

Generational and Regional Differences in Job Choice Preferences and Motivations

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Abstract: Generational differences can be a source of many conflicts, even in the workplace. We believe that intergenerational cooperation can be effectively achieved and encouraged in a workplace if the generations understand and accept each other and have the empathy to accept differences. This requires an appropriate educational programme and the right corporate culture. In this paper, we present part of the results of our primary research on young people in China. The main objective of the research was to analyse how generational differences are perceived by young people in the workplace and how to increase the effectiveness of cooperation while respecting differences.

Keywords: generational differences; Chinese youth; analysis of variance

1 Introduction

Meeting the challenges of the 21st Century requires new skills and competences. Qualities based on individual motivation and openness are important. Such skills include agility, which is becoming increasingly important today [1] [2] but project orientation and project mindset are equally important [3] [4]. According to the Global Leadership Forecast 2023, an international leadership study, empathy is a top leadership skill at the global level. The study aimed to understand current and future leadership practices and was based on responses from nearly 14,000 leaders. More than 50 countries and 24 industries were represented in the study, and the data are compiled by analysing data from 1,827 HR professionals and 13,695 leaders. Five critical areas for future competencies were identified, namely: identifying and developing future talent, strategic thinking, change management, prioritising decision making and influencing others. And empathy is at the forefront of the

characteristics of excellent leaders. They emphasise that a healthy organisational culture is based on trust, openness, avoiding burnout and making employees feel and create value through their work. Managers need to focus on these areas in order to create a better workplace. In addition to ensuring psychological well-being, it is also important to consider the conditions in which employees are working in a digital world, where compliance requires new skills that need to be acquired at lower levels of education, but at the latest in secondary school. [5] [6] [7] [8] [9]

Why is empathy important? Empathy can help build trust and commitment to the organisation and brand. The key to this is authenticity - both for brands and people. Marketing and customer experience are areas where a company can't claim to be anything other than what it is - because it will soon be exposed as a fake. It is, therefore, important for companies to have and use the ability to empathise with colleagues. [10] [11] [12] [13]

A proper recruitment and onboarding process is an essential part of an employer branding strategy.

Randstadt (2019) offers 5 tips for companies to ensure a positive candidate experience.

- 1) Present the potential negative aspects of the position. Although this may seem illogical to some recruiters, being open – even if it is about the negative or challenging side of the job – is transparent and honest, not least to make your company look attractive in the eyes of candidates.
- 2) Put yourself in the candidate's shoes, don't act like a superior!
- 3) Present the office. One of the best ways to improve the candidate experience is to show promising candidates their future workplace.
- 4) Make the interview personal. Find out as much as possible about the candidate and their goals.
- 5) Give application advice on video!

To attract the best and the most suitable people, companies now need to impress candidates at every possible step: be it the application, the interview or the hiring process.

Some data to prove that the candidate experience is more important than ever. Here are some statistics from CareerArc's research on the negative candidate experience:

- 60% of candidates had a bad experience with a company.
- 72% of candidates who left with a bad experience told others about it online or in person.
- 65% of candidates complained that they rarely or never hear feedback on their application.
- However, 51% of candidates who do receive feedback complain that it takes up to a month or more. [14]

Below is a summary of the Randstadt Workplace 2023 report: [15]

Generations Y and Z are placing an increasing emphasis on values, and organisations are increasingly linking workforce excellence to notions of empathy and workplace experience. More and more workers are indicating that they want a more equitable workplace, one that welcomes diversity and unique skills. The current economic uncertainty has opened a new dimension in workers' priorities and expectations. On the brink of a potential economic recession, under the pressure of a rapidly rising cost of living, workers place a huge value on a job that is secure and financially stable.

The survey interviewed 35,000 workers in 34 countries, aged 18-67.

About the results:

Of those surveyed, 61% would not accept a job that would disrupt their work-life balance. This sentiment was particularly strong among those aged under 45. Overall, 48% said they would quit their job if it interfered with their enjoyment of life, compared with 37% in Hungary and 49% among 18-24 year old. The graph below illustrates the expectations of workers in Hungary and globally, by age group, towards their employers in terms of financial benefits in the context of the difficult economic circumstances. In Hungary, 50% of respondents said they would like a pay raise in addition to the normal rate in the difficult economic situation, compared to 39% globally. 35% of Hungarians would like a pay raise for energy and travel expenses, compared to 28% of workers globally.

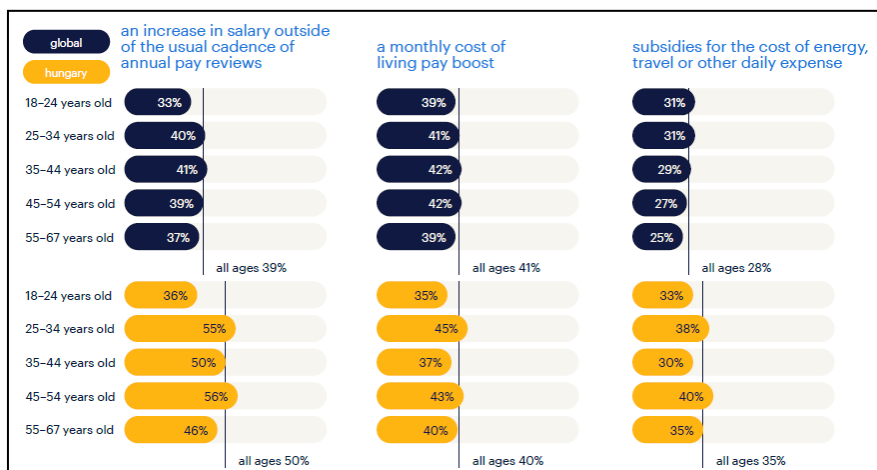


Figure 1

Employers' expectations by age group [15]

In addition to the threat of inflation, many people are worried about their livelihoods due to economic uncertainty. The constant news of layoffs and pay cuts in the business world is adding to the anxiety among workers. That is why business leaders need to be proactive and credible in communicating their ideas and plans for dealing

with recessionary pressures. They may not always be the bearers of good news, but those who compassionately express their support for affected workers will win the respect and trust of all employees. Such an approach should address all the needs of the workforce, not just the financial ones. Most importantly, the workplace should be a haven from outside concerns, to which people feel attached, which provides flexibility to work and where work-life balance can be achieved.

In 2022, 61% of workers thought they might leave the world of work before the age of 65. In 2023, an uncertain global economy, high inflation and dwindling government subsidies will make many people rethink. In 2023, only 51% think they will be able to retire earlier, with financial considerations being the leading reason for rethinking. [15]

Communication, empathy and acceptance are key concepts for achieving emotional attachment in companies, to make employees feel part of the organisation. When companies encourage people to show their true selves, they provide a safe and supportive environment that fosters originality and creativity. Group activities that generate peer interaction and encourage the sharing of personal information are also important. These can create a bond that purely professional collaborations cannot match.

According to Gallup's 2018 survey, Generation Z employees expect an organization to care about the well-being of its employees, to have ethical leadership, and to have a diverse and inclusive workplace. Beyond the day-to-day work experience, a sense of purpose and personal values remain top of the list for Generation Z. Research also showed that job security and fair pay are equally as high a priority for Generation Z. [16]

More than 50% of workers said they would quit if they felt disconnected from their job, with over 60% of 18-24 year old.

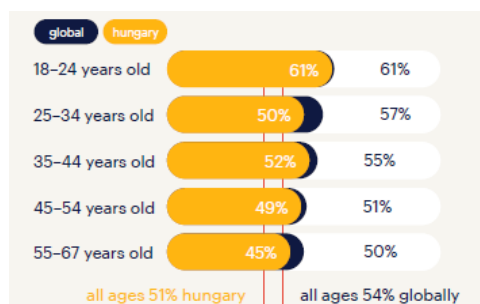


Figure 2
Workplace attachment [15]

The actors in the labour market are economic factors and actors which, although they are mutually dependent as supply and demand, make decisions based on their own economic considerations, seeking to increase their own income and efficiency, even in the face of the other side. Seen from this perspective, the labour market is an

integral part of the economy, of the market, and must therefore be subject to the laws of the market in the same way as other markets. The functioning and utilisation of labour as a resource is a fundamental determinant of the performance and growth of the economy, and the price of labour is an essential component of the profitability of enterprises. In other words, the phenomena, events and state of the labour market are an important component of the economy: every aspect of it affects the economy, and the economy formulates its own criteria for every aspect of the labour market [17].

On the other hand, the other factors of production, such as capital or land, the machine, are impersonal, while the subjects and actors of the labour market are directly the people themselves, who enter the labour market in order to obtain income, livelihood, security, professional/social environment, and advancement through their work. The labour market is (also) the arena, facilitator or inhibitor of this. Consequently, the labour market, with its phenomena, events and state of affairs, is also an important component of society: every aspect of it has an impact on the social situation and its differentiation, on lifestyles, living standards and social satisfaction, and the latter formulate their own expectations of every aspect of the labour market.

Consequently, every aspect of the labour market, every change in its state has both economic and social implications, and the labour market is subject to both economic and social criteria [17].

In the past, there were minimal differences between generations. In the last half century, however, almost everything has changed rapidly: life expectancy, the age composition of society, the vision of the future, communication, etc. It is worth researching and understanding this process of change and its impact on different age groups, because without it, all we see is that things are not what they used to be, and this can lead to tension [18].

Let's briefly review which generations are currently in the labour market.

In addition to the three active generations (X, Y, Z), there are two inactive generations. One of them is no longer active (Silent, Veterans) and the other one, born after 2010, is not yet active (Alpha). They were born in the smartphone and touchscreen era. In the last decade, the iPhone and other smartphones have dominated and transformed our world. Our toddlers see hands holding phones everywhere when they peek out of the pram. The online and offline worlds are merging and becoming one for them [18].

The definition of each generation is generally associated with the evolution of technology, but there is also a change over time, with generational jumps every 15-20 years.

In between the two inactive generations and the active generations, there is a so-called semi-active generation (Baby boomer). On the employment side our priority is security. Their successor generations are accepting of hierarchical systems,

reliable in their work, loyal and their needs are easily identifiable, and they value tradition [19]

The active age groups are grouped as follows:

Generation X: born between 1965-79, parents of members of Generation Z. For them, the lack of economic stability is decisive. This is the first technology-driven generation. They are typically self-reliant and independent, which may be reflected in their work habits. As a lack of economic stability is a characteristic of this generation, they value job stability and security, with long-term job retention and a stable future being among their main concerns. As they are already proficient in the use of IT tools and programs, they are valuable in the workforce [20] [21].

Generation Y: born between 1980-94, career achievement is now an important aspect for them, they value variety and challenge, are keen to take on new challenges and are creative. This generation has grown up in a fast-paced world where they have to constantly perform and self-fulfill, so they are more burnt-out and have a high-level of stress in their lives. Their technological skills are advanced, having grown up with computing devices and mobile phones. They are also more responsive to change, adapting more quickly. Importantly for them, they prefer a job where they can work flexibly, even telecommuting. They like to learn and develop in order to advance professionally and improve their own skills. From a management point of view, they value open communication and the opportunity to participate in the decision making process. This is the generation where the so-called "learning to lead" comes into play. Peter Pan syndrome: "adults who never grow up." As a result, their entry into the labour market is delayed. They live with their parents until the age of 25-30 and choose permanent further education over employment (Gadanecz, 2016, Euroes, 2023) [22] [23]. This is the last age group, each of which was born into an offline world [18].

Generation Z: those born between 1995-2010, the first generation to grow up in a digital environment. They also value a flexible working environment, including teleworking or flexible working hours, personal leave is essential. Obsessed with personal development, they seek jobs where they can develop their personal creativity. But their commitment is far less stable than that of previous generations. They tend to set short-term goals, with little or no thought given to 2-3 year plans. They expect the same from their workplace, given the fast pace and the fast-paced world we live in. They need immediate feedback and opportunities for rapid development. If they don't get these things, they don't care about stability, they move on quickly, looking for new opportunities. They are not loyal types. In terms of communication, they prefer visual content, and a workplace where they can use modern communication tools is ideal for them. In terms of leadership, they are less inclined to follow rules and often show insufficient respect for their superiors [22] [23].

László [17] argues that employers and employees both set individual and specific goals for themselves and for each other. At the same time, we must see – if only

because we are talking about two actors in the same organisation, two actors in the same relationship, two shapers and stakeholders in the same process – that there are similarities and contrasts, conflicts and potential for connection.

Employer objectives are linked to (among other factors):

- Wage (labour cost) size, competitiveness;
- Benefits (to achieve tax savings and HR goals);
- Achieving a motivational effect - improving performance;
- Availability of workers on demand;
- Competence, convertible knowledge and work ability;
- Length, flexibility and scheduling of working hours (overtime);
- Flexibility of application/release;
- Peace at work - loyalty.

Among the motivation to work/employees, it is worth separating two segments, especially from an employment policy perspective: the motivation for entering the labour market and becoming an employee of those who are not currently employed ("outsiders") on the one hand, and the expectations of those who are actually employed ("insiders") on the other.

Typical employee goals for those already in work:

- Wages, income, livelihoods (fixed or variable wages: income security can be important; wage increases: the need or possibility to raise living standards, compensation for inflation);
- Benefits (cafeteria, health, sport, community);
- Security: job security and, in the case of a change of job, support and chances of reintegration;
- Respect, dignity, equal opportunities;
- Working conditions (working conditions, working environment, health and safety);
- Staff conditions (management, atmosphere, relationships, support, career prospects);
- Content of the work, professional validation;
- The length of working time, the schedule;
- The chances of reconciling work and family life.

Finally, let's briefly summarise why it is important to have an experiential organisational culture from an employer brand perspective. It's a well-known saying that your customers won't love your company unless your employees love it. Positive customer experience can only be created by satisfied employees, and this is true

anywhere, in any sector, with any customer base. P2P, or people to people, is the foundation of business. People connect, and it is on these human connections that customer experience, employee experience, motivation, engagement and loyalty stand or fall. Shared experiences, connections, brainstorming, experimentation, continuous improvement and internal inspiration are at the heart of the culture, the way we work together, the way we help and encourage each other, the way we relate to each other. It's like an iceberg – only the surface is visible from the outside in employer branding videos and advertisements, but the core, the real value is invisible. Culture is hard to replicate, it can be a really competitive advantage in the marketplace that can really differentiate your company from your competitors. So companies need to work on the factors that ensure that colleagues are connected and engaged with the company. The 6 most important factors in terms of experience are company leadership, internal communication, professional and personal development, well being, motivational environment and culture, social relationships. It is, therefore, worthwhile for HR to shift from a process-driven administrative role to an experience-focused approach [24], [25],[26].

Jiang and Iles (2011) examined the employer brand equity, organisational attractiveness and talent management relationships of private companies in Zhejiang province, China. The research observed that companies with higher brand equity have better organisational attractiveness, which allows them to manage their talent more successfully. The findings presented in this article can help Chinese private sector companies to better understand their workforce attractiveness and how they can intervene more effectively in talent management. When developing an employer branding strategy, it is important to pay attention to both the external and internal focus, as well as the recruitment and retention focus. When developing an Employer Branding strategy, it is important to define structured metrics and benchmarks for your activities and to report on these on a regular basis. Employer branding is not just a creative campaign, but an activity that generates business results. When developing an employer branding strategy, internal communication about employer branding plans also plays an important role. Employer branding is the lovechild of marketing and HR, aiming to achieve transparency and establish credibility.

2 Material and Method

In the framework of the present research, a quantitative data survey was conducted in 2022-2023 among Hungarian and Chinese respondents. In both cases, the research instrument was a pre-tested, standardized questionnaire, the main topics, which were job choice preferences, career path planning, systems of incentives for higher work performance, and intergenerational cooperation. For both samples, an online survey was used [27] [28].

In the Hungarian sample, 549 evaluable questionnaires were processed using an arbitrary sampling method, and in the Chinese sample, a snowball procedure was used, resulting in the analysis of 300 responses from Generation Z specifically. In our previous studies we presented in detail the main conclusions of the results obtained on the Hungarian sample [27], so in this case we focus on the data obtained on the Chinese sample, and within this, we examined the possibilities of cooperation between generations at work: what Generation Z thinks about the possibilities and obstacles of cooperation with older people.

Descriptive statistics were used to evaluate the results, analysis of variance was used for the correlation analyses to compare the data measured on metric and non-metric scales, and factor analysis was used for the multivariate procedures to address the research objectives.

2.1 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

The entire sample of respondents was drawn from Generation Z, aged 19-22, as our main objective was to understand the job choices of young people in China. The gender distribution of the sample was 44% female and 56% male. The mothers and fathers of the respondents were typically (95%) urban residents under the age of 42.

3 Results

For the first time, we looked at young people's perceptions of how different generations can work together in the workplace. The results show that young people think that their own generation reacts more easily and quickly to change in the workplace than their older counterparts. Young people believe that a modern work environment is more important to them, while older generations are less motivated and encouraged by it.

However, it is certainly a positive result in terms of intergenerational cooperation that there was a high level of agreement among the young people interviewed that they enjoy working in a workplace with older people because they can learn a lot from them. They felt that an older colleague can be a good mentor for younger people. This is a key issue, because they accept their older colleagues as mentors and supporters, but young people find it difficult or impossible to accept older colleagues bossing them around, guiding them or feeling empowered by their age to put themselves in the place of young people. Generation Z does not see age as the basis for a hierarchy, for them age is not necessarily the basis for respect. This is why it is often difficult for an older generation, raised with different values, to understand and accept the thinking of the younger generation. This can be a source of many problems in the workplace, which we believe can be solved and helped by

education. We believe that the generations need to get to know each other and understand the reasons for their differences in thinking in order to work together in a meaningful way.

Table 1
Intergenerational cooperation as seen through the eyes of Generation Z Chinese youth

Statements on intergenerational cooperation	averga
Older employees work more slowly	2,30
Older employees make more mistakes at work	2,08
Older workers find it more difficult to cope with electronic work tools and communication	2,65
A workplace where I can only work with younger people is better	2,37
Older workers adapt to changes more difficult and slower	2,68
I would like to have older people in the team where I work because you can learn a lot from older people	2,97
I want to work in a workplace where there are mostly people at my age in a team	2,63
It is more difficult for a younger person to find a good job than for an experienced older worker	2,65
Young people adapt to changes more easily and quickly	2,98
Older employees think they have the right to train the younger ones	2,52
Older employees are often bossy towards younger employees	2,52
Older employees can mentor younger ones	2,90
Older employees are jealous of young people	2,40
Young people are less loyal to the company than older people	2,55
Young people are more flexible when it comes to changing jobs than the elderly	2,93
For young people, the home office is a more important criterion	2,73
A modern work environment is more important for young people than for the elderly	2,93
Older people accept the rules more easily than young people	2,73
Young people look down on older people who have difficulty using IT devices	2,55
Working in a foreign language is inspiring	2,73
Collaborating with foreign-speaking colleagues is stressful	2,65
Today, it is easier for a foreigner to find a good job than for a native	2,50
Workers from other cultures are jealous of their places	2,35
I would like to have foreigners in the team where I work	2,75
I would like to have people living according to other religious practices in the team where I work	2,62
It is motivating to get to know the way of thinking of colleagues from other cultural backgrounds	2,87

Source: Own research, 2023. N=300

We then examined whether there is a statistically verifiable difference by gender in the perception of the possibility of intergenerational cooperation. To test this, we used a one-way ANOVA method to examine the relationship between the two variables. The results showed that a statistical relationship was confirmed at several points (sig $\geq 0,05$)

Table 2
The relationship between workplace generational differences and gender

ANOVA									
Statements on generational differences					Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Older employees work more slowly	Between Groups	(Combined)		1,485	1	1,485	3,127	0,078	
		Linear Term	Unweighted	1,485	1	1,485	3,127	0,078	
			Weighted	1,485	1	1,485	3,127	0,078	
	Within Groups			141,515	298	0,475			
	Total			143,000	299				
Older employees make more mistakes at work	Between Groups	(Combined)		17,698	1	17,698	36,317	0,000	
		Linear Term	Unweighted	17,698	1	17,698	36,317	0,000	
			Weighted	17,698	1	17,698	36,317	0,000	
	Within Groups			145,219	298	0,487			
	Total			162,917	299				
Older workers find it more difficult to cope with electronic work tools and communication	Between Groups	(Combined)		6,971	1	6,971	8,267	0,004	
		Linear Term	Unweighted	6,971	1	6,971	8,267	0,004	
			Weighted	6,971	1	6,971	8,267	0,004	
	Within Groups			251,279	298	0,843			
	Total			258,250	299				
A workplace where I can only work with younger people is better	Between Groups	(Combined)		8,084	1	8,084	11,386	0,001	
		Linear Term	Unweighted	8,084	1	8,084	11,386	0,001	
			Weighted	8,084	1	8,084	11,386	0,001	
	Within Groups			211,582	298	0,710			
	Total			219,667	299				
Older workers adapt to changes more difficult and slower	Between Groups	(Combined)		4,008	1	4,008	6,601	0,011	
		Linear Term	Unweighted	4,008	1	4,008	6,601	0,011	
			Weighted	4,008	1	4,008	6,601	0,011	
	Within Groups			180,909	298	0,607			
	Total			184,917	299				
I would like to have older people in the team where I work because you can learn a lot from older people	Between Groups	(Combined)		3,236	1	3,236	5,172	0,024	
		Linear Term	Unweighted	3,236	1	3,236	5,172	0,024	
			Weighted	3,236	1	3,236	5,172	0,024	
	Within Groups			186,431	298	0,626			
	Total			189,667	299				

I want to work in a workplace where there are mostly people at my age in a team	Between Groups	(Combined)		3,236	1	3,236	4,909	0,027
		Linear Term	Unweighted	3,236	1	3,236	4,909	0,027
			Weighted	3,236	1	3,236	4,909	0,027
	Within Groups			196,431	298	0,659		
	Total			199,667	299			
It is more difficult for a younger person to find a good job than for an experienced older worker	Between Groups	(Combined)		0,708	1	0,708	0,760	0,384
		Linear Term	Unweighted	0,708	1	0,708	0,760	0,384
			Weighted	0,708	1	0,708	0,760	0,384
	Within Groups			277,542	298	0,931		
	Total			278,250	299			
Young people adapt to changes more easily and quickly	Between Groups	(Combined)		10,371	1	10,371	16,747	0,000
		Linear Term	Unweighted	10,371	1	10,371	16,747	0,000
			Weighted	10,371	1	10,371	16,747	0,000
	Within Groups			184,545	298	0,619		
	Total			194,917	299			
Older employees think they have the right to train the younger ones	Between Groups	(Combined)		8,250	1	8,250	13,916	0,000
		Linear Term	Unweighted	8,250	1	8,250	13,916	0,000
			Weighted	8,250	1	8,250	13,916	0,000
	Within Groups			176,667	298	0,593		
	Total			184,917	299			
Older employees are often bossy towards younger employees	Between Groups	(Combined)		2,930	1	2,930	3,933	0,048
		Linear Term	Unweighted	2,930	1	2,930	3,933	0,048
			Weighted	2,930	1	2,930	3,933	0,048
	Within Groups			221,987	298	0,745		
	Total			224,917	299			
Older employees can mentor younger ones	Between Groups	(Combined)		6,226	1	6,226	11,539	0,001
		Linear Term	Unweighted	6,226	1	6,226	11,539	0,001
			Weighted	6,226	1	6,226	11,539	0,001
	Within Groups			160,774	298	0,540		
	Total			167,000	299			
Older employees are jealous of young people	Between Groups	(Combined)		0,215	1	0,215	0,266	0,607
		Linear Term	Unweighted	0,215	1	0,215	0,266	0,607
			Weighted	0,215	1	0,215	0,266	0,607
	Within Groups			241,785	298	0,811		
	Total			242,000	299			
Young people are less loyal to the company than older people	Between Groups	(Combined)		7,920	1	7,920	12,667	0,000
		Linear Term	Unweighted	7,920	1	7,920	12,667	0,000
			Weighted	7,920	1	7,920	12,667	0,000
	Within Groups			186,330	298	0,625		
	Total			194,250	299			

Young people are more flexible when it comes to changing jobs than the elderly	Between Groups	(Combined)		0,485	1	0,485	0,694	0,405
		Linear Term	Unweighted	0,485	1	0,485	0,694	0,405
			Weighted	0,485	1	0,485	0,694	0,405
	Within Groups			208,182	298	0,699		
	Total			208,667	299			
For young people, the home office is a more important criterion	Between Groups	(Combined)		1,091	1	1,091	1,831	0,177
		Linear Term	Unweighted	1,091	1	1,091	1,831	0,177
			Weighted	1,091	1	1,091	1,831	0,177
	Within Groups			177,576	298	0,596		
	Total			178,667	299			
A modern work environment is more important for young people than for the elderly	Between Groups	(Combined)		1,091	1	1,091	1,494	0,223
		Linear Term	Unweighted	1,091	1	1,091	1,494	0,223
			Weighted	1,091	1	1,091	1,494	0,223
	Within Groups			217,576	298	0,730		
	Total			218,667	299			
Older people accept the rules more easily than young people	Between Groups	(Combined)		0,215	1	0,215	0,269	0,604
		Linear Term	Unweighted	0,215	1	0,215	0,269	0,604
			Weighted	0,215	1	0,215	0,269	0,604
	Within Groups			238,451	298	0,800		
	Total			238,667	299			
Young people look down on older people who have difficulty using IT devices	Between Groups	(Combined)		0,243	1	0,243	0,285	0,594
		Linear Term	Unweighted	0,243	1	0,243	0,285	0,594
			Weighted	0,243	1	0,243	0,285	0,594
	Within Groups			254,007	298	0,852		
	Total			254,250	299			
Working in a foreign language is inspiring	Between Groups	(Combined)		0,485	1	0,485	0,582	0,446
		Linear Term	Unweighted	0,485	1	0,485	0,582	0,446
			Weighted	0,485	1	0,485	0,582	0,446
	Within Groups			248,182	298	0,833		
	Total			248,667	299			
Collaborating with foreign-speaking colleagues is stressful	Between Groups	(Combined)		0,102	1	0,102	0,118	0,732
		Linear Term	Unweighted	0,102	1	0,102	0,118	0,732
			Weighted	0,102	1	0,102	0,118	0,732
	Within Groups			258,148	298	0,866		
	Total			258,250	299			
Today, it is easier for a foreigner to find a good job than for a native	Between Groups	(Combined)		4,125	1	4,125	4,712	0,031
		Linear Term	Unweighted	4,125	1	4,125	4,712	0,031
			Weighted	4,125	1	4,125	4,712	0,031
	Within Groups			260,875	298	0,875		
	Total			265,000	299			
		(Combined)		4,008	1	4,008	3,683	0,056

Workers from other cultures are jealous of their places	Between Groups	Linear Term	Unweighted	4,008	1	4,008	3,683	0,056
			Weighted	4,008	1	4,008	3,683	0,056
	Within Groups			324,242	298	1,088		
	Total			328,250	299			
I would like to have foreigners in the team where I work	Between Groups	(Combined)		6,082	1	6,082	7,874	0,005
		Linear Term	Unweighted	6,082	1	6,082	7,874	0,005
			Weighted	6,082	1	6,082	7,874	0,005
	Within Groups			230,168	298	0,772		
	Total			236,250	299			
I would like to have people living according to other religious practices in the team where I work	Between Groups	(Combined)		0,142	1	0,142	0,157	0,693
		Linear Term	Unweighted	0,142	1	0,142	0,157	0,693
			Weighted	0,142	1	0,142	0,157	0,693
	Within Groups			270,774	298	0,909		
	Total			270,917	299			
It is motivating to get to know the way of thinking of colleagues from other cultural backgrounds	Between Groups	(Combined)		0,660	1	0,660	0,806	0,370
		Linear Term	Unweighted	0,660	1	0,660	0,806	0,370
			Weighted	0,660	1	0,660	0,806	0,370
	Within Groups			244,007	298	0,819		
	Total			244,667	299			

Source: own research, 2023. N=300, analysis of variance, one-way ANOVA

Where a statistical relationship was confirmed, we looked at the difference between sexes.

Table 3
Generational differences by gender at work

Statements on generational differences		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Older employees make more mistakes at work	male	165	2,30	0,719
	female	135	1,81	0,671
	Total	300	2,08	0,738
Older workers find it more difficult to cope with electronic work tools and communication	male	165	2,79	0,882
	female	135	2,48	0,961
	Total	300	2,65	0,929
A workplace where I can only work with younger people is better	male	165	2,52	0,823
	female	135	2,19	0,865
	Total	300	2,37	0,857
Older workers adapt to changes more difficult and slower	male	165	2,79	0,688
	female	135	2,56	0,878
	Total	300	2,68	0,786

I would like to have older people in the team where I work because you can learn a lot from older people	male	165	2,85	0,817
	female	135	3,05	0,758
	Total	300	2,97	0,796
I want to work in a workplace where there are mostly people at my age in a team	male	165	2,73	0,829
	female	135	2,52	0,790
	Total	300	2,63	0,817
Young people adapt to changes more easily and quickly	male	165	3,15	0,746
	female	135	2,78	0,835
	Total	300	2,98	0,807
Older employees think they have the right to train the younger ones	male	165	2,67	0,684
	female	135	2,33	0,864
	Total	300	2,52	0,786
Older employees are often bossy towards younger employees	male	165	2,61	0,888
	female	135	2,41	0,831
	Total	300	2,52	0,867
Older employees can mentor younger ones	male	165	2,74	0,676
	female	135	3,03	0,801
	Total	300	2,90	0,747
Young people are less loyal to the company than older people	male	165	2,70	0,800
	female	135	2,37	0,780
	Total	300	2,55	0,806
Today, it is easier for a foreigner to find a good job than for a native	male	165	2,61	1,046
	female	135	2,37	0,780
	Total	300	2,50	0,941
I would like to have foreigners in the team where I work	male	165	2,88	0,847
	female	135	2,59	0,917
	Total	300	2,75	0,889

Source: own research, 2023. N=300, analysis of variance

As a result, we found that female respondents are more accepting, more willing to work with older colleagues, more willing to be mentored by more experienced colleagues. Young men, however, were more vocal, saying that older people are slower and harder to adapt to change, and that they prefer to work in a workplace with a larger number of young people.

This leads us to believe that, in order to mitigate generational differences, it is first and foremost young female workers who can and should be focused on and built upon as opinion leaders.

4 Summary

The conclusion of our research confirms the primary findings of the literature on the generation- and occupation-specific aspects of job choice and attitudes towards work and learning [29], [30], [31]. In this research, we conducted a primary survey of young Chinese respondents to investigate how Chinese young people perceive generational differences in the workplace and what difficulties and barriers they perceive and perceive. The results of the primary research show that they prefer to work in a workplace with older people because they can learn a lot from them. In their view, an older colleague can be a good mentor for younger people, with the proviso that the older colleague should not be bossy and should not feel superior to the younger worker because of his or her age. The research showed that acceptance of generational differences is related to young gender, with young women being more cooperative and accepting compared to their male counterparts.

The limitation of the research is that the sample is not representative, so its results are only valid for the sample and analysed a specific generation. Because of these limitations, we plan to sample by quota and include additional generations in the research, and to nuance the quantitative results obtained with qualitative post hoc research to gain a more nuanced understanding of the differences between generations.

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