flexibility to teams, while older employees offer extensive professional experience, stability, and institutional knowledge. The synergy of these competencies can serve as a significant source of organizational resilience, provided that younger employees are given opportunities for motivation and participation in decision-making processes, and that their potential is not constrained by rigid procedures or overly hierarchical structures (Nieżurawska, 2023).

An important element shaping the contemporary work environment is technological development. Recent reports indicate that Generation Z readily uses tools based on artificial intelligence and automation, yet often lacks systematic training support in this area (Faber, 2025). Organizations that invest in enhancing the digital competencies of young employees and allow them to independently experiment with new solutions not only increase their motivation and engagement but also strengthen their own capacity to adapt to technological changes. This implies that programs aimed at developing digital skills serve a dual function - helping to retain talent within the organization while simultaneously enhancing its resilience.

This is further confirmed by empirical research examining the relationship between job resources, engagement levels, and employee resilience. High individual resilience promotes both job satisfaction and motivation, while organizations that cultivate a culture based on collaboration and continuous learning demonstrate a greater capacity to overcome crises

(BMC Public Health, 2024). Moreover, a reinforcing mechanism emerges: a work environment that promotes resilience and learning stimulates the motivation of young employees, and their activity and energy, in turn, enhance the flexibility and strength of the entire organization.

Research conducted in Poland indicates that the motivation of Generation Z and organizational resilience are closely interrelated. J. Woźniak (2024) emphasizes that organizational resilience should be regarded as a key component of risk management strategy, enabling not only survival but also the achievement of competitive advantage in an unstable environment. Analyses by A.J. Paszkiewicz and A. Wasiluk (2022) demonstrate that young employees place the highest value on a friendly organizational climate, a collaborative approach from supervisors, and flexibility in terms of work time and location. This suggests that human resource policies aimed at meeting these needs not only increase engagement and loyalty among young employees but also strengthen the organization's capacity to adapt and operate effectively under conditions of complexity and uncertainty.

The practical implications in this context are clear. First, organizations should implement transparent yet flexible collaboration rules that provide young employees with a sense of autonomy and opportunities to participate in decision-making processes (Deci, Ryan, 2000). Second, it is essential to create diverse career development paths tailored to the preferences of Generation Z, such as microlearning, reverse mentoring, or training programs aimed at enhancing digital competencies, including skills related to artificial intelligence (Faber, 2025). Third, the transparency of reward and promotion systems is of particular importance, as a lack of clarity quickly undermines motivation (Paszkiewicz, Wasiluk, 2022). Finally, attention to mental well-being and work–life balance cannot be overlooked, as these factors are critical for sustaining employee engagement and energy over the long term (Woźniak, 2024; Duchek, 2020).

Summarizing the considerations, it can be concluded that the motivation of the younger generation and organizational resilience are closely related. Meeting the psychological needs of Generation Z, such as autonomy in decision-making, the opportunity to develop competencies or build valuable relationships, promotes the growth of their commitment, initiative, and creativity. These attitudes, in turn, strengthen key elements of organizational resilience, including adaptive capacity, flexibility, and the ability to learn from past experiences. Organizations that recognize and leverage the potential of young employees gain advantages not only in talent retention but also in building long-term stability and development. As a result, they are better equipped to cope with uncertainty, dynamic environmental changes, and the need for innovation.

4. Research methodology

Based on a review of the literature and preliminary studies, the research problem was formulated as follows: What motivational factors guide the younger generation when entering the labor market? Answering this question allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the needs and expectations of Generations Y and Z toward employers, as well as the identification of determinants that encourage their active job search. The research aimed to determine which motivational factors play a key role during the search for work by representatives of Generations Y and Z. The following hypotheses were formulated:

H1: In seeking employment, representatives of Generations Y and Z consider salary factors to be more motivating than non-salary material factors.

H2: Representatives of Generations Y and Z consider factors related to personal development and education as the most valuable when searching for work.

H3: Flexible work arrangements and environmentally responsible organizational practices increase the attractiveness of an organization for representatives of Generations Y and Z.

To verify the hypotheses, a diagnostic survey method was employed using the CAWI technique, i.e., computer-assisted web interviews. The study was conducted via the Google Forms application, ensuring full anonymity of respondents (Ostrowski, 2025). The research instrument was a questionnaire consisting of a substantive section (five questions on a five-point Likert scale) and a demographic section (three questions).

The research sample was selected deliberately, taking into account specific criteria. The selection was aimed at obtaining the opinions of representatives of generations Y and Z. Respondents had to meet three criteria: (a) age over 18 years; (b) not being employed; and (c) having made initial attempts to enter the labor market. The study involved 199 participants, of whom 58% (116 individuals) were women and 42% (83 individuals) were men. In terms of educational attainment, the majority held secondary education, accounting for 55% of the sample (109 individuals). Bachelor's degree holders comprised 25% of respondents (50 individuals), master's degree holders 12% (24 individuals), and vocational education 6.5% (13 individuals). The smallest groups included participants with engineering education—1% (2 individuals)—and primary education—0.5% (1 individual). Regarding age, the largest group consisted of respondents aged 18-24 years, representing 80% of the sample, while the remaining participants were aged over 25 years.

5. Research results analysis

As part of the study, representatives of Generations Y and Z entering the labor market evaluated motivational factors. All factors were rated on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 indicated "completely unimportant" and 5 indicated "very important". To verify H1, salary factors (Table 1) and non-salary material factors (Table 2) were analyzed.

Table 1.
Evaluation of salary factors

Factor	Rating					μ	σ
	1	2	3	4	5		
Competitive salary	4	10	16	100	69	4.11	0.90
Bonuses	4	6	16	81	92	4.26	0.88

Note. μ - weighted mean; σ - standard deviation.

Source: own elaboration.

For base salary, 50.3% of respondents (100 individuals) considered it rather important. An additional 69 respondents (34.7%) rated this factor as very important. Overall, 169 out of 199 participants (85%) assigned it a high level of importance by selecting a rating of 4 or 5. Neutral responses (rating 3) were given by 16 respondents (8%), while negative ratings (2 and 1) were reported by 10 (5%) and 4 (2%) participants, respectively. The mean score was 4.11, confirming its high significance for the majority of respondents ($\sigma = 0.90$). Similarly high results were observed for the second factor, namely performance and achievement bonuses. The most frequently selected rating was 5, chosen by 92 respondents (46.3%). Slightly fewer, 81 respondents (40.7%), rated this factor as 4. In total, 173 participants (87%) regarded bonuses as an important component of the motivation system. The remaining ratings were distributed as follows: 16 respondents (8%) – rating 3; 6 respondents (3%) – rating 2; and only 4 respondents (2%) considered bonuses completely unimportant. The mean rating for this factor was higher than that for base salary, at 4.26 ($\sigma = 0.88$).

In the next part, respondents were asked to evaluate non-salary material factors (Table 2).

Table 2.
Evaluation of non-salary material factors

Factor	Rating					μ	σ
	1	2	3	4	5		
Meal subsidies at work	13	36	56	67	27	3.28	1.11
Commuting allowance	7	18	47	88	39	3.67	1.00
Private health care	9	9	36	87	58	3.88	1.02
Savings programs	16	34	61	68	20	3.21	1.09
Retirement programs	11	22	34	85	47	3.69	1.12
Vacation subsidies	8	31	44	74	42	3.56	1.11
Sports cards or other recreational benefits	9	13	47	82	48	3.74	1,04
Access to a company car	8	30	46	84	31	3.50	1.05
Access to a company phone	14	24	51	74	36	3.47	1.13
Access to a company laptop	9	18	48	72	52	3.70	1.09
Material rewards (vouchers, gift cards)	11	26	59	65	38	3.47	1.10

Note. μ - weighted mean; σ - standard deviation.

Source: own elaboration.

The most positively evaluated factor was access to private healthcare, with 58 respondents (29.1%) assigning it a rating of 5 and 87 respondents (43.7%) rating it as 4. This gives a total of 145 positive responses (72.9%). Forty-five respondents (22.6%) took a neutral stance on this factor, while only 18 respondents (9%) rated it negatively (ratings 2 and 1). The mean score was 3.88 ($\sigma = 1.02$). Among other benefits, retirement programs received high ratings, with 47 respondents (23.6%) considering them very important and 85 respondents (42.7%) rating them as rather important. In total, 132 participants (66.3%) assigned this factor a high level of importance. Thirty-four respondents (17.1%) expressed a neutral opinion, while 33 participants (16.6%) rated it negatively (2 or 1). The mean score for this factor was 3.69 ($\sigma = 1.12$). Sport cards and recreational benefits were rated at a similar level, with 48 respondents (24.1%) considering them very important and 82 respondents (41.2%) rating them as rather important. In total, 130 participants (65.3%) evaluated this factor positively. Forty-seven respondents (23.6%) gave a neutral rating, while negative ratings (2 or 1) were assigned by 13 (6.5%) and 9 respondents (4.5%), respectively, totaling 11% of all participants. The mean score was 3.74 ($\sigma = 1.04$). One of the factors with fewer positive evaluations was subsidized workplace meals. Only 27 respondents (13.6%) rated it as very important (5), and 67 respondents (33.7%) rated it as rather important (4). In total, 94 participants (47.2%) assigned high importance to this factor. The mean score was 3.28 ($\sigma = 1.11$), suggesting moderate significance. The lowest-ranked factor was savings programs. Twenty respondents (10%) rated it as very important, and 68 (34.2%) as rather important, resulting in 88 respondents (44.2%) assigning it positive significance. Neutral responses were given by 61 participants (30.7%), and 50 respondents (25.1%) rated it as less important (2 or 1). The mean score was 3.21 ($\sigma = 1.09$). The analysis of both groups of factors confirmed H1.

To verify H2, respondents were asked to evaluate non-material, non-salary factors related to professional development, categorized into three groups: development and education, support and implementation, and workplace relationships and environment. In the questionnaire, the factors were presented in a random order.

Table 3.
Evaluation of non-material, non-salary factors related to professional development

Factor	Rating					μ	σ
	1	2	3	4	5		
Development and education							
Opportunity to participate in courses and training	6	12	23	85	73	4.04	0.99
Opportunity to paticipate in international projects or learn foreign languages	0	11	48	85	55	3.93	0.85
Clearly defined career advancement and professional development path	2	13	20	81	83	4.16	0.92
Autonomy and responsibility in task execution	4	11	26	87	71	4.06	0.94

Cont. table 3.

Support and implementation							
Assignment of a supervisor or mentor to a new employee	2	13	28	97	59	3.99	0.88
Well-planned and gradual onboarding process for new employees	2	7	21	83	86	4.22	0.85
Relationships and work environment							
Friendly work atmosphere and organizational culture	2	10	6	43	138	4.53	0.86
Working in a team of experienced and communicative colleagues	2	5	12	63	117	4.45	0.80
Opportunity for competition with other employees (e.g., rankings, contests)	29	42	66	42	20	2.91	1.18

Note. μ - weighted mean; σ - standard deviation.

Source: own elaboration.

One of the most frequently positively rated factors was the well-planned and gradual process of implementing a new employee. Eighty-six respondents (43.2%) rated it as very important, and 83 respondents (41.7%) rated it as rather important. This means that 169 participants (84.9%) considered this factor important or very important. Neutral responses were given by 21 respondents (10.6%), and only 9 participants (4.5%) rated this factor as rather or completely unimportant. The mean score was 4.23. Another highly rated factor was working in a team of experienced and communicative colleagues. One hundred seventeen respondents (58.8%) rated it as 5, and 63 respondents (31.7%) rated it as rather important, resulting in a total of 180 respondents (90.5%) giving positive evaluations. Neutral ratings were given by 12 respondents (6%), and negative ratings by only 7 participants (3.5%). The mean score was 4.45. The highest-rated factor was a friendly work atmosphere and organizational culture. One hundred thirty-eight respondents (69.3%) rated it as 5, and 43 respondents (21.6%) rated it as 4. In total, 181 respondents (90.9%) considered this factor important. Only 6 participants (3%) selected a neutral rating, and 12 respondents (6%) rated this factor as rather or completely unimportant. The mean score for this factor was one of the highest, at 4.53. The factor least frequently rated positively was the opportunity to compete with other employees (e.g., rankings, contests). Only 20 respondents (10.1%) considered this factor very important, and 42 respondents (21.1%) rated it as rather important. Neutral responses were selected by 66 respondents (33.2%), while 71 participants (35.7%) rated this factor negatively, with 42 giving a rating of 2 and 29 giving a rating of 1. The mean score was 2.91.

The analysis of non-material, non-salary factors related to professional development among representatives of Generations Y and Z allows for several important observations. The mean scores of the three groups of factors are relatively similar: development and education - 4.05; support and implementation - 4.10; relationships and work environment - 3.96.

All three areas achieved values above 3.9 on a scale from 1 to 5, indicating that respondents consider each area significant when choosing a workplace. The differences between the mean scores are small, suggesting that no single motivational factor dominates and that young candidates attach similar importance to opportunities for development, workplace support, and relationships with colleagues. In the development and education group, the ratings of

individual factors were very consistent (4.04, 3.93, 4.16, 4.06). The absence of extreme values indicates that all elements related to personal development and education are relatively equally valued by respondents. In the support and implementation group, slightly larger differences were observed between factors (3.99 and 4.22), suggesting that some forms of support are perceived as more valuable than others. The most varied results were recorded in the workplace relationships and environment group (4.53, 4.45, 2.91).

The initial H2 assumed that job-seeking representatives of Generations Y and Z value factors related to personal development and education the most. The data partially confirm this assumption - development and education received a high mean score (4.05); however, it did not significantly exceed the mean scores of other areas, particularly support and implementation (4.10). This indicates that, while personal development and education are important, young candidates equally value receiving support at work and building relationships in the professional environment.

The next stage, aimed at verifying H3, was divided into two parts. In the first part, respondents were asked to evaluate non-material, non-salary factors related to work time organization, which could significantly influence employment comfort and the flexibility in performing tasks.

Table 4.
Evaluation of non-material, non-salary factors related to work time organization

Factor	Rating					μ	σ
	1	2	3	4	5		
Possibility of remote or hybrid work	6	19	36	88	50	3.79	1.02
Flexible working hours	2	13	29	82	73	4.06	0.93
Additional days off for personal matters	2	13	17	88	79	4.15	0.90
Ability to adjust the workplace to individual needs	3	14	29	95	58	3.96	0.92

Note. μ - weighted mean; σ - standard deviation.

Source: own elaboration.

A highly rated factor in this group was flexible working hours (e.g., the ability to choose start and end times). Seventy-three respondents (36.7%) rated it as 5, and 82 respondents (41.2%) rated it as 4, totaling 155 positive responses (77.9%). Neutral responses were indicated by 29 participants (14.6%), and only 15 respondents (7.5%) provided negative ratings, of which 13 selected "rather unimportant" and only 2 selected "completely unimportant". The mean score was 4.06 (σ = 0.93). An even higher proportion of positive ratings was observed for the factor related to additional days off for personal matters, with 79 respondents (39.7%) rating it as very important and 88 respondents (44.2%) as rather important. This results in a total of 167 positive responses (83.9%). Neutral ratings were given by 17 participants (8.5%), while only 15 respondents (7.5%) considered this factor rather or completely unimportant. The mean score was 4.15 (σ = 0.90). The possibility of remote or hybrid work was rated as very important by 50 respondents (25.1%) and as rather important by 88 respondents (44.2%). In total, 69.3% of participants assigned a positive significance to this factor. Neutral responses were

given by 36 respondents (18.1%), while negative ratings were reported by 25 participants, of which 19 (9.5%) selected a rating of 2 and 6 (3%) selected a rating of 1. The mean score was 3.79 ($\sigma = 1.02$). The fourth factor analyzed was the ability to adjust the workplace to individual needs. Fifty-eight respondents (29.1%) rated it as 5, and 95 respondents (47.7%) rated it as 4, meaning that 76.8% of participants considered this factor rather or very important. Neutral responses were provided by 29 respondents (14.6%), while 14 respondents (7%) rated it 2, and only 3 participants (1.5%) rated it 1. The mean score was 3.96 ($\sigma = 0.92$). The analysis of the results indicates that non-materal, non-salary factors related to work time organization are important for the younger generation entering the labor market.

In the second part, dedicated to verifying H3, respondents evaluated the importance of non-material, non-salary factors related to environmental care and ecology as elements of the motivation system.

Table 5.
Evaluation of non-material, non-salary factors related to pro-environmental attitudes

Factor	Rating					μ	σ
	1	2	3	4	5		
Environmental initiatives in the workplace (e.g., waste segregation, reducing paper usage)	21	30	46	81	21	3.26	1.15
Access to company bicycles and electric scooters for business and personal use	30	41	73	38	17	2.85	1.15
Ability to use a "green budget" to purchase eco-friendly products or services	30	35	77	42	15	2.88	1.13
Participation in programs supporting charitable environmental initiatives	23	36	69	56	15	3.02	1.11
Access to eco-friendly gifts (e.g., eco-gift cards instead of traditional gift cards)	33	43	69	40	14	2.79	1.15

Note. μ - weighted mean; σ - standard deviation.

Source: own elaboration.

The highest-rated factor was workplace ecological initiatives, such as waste segregation or reducing paper usage. A total of 102 respondents (51% of all responses) rated this factor as 5 or 4, with 21 participants indicating "very important" and 81 indicating "rather important". Neutral responses were given by 46 respondents (23%), while 30 respondents (15%) rated it as rather unimportant, and 21 respondents (10.5%) considered it completely unimportant. The mean score was 3.26 ($\sigma = 1.15$). The factor related to participation in programs supporting ecological charitable initiatives received 15 ratings of 5 and 56 ratings of 4, totaling 35.4% positive responses. Sixty-nine respondents (34.6%) selected a neutral rating, while 59 participants (29%) gave negative responses, of which 36 rated it 2 and 23 rated it 1. The mean score was 3.02 ($\sigma = 1.11$).

Access to company bicycles or electric scooters, the use of a "green budget" (e.g., purchasing eco-friendly products), and eco-gifts (e.g., environmentally friendly gift cards) were rated as insignificant by the majority of respondents. Non-material factors related to environmental care were assessed as moderately important rather than highly valued. While

some participants recognized their value, these factors are not considered a crucial element of the motivation system. This may be because pro-environmental initiatives are perceived by the younger generation as an add-on rather than a core component of the employer's offer, especially for those entering the labor market. The overall mean score for non-material, non-salary factors related to pro-environmental practices was 2.96, which prevents full confirmation of H3.

6. Conclusions and discussion

The results of the conducted research confirm that salary factors play a key role in motivating individuals entering the labor market. Competitive salaries and performance-based bonuses received the highest ratings, indicating that for young employees, these elements constitute a fundamental condition for initiating and maintaining engagement in organizational activities. At the same time, it was observed that non-salary material factors, such as private healthcare, pension schemes, or sports and recreational benefits, have a moderate yet still significant value, serving a complementary role alongside the base salary. Particular importance was attributed to non-material factors related to professional development. A friendly work atmosphere, organizational culture, support from the team, and a clearly defined career path were identified as the most important determinants of sustained engagement among the younger generation. It was also confirmed that flexible work arrangements, including additional days off, the possibility of remote work, and flexible working hours, significantly enhance the attractiveness of an employer, while simultaneously enabling better alignment of professional and personal life. In contrast to these findings, pro-environmental factors, despite their increasing presence in public discourse, were rated relatively low. Respondents primarily perceive them as an additional benefit rather than a core component of the motivation system, suggesting that in the early stages of professional activity, financial and developmental considerations are far more important than environmental responsibility.

In light of the conducted analyses, research hypothesis H1 was confirmed, whereas H2 and H3 received only partial support. The obtained results correspond with previous studies on the preferences of Generations Y and Z. Salary constitutes the foundation of the motivation system for these groups; however, maintaining long-term engagement requires supplementing it with developmental and organizational factors that foster a sense of stability, agency, and belonging within the organization. Of particular note is the role of organizational culture and work atmosphere, which were rated highest among all analyzed factors, confirming the importance of interpersonal relationships and the work environment for young employees. These results are consistent with the findings of Surugiu et al. (2025), who indicate that Generation Z expects not only attractive financial conditions, but also an environment that supports development and autonomy.

The obtained results also indicate the growing importance of employment flexibility, particularly in the context of experiences related to the COVID-19 pandemic, which popularized remote and hybrid work models. The limited significance of pro-environmental factors may be interpreted as a consequence of the prioritization of financial and developmental aspects during the early stages of professional careers. Consequently, it can be concluded that an effective motivation system for the younger generation should be based on a combination of competitive remuneration, opportunities for development, support from organizational culture, and flexible working conditions. Pro-environmental elements serve only a supplementary role and may enhance the employer's image, but they do not constitute a primary factor determining job choice or retention. The data point to the need for a holistic approach to motivating young employees, considering developmental, social, and organizational aspects.

In the context of management practice, the research findings highlight the need to develop motivation systems that combine attractive financial conditions with opportunities for professional development and participation in a supportive organizational environment. In particular, it is recommended to design transparent career paths, implement mentoring programs, and cultivate an organizational culture that fosters collaboration and open communication. To maintain the engagement of young employees, it is also essential to provide flexible solutions regarding working hours and location, enabling a better balance between professional responsibilities and personal life. Although pro-environmental factors hold limited importance for young individuals beginning their careers, they can be regarded as an element that strengthens the organization's long-term image as socially responsible. Their implementation may help distinguish the company in the labor market, especially in the later stages of employees' careers, when the significance of non-material values may increase. The theoretical approach to the role of remuneration in the motivation process is confirmed in the study by M.A. Leśniewski and J. Berna (2012), which discusses the place of pay in motivational structures. Research on generational differences conducted by K. Lutyńska and A. Wasiluk (2023) showed that while remuneration and stability are the dominant motivators for older generations, younger generations (Y, Z) attach greater importance to interpersonal relationships, organisational culture and flexible working hours.

With regard to future research, a significant issue concerns the relationship between the motivational profile of the younger generation and the organization's adaptive capacity. This raises the question of how the needs and expectations of Generations Y and Z - such as autonomy, a sense of meaningful work, opportunities for development, and organizational flexibility - can strengthen resilience processes, support organizational learning, and enhance the effectiveness of responses to change. Addressing this question is crucial for human resource management practice, as it indicates that investing in the motivation and well-being of young employees can simultaneously constitute an investment in the resilience of the entire organization (Georgescu et al., 2024; Paszkiewicz, Wasiluk, 2022).

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