Different leadership styles and their impact on Generation Z employees' motivation

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Affidavit

I hereby affirm that this Bachelor's Thesis represents my own written work and that I have used no sources and aids other than those indicated. All passages quoted from publications or paraphrased from these sources are properly cited and attributed.

The thesis was not submitted in the same or in a substantially similar version, not even partially, to another examination board and was not published elsewhere.

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Abstract

The aim of this bachelor thesis is to describe different leadership styles and investigate their influence on employees` motivation at workplace. Motivated workforce within an organization is essential factor for establishing and maintaining healthy work environment. For an organization to be successful, its leaders need to understand the needs of their employees and continuously adapt the corporate structure and business strategies.

Various technological advancements changed the way new generations are raised. Such evolving youth has different characteristics, needs and attitudes both in everyday life and at the workplace. Leadership styles which were effective in past are becoming unsatisfactory and unacceptable to new generations, especially generation Z, which will be the focus of this thesis. According to Zemke et al. (2000), generation Z involves people born between 1995 and 2010. In relation to that, for leaders and managers to be able to attract and engage new employees within organization and take its advantage, they need to understand the changes in their motivating factors, as well as their behaviour patterns.

Research question is as follows: 'What is the impact of different leadership styles on employees' motivation to work and achieve organizational objectives?'. Thesis will be based on qualitative research design and interviews will be used as a tool for collecting, analyzing and interpreting the results from the sample size consisting of business and management students of the Generation Z within Europe, who previously had some working experience.

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1   Introduction

Nowadays, many companies face the challenge of attracting and retaining employees within an organization, as well as succeeding in such competitive globalized market. It is believed that the main reasons for this issue are globalization and its extremely demanding multinational factors (Alghazo, 2016). However, one effective way of making organization successful is establishing great relationship between the leader and its followers, who are in this case, employees.

Having an influential leader fostering employee's motivation is a great tool for increasing organizational productivity and success. Leaders use multiple opportunities to strengthen the mission and vision of a company, effectively communicate it to their followers and establish the implementation strategy (Fullan, 2011). Effective leaders should be inspirational and supportive towards their subordinates and attempt to develop employees' capabilities which would then increase their motivation and satisfaction with work, promoting their mental well-being at work. One argument would be that the psychological safety within organization is positively correlated to the overall team performance (Schaubroeck et al., 2011).

Motivation can be best described as a powerful tool for pushing people towards achieving certain aim. Another purpose of motivation is its ability to enable people meet their basic human needs, such as self-esteem, sense of belonging, recognition and other (Kotter, 1999). There are many theories of motivation which can prove its importance, and this thesis will outline briefly explain the most acknowledged ones. First, McGregor's theory of X and Y distinguish people in two separate groups; X group of people who are driven by compensation and rewards, and Y group who seek more responsibility and creativity within their jobs (Grensing-Pophal, 2002). Next, Herzberg's theory claims that there are two separate factors that organization can use to influence motivation inside of workplace; motivators and hygiene factors (Herzberg et al., 1959/1993). Motivators are intrinsic factors which encourages employees to work harder, such as responsibility and challenging work. Hygiene factors are more extrinsically oriented, such as monetary compensation, benefits and other such rewards (Herzberg, 1968).

In relation to that, leaders are integral part of successful organizations for the number of reasons. Within every organization there should be influential leader who will positively affect each employee's behavior. When done effectively, it has significant impact on the employees' eagerness toward achieving organizational goals, mission and vision (Shamir et al., 1998). Leaders communicate innovative ideas and carry the main role in implementing such ideas through employees (Lussier, 2010).

Additionally, motivation accounts for people's passion and determination. For such reason, there is strong connection between motivation and organizational success, as well as leader's role in keeping employees inspired (ibid.).

The focus will be put on three distinct leadership styles: autocratic, democratic, and transformational leadership (House, 1996; Maner, 2017; Bhatti et al., 2012; Sergioranni, 2003; Naile & Selesho, 2014; Eagley et al., 2003) owing to their clearly separate characteristics and each of the three leadership approaches being mostly used within the Europe.

Therefore, the aim of this paper is to examine and answer the following research questions: 'What is the impact of different leadership styles on employees' motivation to work and achieve organizational objectives?', with the focus put on the generation Z, born between 1995 and 2010 (Zemke et al., 2000). It is out of great significance for both HR managers and leaders within the business to prepare for the future workforce and align their behavior with the traits of generation Z in order to fulfil their expectations and result in positive organizational outcomes. Understanding new patterns of behavior and way of thinking of inexperienced youth now entering the labor market will help in the process of recruitment and selection, as well as their retention, positively influencing the organizational sustainable growth (Dangmei & Singh, 2016).

This thesis will be guided by the existing literature on generation Z's characteristics and preferences, as well as workplace and leadership related expectations, with the aim to examine whether distinct leadership styles have impact on their motivation to work and what kind of leadership style would be the most effective towards such generation. Companies could take advantage of this thesis when developing their

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organizational strategies and building workplace environment suitable for such unique upcoming workforce. Realizing their motivating factors and extracting generation Z's potential would enhance the workplace environment and increase employee productivity, which I will attempt to empirically examine in the methodology and interview section of this thesis.

2   Literature Review

2.1   The role of leadership in fostering motivation

A leader is an individual with vision with the role to communicates company's values, ideas and collective goals to followers and subordinates who need to implement them (Shamir et al., 1998). The effectiveness of the leader is reflected in employees who are motivated and eager to accomplish tasks, engaged with group dynamic and constantly focused (Lussier, 2010). Leaders can influence employees' behavior through appropriate communication skills, training, managing discipline and rewarding positive results (ibid). Additionally, employees feel the need to accomplish their own personal and career goals to raise their satisfaction levels. Motivation keeps the individual moving passionately towards pursuing a certain outcome (Robbins et al., 2009) and plays the main role in satisfying one's needs (Kontodimopoulos et al., 2009).

However, with many different leadership styles it might be challenging to match appropriate method with the follower's characteristics. Frustrated employees, inexperienced or dissatisfied employees with decreased motivation levels could lead to poor results and negative outcomes (Naile & Selesho, 2014). To avoid unfavorable results, positive relationship between leader and follower is essential in creating respectful and positive attitudes within organization. Further, such leader-employee connection would result in overall health of the work environment (ibid).

2.2 Different leadership styles

Every leader's role is to set direction, motivate and inhibit the follower's eagerness and effectiveness (Kotter, 1998). However, not every leader has the same characteristics and way of implementing leadership approach. Naile & Selesho (2014) claim that leaders are deemed to be effective when their leadership style is aligned with characteristics of their followers. Therefore, they should be aware of the influence their behavior has on the followers' perceptions and attitudes towards the workplace, while also having appropriate understanding of their employees' characteristics to realize their potential (ibid.).

The further literature will describe three different leadership styles, namely: autocratic, democratic and transformational (House, 1996; Maner, 2017; Bhatti et al., 2012; Sergioranni, 2003; Naile & Selesho, 2014; Eagley et al., 2003). The reason for choosing such styles is mainly for the fact that they could be easily distinguished from each other owing to their unique characteristics and leading behavior, as well as because such styles are most frequent, aligned to European culture and therefore effective within the European businesses (Taleghani, Salmani, & Taatian, 2010). Subsequent section will provide and explain some of their most significant advantages and disadvantages, with the aim to gain knowledge of ways in which such styles affect employees and influence their motivation to work.

2.2.1 Autocratic leadership style

Autocratic leaders concentrate on their individual power and authority, where dictatorial style is prevalent (House, 1996), as such leaders tend to use their power confirmed up by their superior and strong position within a company. They take all responsibility for decision making process within the organization (Smither, 1991) and they require their followers for respect and strong compliance to established rules (Pellegrini & Scandura, 2008). Such leaders are deemed to be self-centered, overly confident in their decisions and leading processes (Maner, 2017) and considered as strongly task and achievement oriented (Einarsen et al., 2007).

Autocratic leaders do not accept employee input, do not ask for subordinate opinion about ongoing business tasks and do not allow followers to participate in decision making (De Cremer, 2006). It could be said that employee exclusion from important organizational activities could make them feel unfairly treated and less valued by the organization. In relation to that, such state could negatively affect organizational psychological safety (De Cremer, 2007), as well as increase the possibility of role conflict or role overload (Zhang & Xie, 2017). Other disadvantages could be their lack of time or no need for discussion, resulting in lack of effort for communication with followers since they are highly focused on organizational efficiency and employee productivity. That is often believed to be factor which increases employees' stress level and pressure at the workplace (Rosenbaum & Rosenbaum, 1971).

On the other hand, autocratic leaders provide their followers with direction and clear structure in terms of both their roles and assigned tasks (Foels et al., 2000), making employees more confident in what they do. It is believed to establish clear chain of command within the organization which could result in consistency and stability, factors satisfying people's need for predictability (Tiedens et al., 2007). Additionally, it would form clear expectations when it comes to their roles, task assignments and other role-appropriate behaviors (Cooper & Withey, 2009), emphasizing discipline and control. Another positive point is that such leaders state and create clear boundaries within the organization (Kahn, 1990) and therefore, avoid any possible confusion related to role overlap, misunderstanding of organizational rules and policy related compliance.

2.2.2 Democratic leadership style

Democratic leaders have higher levels of people's skills (Bhatti et al., 2012) and create more interpersonal and rather fair relationship with the followers (Ngai, 2005), having all members feel equally important and compatible. They use methods which are rather decentralized and participative, which means they encourage their followers in various organizational activities, meetings and discussions. Such leaders are believed to be more open-minded which is reflected in them showing more interest in hearing

employees' thoughts and attitudes, considering different opinions beneficial and useful for organizational development (Sergioranni, 2003). In addition, not only they practice better communication within the company, but also, they are both more open to accepting constructive criticism and receiving feedback from their followers (ibid.). The explained behavior results in employees feeling as a valuable component of the organizational teamwork and their opinion being considered in any decision making (ibid.). Such type of structure and participative leadership style often results in employees being empowered and more satisfied with their role and position (ibid.), while also increasing the morale of the organization.

However, democratic style is deemed to be effective only in circumstances in which workforce consists of appropriately experienced and highly skilled employees (Saqib Khan, et al., 2015) who are inclined towards teamwork and collaboration, as high level of trust is needed to consider employee input in decision making or any other formal activity within the organization. Moreover, explained approach could be said to be more time consuming than other leadership styles, as such discussions could last long and are often inconsequential (ibid.). Nevertheless, it could be said that such environment with democratic leader requires highly participative employees with increased levels of commitment, who are sometimes expected to sacrifice their own wants and instead, think in terms of organizational needs to achieve the most optimal outcomes.

2.2.3 Transformational leadership style

Transformational leaders are characterized by having their own and unique vision about the future, they are deemed rather inspiring and are eager to make significant changes and innovations within company with assistance of their motivated followers (Naile & Selesho, 2014). Transformational leadership requires a leader who is able to exert idealized influence, appeal to followers' intrinsic and emotional aspect (Bass & Avolio, 1994), as well as encouraging their intellectual stimulation (Warillow, 2012). Their inspirational motivation towards their followers relies on their ability to initiate and develop an attractive vision of the future, resulting in their followers feeling more optimistic and enthusiastic about what they do (Dijk & Kirk, 2007). Transformational

leaders tend to set a personal example, appreciate different perspectives and continuously encourage and train their followers to act aligned with the set vision (ibid.). Such leaders are deemed to exhibit high levels of optimism and passion about achieving organizational tasks and goals (Eagley et al., 2003).

As previously mentioned, they build empowering and emotional relationship with their followers and others involved within the organization (Bass & Avolio, 1994) and when encountered with some of their weaknesses, transformational leaders tend to improve such state by putting emphasis on providing them with mentorship, which results in higher employee morale and increased self-confidence (Warillow, 2012). They tend to put the collective interest first, making it possible for the followers to achieve their common objectives, which could contribute to each participant feeling more valued and respected (García-Morales et al., 2012).

On the other hand, some authors would argue that leaders using transformational style relies on manipulative tactics by appealing to one's emotions and often disregard moral values (Stone, Russell, & Patterson, 2003). Lacking moral integrity and dismissing opposing opinions or interests could result in dictatorship in which minority is being discriminated and oppressed (Bass, 1997). Such behavior is deemed to be the consequence of their narcissistic personality, attributed to their excessive confidence and heroic attitude, which they use to gain followers' trust and admiration (Stone, Russell, & Patterson, 2003).

Leadership style	Characteristics
Autocratic	- Individual control - Leader's authority and power - Clear rules - Self-decision-making - Clear chain of command - Requires compliance

	• Task-oriented • Clear boundaries • Formality • Employee external motivators
Democratic	• Power-sharing • Team-oriented • Collective decision making • Flexibility and adaptivity • Equal employee input • Considerate • Decentralized approach • Open-door policy • Participative • Collective interest
Transformational	• Change and innovation oriented • Inspirational behavior • Leader's idealized influence • High levels of enthusiasm and commitment • Encourages creativity • Clear values and priorities • High levels of organizational trust • Intrinsic motivators

Table 1[1]- Types of leadership styles and their characteristics

Table 1. displays qualitative data which is used to better explain Autocrative, Democrative and Transformational leadership styles. The table relates each type to its specific and most important characteristics.

2.3 Importance of employee motivation in achieving organizational objectives

Motivation plays a key role in regulating one's direction, passion, endurance and persistence in achieving a goal (Robbins et al., 2009).

Employees' level of commitment and job satisfaction are dependent on their motivation to work (Furnham et al., 2009). Satisfied employees are more committed to the organization and positively contribute to the organization being more effective and productive (Robbins, 2006). Motivated and committed employees understand the values and goals of the organization and they tend to care about its success and further development (Luthans, 2002). Therefore, the success of the organization is highly dependent on the employees' performance. Factors such as work overload, unclear goals, change in terms of organizational priorities and other such incidents tend to disrupt employees' effectiveness and commitment. Those factors combined can increase employees' stress levels and negatively affect their motivation (Gällstedt, 2003).

2.4 Understanding Generation Z and their characteristics

Although it might be challenging to precisely distinguish generations and define their time-lane borders, each generation group has unique characteristics and attitudes

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[1] Source: Author's table based on House, 1996; Maner, 2017; Bhatti et al., 2012; Sergioranni, 2003; Naile & Selesho, 2014; Eagley et al., 2003.

shaped by their experiences and incidents that occurred within such time frame (Bencsik, Horváth-Csikós, & Juhász, 2016). Generation Z can be described as diverse and multicultural, with very distinctive and informal way of communicating, being straightforward but also very impatient (ibid.). According to the Generational White Paper (2011), the reason for their extremely low patience and shrinking attention span is mainly their high dependency and reliance on technology and internet. Moreover, they are generally associated with attributes such as individualism, materialism, as well as very demanding, egocentric and astute (ibid.). However, they could easily take advantage of their characteristics such as being highly adroit, entrepreneurial, tolerant and upright, both at workplace and everyday life (Schawbel, 2014).

The reason why Generation Z differs from other generations is that they are considered dependent and relied on internet and technology. Instead of being accustomed to it like previous generations, they were born into technology and started using it from the very first years of life (Baysal Berkup, 2014). Therefore, it is not surprising that they are called 'Children of Internet', 'Digital Generation' or 'Digital Natives' (ibid.). The members of generation Z are deemed to be the most technologically literate generation (Desai & Lele, 2017), as well as 'technology addicts', since they are used to lifestyle which requires being online '24/7', being constantly exposed to various information, as well as sharing it using their social media or other networking websites. Moreover, they are considered most connected generation owing to the fact members of generation Z expect each other to be online all the time in order to socialize and communicate (Baysal Berkup, 2014). However, the main benefits of their such excessive use of internet are that they developed great multitasking skills and are able to satisfy their interests on multiple topics at the same time using web. Their main source of knowledge is internet. Apart from taking advantage of such information availability online, they also use internet to share knowledge and practice teamwork on a virtual level (Desai & Lele, 2017). All combined resulted in various beneficial skills such as efficiency, practicality, innovation and them being highly determined and resourceful (Baysal Berkup, 2014). Used to the fast-

paced and contemporary way of living and various technological advancements, they do not struggle with constantly changing environment and related challenges (ibid.).

Some of their behavioral characteristics include high levels of intuition but no salient sense of commitment; constantly questioning themselves and evaluating their needs or purposes; being focused on present; generally open-minded and non-judgmental (Bencsik & Machova, 2016). When being compared to previous generations, some other distinctive traits of the generation Z are that they very appreciate comfortability and feeling at ease anywhere. When it comes to their ideal employment and entertainment, they lack clearly defined boundaries (ibid.).

2.4.1 Generation Z and their motivating factors

According to Bencsik et al. (2016), Generation Z is determined to find a career that respects their independence and privacy while also allowing them to maintain a work-life balance. Generation Z is more likely to apply for employment and positions that are relevant to their interests and provide opportunities for self-development and skill enhancement (ibid.). They are not keen on working at job positions that would benefit only the demands of their superiors and managers. Extrinsic rewards such as monetary compensation is no longer only requirement when applicants of the generation Z are searching and applying for a job. Instead, they are more intrinsically motivated, meaning they are more attracted to inherent satisfaction, self-actualization, further evolution and growth (Patel D. , 2017). Although such individuals value responsibility and various task accomplishments both in everyday life and at work, they still want others to acknowledge their success and recognize them as valuable persons. Not only would such environment increase their motivation levels most, but also it would positively impact their mental stability and self-satisfaction.

Those individuals are entrepreneurial, agile and innovative by nature and they aspire to make a difference and leave the track fabricated by their own actions and ideas (Patel D. , 2017). In relation to that and as a result of the contemporary and unpredictable way of living they were born into; generation Z have the ability to

prosper in constantly changing environment. Schawbel (2014) claims that generation Z's urge to participate in internships could be attributed to their desire to improve both professionally and personally, as well as motivation to accept given opportunities.

On the other hand, there appear to be some contrary findings. According to Twenge (2017), generation Z has lower expectations and weaker self-confidence than the previous generation of Millennials. As a result, they are more concerned about safety in various aspects of life. Patel D. (2017) further argues that one of the generation Z's most desired workplace and achievement incentive is having the secure life without unexpected and undesired changes outside of work. Such concern could be ascribed to recessionary period they experienced at youngest ages, as well as the repercussions that period had on their parents (Tulgan, 2013). In this regard, some studies assume that generation Z is more money-conscious and focused on saving, with the goal of achieving long-term employment security (Patel D. , 2017).

2.4.2   Generation Z and their attitude towards workplace

Digitalization in the era of generation Z has brought in numerous advantages related to workplace, and flexibility is certainly one of the greatest. People are now allowed to work from home or while they are on a vacation (Eberhardt, 2015). However, this has blurred the boundaries between personal and professional life, especially to youth who grew up with their gadgets and cannot imagine going to the office without their smartphone or laptop (Mihelich, 2013).

When it comes to the work ethic of generation Z, Bascha (2011) suggests that they value keeping their privacy and being independent and self-reliant, but they also expect workplace transparency and expect to stay informed instead of being neglected, despite their current level and position at work. Similarly, they want their managers to value their ideas but also be on the level and open to them despite their

young age (Shawbel, 2014). They are considered highly flexible when it comes to different opportunities and challenges at work. Various task contribution is their way to express their eagerness to work and prove themselves, while as a result they expect to be noticed and acknowledged. Mihelich (2013) claims that one of their major workplace incentives is gaining recognition. Employers should therefore be aware of those specific traits of generation Z. Ignoring such specific traits of generation Z might lead to their reduced productivity and lower engagement.

Comparing Generation Z to their ancestors, studies indicate that they are entrepreneurship-oriented, and more motivated by self-actualization and personal advancement than solely by remuneration at workplace (Dan Schawbel, 2014). Nevertheless, based on the findings of Generational White Paper (2011), due to the high dependency on technology and internet during their upbringing, generation Z has a very narrow attention span. In relation to that, they can be seen as technophilic and their ability to find solutions to their problems with ease by using internet, might be considered their highly useful skill (Tari, 2011). However, some researchers would argue they majorly miss problem-solving and decision-making skills in real life, which are at most times crucial at work (Coombs, 2013). Technology also has a role in a way that gen Z prefer corporations that allow them to communicate and work regardless of physical obstacles such as geographical boundaries or time zones.

It could be said that such individuals would be more attracted to job positions at companies with sociable environment and corporate climate which allows for flexible schedules. Moreover, they feel that their formal education has not equipped them with the required expertise to deal with real life problems, hence they seek workplaces that would provide mentoring, together with various learning and development opportunities (Bridge, 2015).

Lastly, they seek their job to be an interesting place where their creativity will not be suppressed. Hence, managers are advised to provide them with project that would encourage competitiveness, but also nurture friendly atmosphere among colleagues. Since gen Z has grown up using less face-to-face communication, they may have developed insufficient interpersonal skills hence it is crucial for leaders and managers

to try guide them into developing the appropriate social interactions (Turner, 2015). In turn, that would further improve generation Z employees' self-assurance and autonomy, as well as their stress-managing ability (ibid.).

2.4.3 Generation Z and their perception of a leader

The definition of leadership and associations relating to the term 'leader' have significantly changed over time. In past, people thought solely about management when talking about idea of managing employees and clearly defined the traits one should have. However, under the influence of the new generations and their perceptions, concepts of leadership and management became separate. Generation Z now sees management as a concept related to mechanical processes such as controlling and continuous checking whether firm functions properly. In relation to that and for managers and employees to be effective and productive, they need an inspiring, determined and future-oriented leader (Walker, 2011). Firms need their leadership strategies to be in accordance with their employees' values, attitudes, work style preferences, motivating factors, all of which depends mainly on the employees' age, i.e., generation to which they belong (Arsenault, 2004).

When it comes to Gen Z's most preferred characteristics of a leader, Salahuddin (2010) found that they admire honesty and integrity, forethoughtfulness, adroitness and self-discipline. Same author believes that generation Z does not consider traits such as inspiration and imagination as significant for the leader as the previous generations did. Instead, many studies show that they expect solemn workplace environment in which leaders would take them seriously despite their young age and lack of professional experience, take notice of their ideas and consider their opinions (Schawbel, 2014). Additionally, they believe workplace should be more about constructive ideas and individual contribution (ibid.).

They would expect and look for constant feedback from their leaders and supervisors in order to continue with their tasks (Randstad, 2016). They take it as a constructive criticism and are determined to make corrective actions if their task outcomes are

below expectations. Such expectations could be attributed to the 'instant-reaction world' they grew up in (Center for Generational Kinetics, 2018), as they are surrounded by various forms of feedback on social media websites such as likes, comments, shares and similar. They expect social connection with everyone, including their boss and other supervisors (Turner, 2015).

As a result, Gen Z would be most satisfied in the workplace if the leader had a positive attitude and tried to provide employees with opportunities for self-development and internal improvement (Adecco, 2016). They value soft skills and seek out emotionally intelligent leaders with advanced communication skills, who promote a good and inclusive workplace culture, and who are capable of providing the necessary mentorship at work (McGaha, 2018). Nonetheless, they show a strong interest in sustainability, community, and social responsibility because they were born during a period of increased environmental knowledge and consciousness as a result of social media exposure, which was followed by many environmental and pollution challenges. In this regard, they would prefer that their company and its leaders pay attention to their impact on the environment and related long-term issues (Middlemiss, 2015).

3 Methodology

3.1 Research design

Creswell (2014) defined three separate research design methods, namely: quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods. Each writer has a possibility to choose among these three styles based on the topic and issue being delt in the study, previous personal experience, as well as the target audience. While the quantitative research design is mainly based on numerical values and data collection with the aim to statistically test a theory (Creswell, 2014), qualitative method is used to discover and understand human behavior (Mason, 2002) and interpret the relationship between non-numerical variables. Mixed methods research design is used when one design is not enough for the study and combines both qualitative and quantitative styles to address the issue and test hypotheses (Creswell, 2014).

For this bachelor thesis the qualitative research design was chosen. The main reason for choosing such design method is its exploratory character which gives the ability to gather meaningful understanding on the generation Z employees' motivation to work and achieve organizational goals when lead by different leadership styles at workplace. Moreover, qualitative design has several research methods for data collection, out of which in-depth interviews are most suitable for this topic. Interviews are used to gain rich insight and collect relevant information owing to their flexible character and the opportunity to modify and adapt questions according to the situation. For this thesis, structured interviews will be conducted, and the detailed description will be provided in the 'Interview guide' section which can be found below.

3.2   Sample description

Sampling process consists of choosing several representatives with aim to gain meaningful information and successfully assign extracted characteristics from the target sample to the whole population (O'Leary, 2014; Kumar, 2011). Two approaches of sampling are probability and non-probability, in which probability sampling accounts for randomization and having the whole population at disposal for making a choice, while non-probability excludes randomization and eliminates risk and bias (Kumar, 2011). In this thesis, snowball sampling is chosen as the strategy which will guide the non-probability sampling process. Such technique is deemed most convenient and effective for exploratory research since current interviewees can name and suggest future subjects among their acquaintances. One of the reasons for choosing qualitative research design method for this bachelor thesis topic is that the sampling does not strictly require large number of respondents within sample, but instead it puts focus on richness and uniqueness of data being collected (Kumar, 2011). The data was collected using in-depth, individual interviews with generation Z undergraduates, born between 1995 and 2010 (Zemke et al., 2000), studying in different European business and management universities and previously had some working experience, either internship or employment. The reason for choosing

business and management students is that they are the future valuable and powerful workforce who should develop certain managerial and leadership skills from early working stage. Moreover, observing and understanding their behavior would lead to positive and constructive changes to the current style of leader-member relationship, with the goal to improve wellbeing of workplace environment and enhance company's overall performance. Each interviewee gave consent to actively participate in this research. Although their positions and roles at work differ, conducting interviews with such specified sampling gives insight into their personal opinions on different leadership approaches and ways in which their relationship with the leader affected their motivation levels at work. Additionally, understanding their attitudes and preferences will allow for drawing assumptions and conclusions on how management and leadership within various companies should modify and adjust in accordance with new generations' characteristics, habits and overall lifestyle in order to achieve desired outcomes and organizational goals.

3.3   Interview guide

This section provides the reader with an idea in which the research interview is structured and puts an emphasis on the main themes and question purposes. Each question aims to gain respondents opinion on various topics related to leadership, workplace environment and their preference on the leader-employee relationship. Interviewees will give opinion to specific situations at work and provide in-depth description about their preferred types of communication, organizational structure and leadership approaches. All answers will be filtered and coded to extract meaningful results and draw conclusions to specific topics in order to explore which leadership style is most preferred by generation Z and how their optimal motivation levels can be achieved. Interviews took up to 45 minutes and were conducted via Skype or MS Teams online call.

First section aims to create the respondents' profile and consists of brief personal questions related to age, educational level, industry field of interest and previous or current working experience. Due to the data privacy and security reasons, only respondents' first names will be used in the process.

-Could you please introduce yourself with your first name and age?

-Could you please indicate your educational level (high school, university, masters) and country where you study, as well as your chosen field of study?

-Please briefly explain your previous work experience, i.e., have you taken part in internship or were you employed? What was or what is your position and role at work? To which industry was it related?

- Overall, were you satisfied with the leadership and management style at your company? Has such management style been an influencing factor of you quitting or staying at that job and company?

The next section aims to gain insight into participants' attitudes and feelings towards their motivation at workplace in general, as well as their preferences for workplace environment.

- What positively affects your motivation to work and achieve organizational objectives? Please name some factors of your choice and add a brief explanation.

-What does negatively affect your motivation to work? Please name some factors of your choice and add a brief explanation.

The following questions focus on communication between a leader and interviewee as an employee. Moreover, they are asked to describe their previous experience with focus put on employee engagement, i.e., expressing their own opinion and participating in decision making.

-In your opinion, what is the most effective communication between a leader and you as an employee? Do you prefer an open-door policy with your leader in which

you can informally discuss and express your opinion, or you rather prefer more structured relationship with clear established roles and formal meetings?

- During your current or past working experience, did you have any opportunity to express your opinion or participate in any decision-making? If yes, please briefly describe the situation and state if you feel confident in such situations considering your current experience and knowledge.

- How important do you perceive situation in which the leader allows inexperienced employee to be engaged in important organizational activities?

The next two questions aim to obtain interviewee's opinion on their preferred leadership characteristics in general, as well as their thoughts on leader-employee relationship.

- In your opinion, what is a good relationship between a leader and you as a follower, i.e., employee? What characteristics would you look for in a leader?

- Would you prefer to work for a company with a leader who is more task-oriented or interpersonal relationship-oriented? What would make you more motivated and why?

Next, interviewees are discreetly asked to give opinion on their preferred leadership characteristics. Each question is posed specifically in a way to target characteristics of leadership approaches described in literature review, namely: autocratic, democratic and transformational.

- How would you perceive and feel in working environment in which leader is strongly oriented towards task achievement? To better illustrate, employees get a reward after doing the job right and establishing interpersonal relationship is not necessary.

- What is your opinion on organizational hierarchy with clear chain of command? How does the clear organizational structure where each employee has their own tasks, clearly assigned roles and responsibilities influence you motivation to work?

- How would you perceive working environment in which leader encourages all employees to participate in collaborative thinking and decision-making? To better illustrate, employees express their own opinion, develop new ideas with colleagues and participate in problem-solving. What is your opinion on power-sharing?

- Would you be more motivated to work for a leader who appreciates your achieving tasks and doing the job right after which you get a reward, or you would rather be motivated to engage in collaborative thinking, discussion and decision-making at work despite all your formal work responsibilities?

- How would you perceive the working environment in which leader inspires and seeks open-minded employees inclined towards innovation, creativity and leaving an impact on the future? Would it make you feel stressed and under pressure, or you would it rather inspire you and make you want to participate?

Finally, online call interview with each participant ends with a thank you statement for their meaningful and personal answer sharing, as well as valuable contribution to this thesis.

4   Interview results

The aim of this section is to analyze the data extracted from previously conducted interviews. As the thesis used qualitative research approach, related qualitative analysis will serve as beneficial step in further understanding the phenomenon of leadership styles and employee motivation (O'Leary, 2014). After conducting, recording and transcribing the interviews, this section will aim to extract meaningful data in order to answer the initial research question of the thesis and communicate its findings. The subsections below will reveal most frequent and significant responses that were mostly agreed upon respondents being interviewed, as well as some contrary answers based on opposing attitudes. That way, reader will be able to understand the topic in more depth, consider the effect of specific leadership styles and employees' motivation and see how the interview results were grouped with purpose to draw certain conclusions. The detailed information from some of the

selected interviews previously transcribed into written text will be represented in the Appendix section.

4.1 Interviewees' profiles

The aim of this section is to present the basic personal information of the interviewees. A total of 11 interviews were conducted with participants of the generation Z (1995-2010), studying in high schools or universities within Europe. Their work experience included internships, part-time or full-time jobs. Although their roles and positions at work varied, each job pertains to the field of business and management. Table 2 gives more detailed information about participants who took part in the research.

Respondent	Age	Educational background	Work experience
David	23	University in Italy, Marketing and management	Employment; Social media marketing manager
Daria	21	University in Austria, International management	Internship; Public relations
Karlo	21	University in Switzerland, Business administration	Internship; Account executive. Part-time employment; customer

			relationship manager
Mila	22	University in Netherlands, Business and management	Internship; Account management assistant
Teodora	22	University in Serbia; Management and Economics	Part-time employment; Marketing management
Alex	19	High school in Russia	Internship; Project manager assistant
Milena	23	University in Austria; International management	Employment; Social media marketing associate
Andrey	20	University in Serbia, Management and organization	Internship; Logistics and supply chain assistant
Hesam	22	University in Austria, International management	Internship; Gender and diversity management
Mina	23	University in United Kingdom, Bioscience management	Internship; Strategic planning and marketing

| Nikolina | 25 | University in Spain, Financial management | Internship; Financial management assistant |

Table 2²- Respondents' profiles

Table 2. represents generation Z respondents' profiles to represent the sample with whom interviews were conducted, while indicating differences in educational background and their employment history.

Overall, their satisfaction with their work experience and their attitudes toward managerial and leadership approach within the company varied.

- I was satisfied, my boss was very friendly and acted like she was at the same level as we were. If my internship wasn't limited to 2 weeks, it would have definitely be an influencing factor of me staying there. However, I would also consider some other things when deciding on staying/leaving. (Nikolina, 25)
- I was satisfied with the values that were shown by the company throughout my work there, the management style was definitely influential for my work there because it was a very friendly work environment where the top management could also speak freely with their employees, therefore it was not the factor that influenced my leave. (Daria, 21)
- I was satisfied to an extent, taking into consideration that my field of work requires much creativity and collaborative work- most of

² Source: Author's table

my colleagues were task-oriented which over time made me look for another company to work in. (David, 23)

- I was satisfied as I worked in the company with the purpose to gain experience and encounter different situations that would advance both my peoples and technical skills, rather than getting some tangible rewards such as salary. It has already ended but I would not extend it further nor return to the same position, I did not really enjoy their type of leadership and management, as to me it seemed to be too traditional and outdated. (Karlo, 21)

This general information will serve as a basis for further collection of meaningful data on generation Z's preferences toward different leadership styles, their behavior in different workplace circumstances and overall satisfaction and motivation levels being correspondingly affected. Influences and factors affecting their opinions were further explored with next interview questions.

4.2 Generation Z's motivation at work

Interviewees' answers on the factors positively and negatively affecting their motivation levels at work are mostly in accordance with the author's literature review. Some respondents were providing more detailed explanations of the influences and its effects, and some were rather concise.

Most respondents reflected on the healthy work environment with friendly and polite colleagues, as well as structured organization when being asked about factors positively affecting their motivation to work. Many of them agreed that further skill advancement, as well as ability to get promoted within the firm are factors that sustain their interest and keenness towards work. Figure 1 displays respondents' most frequent answers on factors positively affecting their motivation at work.

- How interested I am in the sphere of work and is it something I enjoy doing. Then, the people I am working with, their attitudes towards the task and how well we connect with each other… Also, ability to progress and move to higher positions, as well as the ability to recieve feedback from the supervisor or manager. (Mina, 23)

- Money and salary; financial reward is definitely something important but still, just the initial step to be satisfied. Then how relatable the work is to me; in the sense that if I don't like doing it, I probably won't perform well; however, if it is something that is relatable to me and something that interests me, and I enjoy doing it then my motivation grows. Friendly communication with boss or manager; if my boss is not friendly to me and is acting bossy then I would perform worse. Last would be seeing the outcome of my work. (Milena, 22)

- What motivates me most is knowing that I am working for a company which develops my both technical and soft skills, knowing that I am doing something positive for myself in terms of self-development. Being able to gain recognition and promotion, the ability to advance at work. Of course, satisfactory monetary compensation is a must for me to stay at the company. (David, 23)
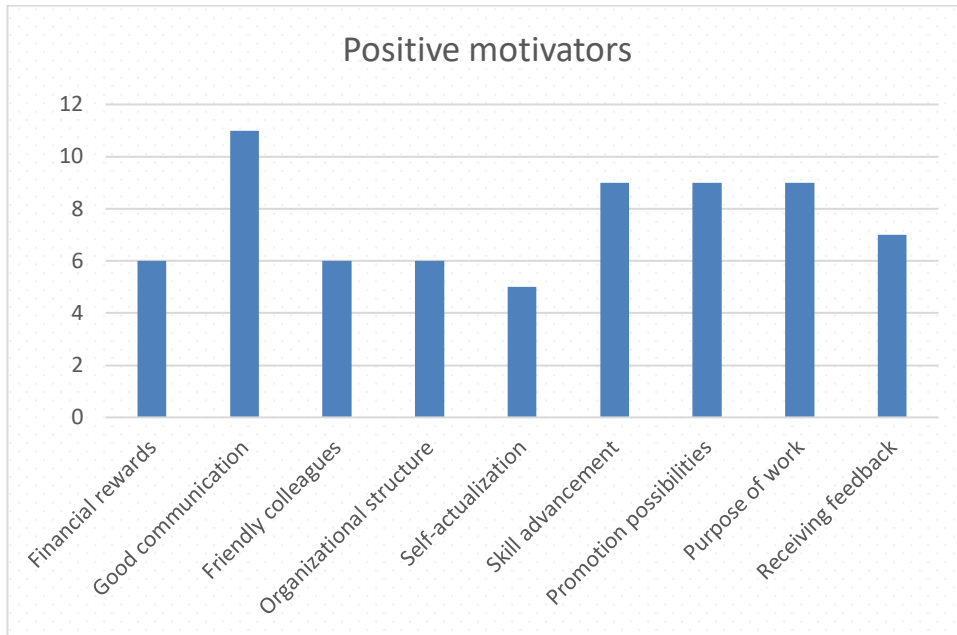
Figure 1[3]- Respondents' positive motivators at work.

On the other hand, some of the factors negatively affecting their motivation were negative work environment involving conflicts and employee drama, a feeling of not being appreciated as a worker, as well as unappealing company values or unclear vision. When it comes to leadership, most respondents claim they get discourages and uninspired by inequality amongst workers due to the overemphasized hierarchical system within the firm. With the renumeration no longer being main incentive for workers to continue with their work, it could be said that intrinsic motivators are gaining more value than before. As stated in the literature review, generation Z is more focused on reaching psychological safety, sense of fulfillment and enjoyment at work (Bencsik & Machova, 2016; Bencsik, Horváth-Csikós, & Juhász, 2016). Aiming towards self-actualization, they wish for

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satisfactory feeling and enjoyment from their tasks and responsibilities, as well as putting more effort to understand actual point and a purpose of work (Patel D., 2017). Figure 2 displays respondents' most frequent answers on factors negatively affecting their motivation at work.

- Negative attitude towards me from my boss or manager: this would only bring me down and push me to reconsider me staying at the company. That would mean neglecting my contribution, underestimating my performance, seeing me as incompetent… Also, employee drama: if other employees around me fight or have verbal arguments. Of course, low salary. (Milena, 22)

- The values of the company are something that really catch my attention from the beginning, if they are working strictly for profit that is something that does not motivate me. Another thing is the people that work there- if their work ethic is not strong and they do not believe in working towards goal that is something that demotivates me. Lastly, the idea of working from 9-5 without doing any real work is not interesting for me. (Daria, 21)

- Negative work environment in terms of behaviour, hierarchy system and discrimination amongst workers. (Hesam, 22)

- Putting too much emphasis on hierarchy and underestimating my working abilities only because of my age and less experience. I automatically consider such firm as old fashioned, and I lose my interest. Other factors would be a firm not having clear and interesting vision, no purpose in what I am doing and overly repetitive tasks. (Karlo, 21)
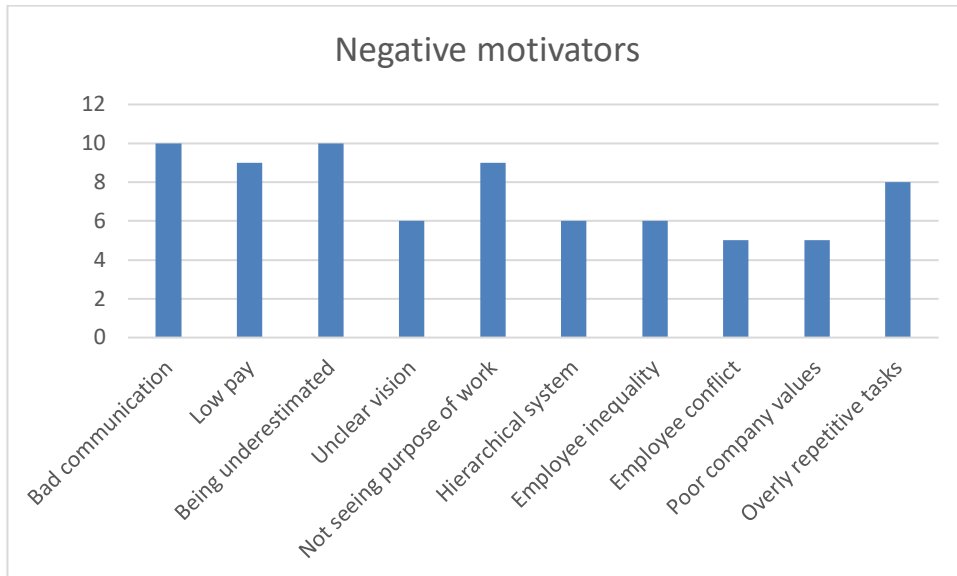
Figure 2[4]- Respondents' negative motivators at work.

4.3   Communication between a leader and a follower

As already discussed in the literature review, communication is the essential component of any relationship, as well as the building block of a healthy working environment. It can serve as a great leader's tool for enhancing the employees' motivation. In relation to that, interviewees were asked to state their opinion what is the most preferred communication style at work, whether they prefer an open-door policy with more informal discussion and opinion expressing possibilities, or rather more structured and formal communication styles in accordance with hierarchical structure of their assigned roles at work. Most of their responses reflected inclination towards open-door policy, as such communication goes in hand with appreciation,

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[4] Source: Author's figure based on Interview results.

involves establishing trust and maintaining healthy relationships. Some of the respondents in favor of open-door policy claim that:

- I believe in an open-door policy between the leader and their subordinates. Considering that I know many companies with such a way of dealing with company matters, I think that being able to express opinions openly to leaders and managers will lead to a generation of better ideas. (Daria, 21)

- I would say a bit of both worlds, because I would prefer to have a friendly relationship with management or leader and be open to discuss everything not as a manager versus subordinate type of relationship. However, I would also prefer to have structured meetings, where we discuss everything openly, so friendship time and work time are not mixed. (Milena, 22)

- I prefer open-door policy in which I can express my opinion which will then be taken into account in any way - if it's wrong I want to know why, if it's right then great. On the other hand, a leader needs to maintain some kind of structure, not everything can be informal so I'd be fine with him/her making a final decision. (Nikolina, 25)

- Open-door policy. However, I would keep it in formal language, and I would not mix such policy with having democracy within firm. In my opinion, having open-door policy is a way of building more healthy and reliable relationships between a leader and follower, but not using it as a means to an end. (Mila, 22)

- I prefer structure but in terms of professionalism, everyone knowing their role, but I very appreciate firms in which it would still mean that I can freely communicate to my leader or supervisor, of course still in appropriate and formal manner. So, I would be discouraged and demotivated if firms do not practice open-door policy. (Karlo, 21)

On the contrary, one interviewee was in favor of structured communication with clearly established roles:

- More structured relationship with formal meetings and clearly established roles. I think that open-door policy usually results in having disagreements, also there are differences in expertise and work experience so not everyone should be able to freely state opinions and make suggestions. (Mina, 23)

Most respondents were uncertain and ambivalent when asked whether inexperienced employees should be included in formal meetings and decision-making. As they claim, such workers should be carefully monitored as they might lack both knowledge and experience. However, most of them agreed that it would be significant for employee's knowledge and skill advancement.

- Without being involved in various organizational activities, opinion exchange and brainstorming, I think inexperienced employees could not advance. Of course, they should not be in position to make decisions and have impact on it, as company should keep some hierarchy. Even when not being competent, supervisors should in my opinion support employee and provide individual mentorship. Neglecting them due to the inexperience and age would probably decrease their confidence and motivation to learn more. (Alex, 19)

4.4   Relationship between a leader and a follower

Respondents generally had an opinion that relationship between leader and follower should be kept formal, which would be best achieved if their leader is holding to his or her integrity, dignity and being able to establish some boundaries. However, generation Z believes that leaders who put emphasis solely on their power and use it in a way to abuse employees with their authority and satisfy their personal interests are highly likely to encounter generation Z employees' resistance and rejection, thus low employee morale and decreased firm performance. Thus, when asked what a good leader-follower relationship is, they answered:

- Confidence in what he or she is doing, knowing how to communicate with followers, inspiring, knowing how to get respect and having dignity, adaptive and knowing how to handle change. (Karlo, 21)

- A good relationship is being able to discuss important cases for work with trust, being able to share knowledge and experiences, be open about personal needs as well as have a balanced work-personal life. (Daria, 21)

- I prefer formal and professional relationship in which leader has integrity. Also, I think leader needs both good listening and communication skills and know how to establish and maintain both trust and respect from followers. (Nikolina, 25)

- Straightforward, honest, so in my opinion communication skills get first place. Also, strong personality with dignity, but good character so he or she does not stress on their power before everything else. (Mila, 22)

Although respondents had varying answers when asked if they prefer their leader to be more interpersonal relationship oriented or task-oriented, there are some valuable conclusions to draw.

Those who were in favor of more interpersonal relationship-oriented leaders, supported their answers with arguments related to the wellbeing of employees, the strength of emotional relationships and better commitment when doing task at work if there is a good connection to their leader.

- Interpersonal-oriented, that approach will form good relationships and motivate me more, which would result in myself being more committed to achieving tasks and doing my job right. (Karlo, 21)

- The latter one is definitely more motivating because if the leader is completely task oriented and I don't have any kind of freedom in work, that would be demotivating, and I wouldn't see any purpose in what i'm doing (Nikolina, 25)

Although there were some respondents who chose leaders more oriented towards task achievement, they did not neglect the significance of followers' wellbeing,

perceiving healthy leader-follower relationship as a necessity. Reasons for their choice was based on their belief they would better understand company's objectives and their roles, as well as feeling more encouraged to deal with some challenging tasks.

- Task oriented so I can take it seriously, but ideally taking into consideration the wellbeing of employees and maintaining healthy work environment with high employee morale, as that way I would be more motivated to achieve most optimal results doing my tasks. (Hesam, 22)
- While relationships and a pleasant work environment contribute to employee wellbeing, structured objectives are necessary to accomplish tasks. Leaders that are more task-oriented may design difficult assignments that encourage employees. (Teodora, 22)

4.5 Generation Z and different leadership styles

This section aims to represent and provide the reader with understanding on how different leadership styles are perceived by the generation Z. Interview questions were designed in a way to target distinct characteristics of three different leadership styles which were previously outlined and described in the literature review. The overall objective was to enable the author to correlate respondents' opinions and attitudes towards specific leadership styles with their motivation to work. Thus, the obtained valuable insight would serve as valuable data for the author to end the study and draw certain conclusions from the evidence.

The following sequence is how the generation Z's attitudes towards specific leadership style will be presented: autocratic, democratic and transformational.

4.5.1 Attitudes towards autocratic leadership style

Most of the interviewees claim that having a leader who is strongly oriented towards task-achievement and who disregards interpersonal relationships at work would result in overly stressful environment for employees. Although such leadership style could make them more focused in the short-term as they receive a reward after

certain task achievement, interviewees claim that such situation would negatively affect their psychological state over time. Some of the answers were as follows:

- Incentives, in my opinion, are excellent motivators. However, a workplace that discourages interpersonal relationships can exacerbate stress and emotional health problems. I would not choose to work in an environment where executives focus exclusively on work accomplishments and treat employees as objects. (Teodora, 22)
- If I do the task right, i will be happy and proud and I would expect some kind of recognition and reward for that. However, otherwise I would feel scared and threatened if i dont do a good job, which now made me think some overly authoritarian behavior would increase my stress level at work. (Milena, 22)
- I would be able to work in this environment as it would keep me focused, especially at the beginning. However, in the long run I believe that it is not that good as some other factors also need to be considered, targeting some intrinsic motivators and considering the mental state of the employees. (Daria, 21)

One respondent had a different perspective and opinion on the interpersonal relationship and claimed to work better when the leader is more authoritative, stating that being obliged to establish relationships would cause unpleasant or unfair environment including flattery behavior. Therefore, she believes leader's authority at work would result in employees being more productive:

- I work better under those conditions. Although doing job right for the purpose of getting reward is not the only thing that motivates me, I would say that forcing interpersonal relationships would result in uncomfortable situations and maybe even flattery, putting work and productivity asides which is not very beneficial. (Mila, 22)

Next, respondents gave their opinion on the chain of command and clear organizational structure at work. Almost all of them were in favor of clear organizational structure in which employees know their roles and have their tasks clearly assigned, some of them directly correlating it to increased motivation levels. Arguments were that there would be less confusion and that work environment should be kept professional.

- In my opinion this will allow the firm and it shoddy to work cohesively, while attaining professionalism with higher output and if one is in a need of support than the entire body will have a clear approach towards solving issues of such. (Hesam, 22)
- It seems to me that such situation would be more efficient as there is no confusion, which would most likely increase the motivation level owing to the fact there is no fear of making mistake and disappointing the boss. (David, 23)

However, one respondent gave interesting answer, claiming that he perceives autocratic leadership approach outdated, pointing out that nowadays intrinsic motivation has to be considered for the most optimal outcomes.

- I would consider it old-fashioned in some way, too repetitive, demotivating as only incentive to do something is receiving that reward. I work better in situations in which my intrinsic motivation is also targeted. (Karlo, 21)

4.5.2 Attitudes towards democratic leadership style

When asked about their opinion on the working environment in which leader would be highly inclined to collaborative thinking and encourage employees' teamwork activities, interviewees were unsurprisingly ambivalent. Almost all of them were opposed to the situation od power-sharing, although such situation would hypothetically make them more influential within the organization. Their answers reflected their positive perception of a leader who has the main word and holds his

integrity and who would only include subordinates in opinion sharing and collaborative work when it comes to less formal activities. The mentioned could be attributed to generation Z being characterized as rather individualistic, self-reliant and less patient compared to previous generations, most likely due to their reliance on the Internet and less face-to-face communication (Generational White Paper, 2011; Bencsik, Horváth-Csikós, & Juhász, 2016), as outlined in the literature review.

Some of the answers below will describe their judgement on collaborative thinking, teamwork and power-sharing:

- I would be fine with this, if there was equal employee involvement. However, in my opinion when it comes to more important things than solely brainstorming, negative aspects would include being obliged to make group agreements, put collective interest first and sometimes struggle with understanding other's point of view when it completely differs from your own experience and knowledge. (Daria, 21)

- I don't consider myself as a team player. However, it is dependent upon the people with whom I work. If we share a similar way of thinking, we can achieve amazing results; if not, it can be difficult to strike a compromise. (Teodora, 22)

- At small groups, where is workers have defined roles, I think it would be advantageous, so there is diversity in attitudes and for broadening horizons. Still, it should remain formal, and workers should not get too much freedom in a way that it would make them overly confident- the leader is the one who should keep the integrity and main role in decision-making. (Mila, 22)

- I would prefer excluding democracy from work as it requires having individuals putting collective and firm interest first, thinking in terms of firm development rather than achieving some personal goals, what I think not many employees are able to do, especially not at the beginning when you are more concerned with yourself and making your own path. Also, most discussions would be meaningless and too long if everyone gets the opportunity to share opinion. (Alex, 19)

Their responses indicate they value collaborative thinking and opinion sharing when it comes to expanding one's horizons and being more open-minded. Therefore, companies could benefit from employee input in terms of discussion and diversified judgements. However, from the firm and leader perspective, they believe such circumstances would result in lower productivity.

- I think companies would benefit from including inexperienced employees in collaborative work in terms of opinion sharing and discussions, as it would improve their knowledge but also confidence and eagerness to gain more expertise. Being able to handle mistakes is necessary for development, however, I think decision making has to be done by superiors with experience. (Karlo, 21)

4.5.3   Attitudes towards transformational leadership style

Based on interviewees' answers, almost all had a positive perception towards working environment in which employees are encouraged towards change and making come positive remark. They were generally in favor of situations in which they would use their creativity and be able to do something valuable in long-term.

On the question asking how they would perceive working environment in which leader inspires and looks for employees inclined towards innovation, creativity and leaving an impact on the future, some of them answered:

- I have a positive perception on this, it would inspire me to participate. Especially speaking about circumstances in which the leader is enthusiastically communicating company's mission and vision with aim to gain followers' trust and eagerness for involvement. Although there are high levels of trust and cooperation needed, I think both parties would benefit from embracing growth inclination towards change. (Mila, 22)

- Although I find myself creative and open-minded, it would first appear to me as scary and stressful, as that kind of environment would be something new to me. Then I would probably push myself to participate! I expect to be even more motivated after overcoming that fear at first and proving myself. (Milena, 22)

- It seems to me that such situation is demanding at the beginning of one's career, however, with the right leader's approach towards employees, established trust and great communication skills, I would perceive it interesting and inspiring as it means I am doing something valuable and impactful. (Andrey, 20)

Some of them admitted being slightly skeptical at the initial phase of the process as it might be something new for them and their careers, however, most answers indicate they believe companies implementing such approach are more likely to strengthen employee commitment and trust. It could be said that such benefits are highly correlated to better firm performance and employee long-term engagement. In relation to that, one interviewee believes firms using the explained transformative approach would encounter less issues as they are considered contemporary. His positive perception is further assisted with argument that such inspirational approach would contribute to employee self-actualization, which was previously also outlined in the literature review as generation Z's highly valuable motivation factor (Patel D., 2017; Bencsik & Machova, 2016):

- I think those companies are most likely to prosper and keep up to date with ongoing changes… Being adaptive and flexible is nowadays very important. When it comes to innovation and future impact, it would motivate me to participate as I would see it as a way of self-actualization, in addition to many other tangible benefits it would bring to the firm. (Alex, 19)

5 Conclusion

The main aim of this thesis was to describe the importance of employee motivation, especially generation Z, and to examine its correlation with certain leadership approaches, namely: autocratic, democratic and transformational leadership styles. After collecting relevant literature and thorough background information, it became obvious that certain factors exert different influences on people's motivation to work and achieve organizational goals. Within every organization, there should be an appropriately skilled leader who is competent in exerting empowering influence on his or her followers, aiming towards most optimal organizational results and outcomes. In addition to that, during all the phases of this thesis, there was the author's tendency to put emphasis on establishing a healthy working environment with well-established norms and considerations, as well as having healthy relationship between a leader and a follower despite their age and expertise differences. For such reason, the focus was put on the generation Z, as is mostly consist of graduates entering the workforce nowadays. As previously explained in the literature review, they are at the beginning of their careers, carrying a wide array of their specific characteristics, habits, behavioral patterns and established attitudes.

The examined research question, which was: 'What is the impact of different leadership styles on employees' motivation to work and achieve organizational objectives?', cannot be answered easily and the subject had to be looked from different perspectives. It should be clear that some of their perceptions on healthy work environment significantly differ from their ancestors and workforce consisting of some previous generations. First, generation Z considers positive and warm organizational environment, including both their colleagues' and superiors' politeness and respect highly desired. They perceive establishing interpersonal relationships with their leaders and managers more valuable than some previous generations, mainly due to the reason of feeling more committed to achieve tasks when emotions and interpersonal relationships are present, which brings them satisfaction and pleasant time at work. They tend to neglect conventionally established working hours, while erasing clear boundaries between private life and work. It could be said that such way of thinking is aligned with their desired factors when searching for their job,

such as emphasizing their own perception of assigned tasks at work, i.e., realizing the actual purpose of work and overall company vision. They consider good remuneration unquestionable, putting more focus on other firm aspects, such as the possibility to further upgrade their skills or be promoted at work, upgrading their positions and reputation. Based on the respondents' answers on their work expectations and own perceptions, an increasing number of them is becoming more attracted to inherent satisfaction and fulfilling their need to achieve certain forms of self-actualization at work. As previously mentioned, generation Z is continuously aiming to find and understand the actual purpose of their work, trying to avoid routine and overly repetitive work without realizing what their company intends to do and achieve in the end.

When it comes to autocratic leadership style, generation Z employees are most likely to get discouraged in overly hierarchical working environment in which their leaders use their leading role as the main source of influence and power. They perceive leaders who put their power first and use it as a means to an end unprincipled and demotivating. Further, generation Z lacks enthusiasm and motivation to work when found in circumstances in which leaders underestimate their followers' abilities and competences, thus excluding them from participating in certain organizational activities or solely neglecting their opinion. They perceive autocratic leader's characteristics such as coercive use of power and tendency to implement transactional rewarding system demotivating and discouraging. Although such leadership style could be used to delegate more challenging tasks and might result in higher employee productivity at first, owing to its structure and clearly established roles; generation Z believes their optimal motivation levels would not be achieved due to the style negatively affecting their stress levels and mental state, as well negatively affecting their performance in the long term, all of which would result in employee resistance and decreased motivation.

When it comes to teamwork, collaborative thinking and opinion exchange, all of which are present in democracy and used by democratic leaders, generation Z is less likely to show interest and participate. They are more motivated to achieve certain task when they receive individual feedback and recognition from leaders. Despite the fact

generation Z is mostly perceived as open-minded and prejudice-free, they are still against accepting opinions and attitudes which are opposite of their own and they struggle to change their formerly shaped attitudes and beliefs to the topics of their interest. As they do not like to depend on others and are more self-reliant than previous generations, leaders who encourage power-sharing and democracy at work are most likely to find generation Z employees less motivated. Although democratic leadership has advantages such as increased employee participation in organizational activities and higher employee influence, generation Z is more in favour of leaders who hold the main word in decision-making and has established strong dignity.

Growing up in constantly changing environment paired with significant modifications in people's lifestyles, mostly owing to high reliance on technology and internet, generation Z is considered highly adaptive and open to changes. Such ability can be easily transitioned to the workplace in which they would be rather inclined towards innovations and leaving positive remarks on future, contributing to their need for self-development and growth. As generation Z is highly concerned with intrinsic values and their self-development, they would be highly motivated to work in the environment in which leader uses inspiring tone for communication and uses his or her role to appeal to followers' values, ideas, as well as inherent satisfaction, all of which are most correlated with transformational leadership approach (Naile & Selesho, 2014; Bass & Avolio, 1994; Warillow, 2012; Eagley et al., 2003). They deem employee engagement, as a result of emotional presence and better-established personal relationship with their leader, would result in far-reaching positive result for the company and accounts for higher employee commitment. Additionally, transformative leadership style provides strong leader-follower connectedness and commitment which would satisfy generation Z's need for individual consideration and mentorship, as such leaders consider listening, empowering and supporting their followers significant for the organizational health.

Although transformational leadership style might omit most optimal corporate results in terms of productivity and profit at first, generation Z is motivated by transformational leader's ability to exert higher levels of trust and respect owing to the fact they make their employees feel as an equally beneficial part of the group,

despite their age or lack of experience. Transformational leadership approach creates a spirit of co-operation, considering employee as a valuable asset of the firm, rather than objects obliged to comply with leader's demands. The described environment would positively influence generation Z's motivation to work as they would be attached to both leader and company's overall vision. In relation to that, they would be still eager to accomplish certain tasks even without considering the final reward or solely monetary compensation. Such visionary leadership is highly likely to enhance generation Z's intellectual stimulation, challenging them to be creative and innovative.

The attempt to find the most advantageous leadership style varies and depends on the industry and the type of jobs (Naile & Selesho, 2014; Taleghani et al., 2010). However, the findings of this thesis can be used as a guide and provide a direction in which leaders and managers could align their strategies if their goal is to enhance the generation Z employee motivation to work, while taking into consideration their needs and preferences. The results provide an insight into the most effective ways to take advantage of generation Z's specific characteristics, as well as a thorough understanding of their formed workplace attitudes. In turn, as optimal level of motivation is reached, companies could benefit from higher employee engagement, commitment and productivity, all of which would potentially result in better company performance and success.

6   Limitations

This section describes some of the limitations that author has encountered during the research. One of the major difficulties was obtaining interviewees who fulfilled the author's intended sample criteria and were willing to take part in the interviews. Furthermore, some of the issues that made interviews less appealing to the public were that interview questions could be considered intimate and as an invasion of privacy, as well as the long required for completing the phase, which is why the author opted for the snowball sampling method. One might not want to reveal very personal

opinions and attitudes towards leadership and their experience in the firms they might still work in. When it comes to key conclusions, the thesis was limited by generation Z having rather short work experience to make them compatible to form firm and definite opinion towards leadership and related approaches. Because most of them are at the very beginning of their careers and did not yet encounter many opportunities, their judgements and beliefs are more prone to change over time. Finally, when answering the questions, this thesis did not consider the size of the companies and the number of people within the organizations where participants were or are still working. Further research is needed to analyse different industries and make clear distinctions between generation Z employees in those industries, as they will have varied needs and motivators to work. Finally, while a sample size of 11 generation Z respondents is not completely indicative of the entire population, the results and conclusions of this thesis provide the reader with valuable insight into the topic being discussed. It provides a greater insight of generation Z's mindsets and ways of thinking in terms of their professional and career backgrounds, as well as the most important factors including leadership and their own motivation. The findings present meaningful explanations derived from the author's qualitative research, while also revealing more areas to be questioned and investigated in future research.

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8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1 – Respondent 1

1) Could you please introduce yourself with your name and age?

Answer: Karlo and I am 21 years old.

2) Could you please indicate your educational level (high school, university, masters) and country where you study, as well as your chosen field of study?

A: University in Geneva, Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration.

3) Please briefly explain your previous work experience, i.e., have you taken part in internship or were you employed? What was or what is your position and role at work? To which industry was it related?

A: I worked in family-owned company as account executive and part-time customer relationship management assistant. It includes various activities related to forming and maintaining customer relationships, dealing with many inquiries and providing assistance in using our IT services.

4) Overall, were you satisfied with the leadership and management style at your company? Has such management style been an influencing factor of you quitting or staying at that job and company?

A: I was satisfied as I worked in the company with the purpose to gain experience and encounter different situations that would advance both my peoples and technical skills, rather than getting some tangible rewards such as salary. It has already ended but I would not extend it further nor return to the same position, I did not really enjoy their type of leadership and management, as to me it seemed to be too traditional and outdated.

5) What positively affects your motivation to work and achieve organizational objectives? Please name some factors of your choice and add a brief explanation.

A: Besides good salary, I become very motivated when company offer its employees ability to upgrade to better positions and constantly work towards advancing their skills and expertise. Also, good working environment with good communication and leaders who show they appreciate my contributions and value me as an employee.

6) What does negatively affect your motivation to work? Please name some factors of your choice and add a brief explanation.

A: Putting too much emphasis on hierarchy and underestimating my working abilities only because of my age and less experience. I automatically consider such firm as old fashioned, and I lose my interest. Other factors would be a firm not having clear and interesting vision, no purpose in what I am doing and overly repetitive tasks.

7) In your opinion, what is the most effective communication between a leader and you as an employee? Do you prefer an open-door policy with your leader in which you can informally discuss and express your opinion, or you rather prefer more structured relationship with clear established roles and formal meetings?

A: I prefer structure but in terms of professionalism, everyone knowing their role, but I very appreciate firms in which it would still mean that I can freely communicate to my leader or supervisor, of course still in appropriate and formal manner. So, I would be discouraged and demotivated if firms do not practice open-door policy.

8) During your current or past working experience, did you have any opportunity to express your opinion or participate in any decision-making? If yes, please briefly describe the situation and state if you feel confident in such situations considering your current experience and knowledge.

A: I had many opportunities but I suppose only since my leader was my family member so I could participate. I was not very confident; I think I lacked knowledge in many discussions, but it actually motivated me to learn more and carefully listen. Maybe

unexpected but I consider it a good thing they did not really consider my opinion when making decisions.

9) How important do you perceive situation in which the leader allows inexperienced employee to be engaged in important organizational activities?

A: I think it's very valuable because that way, inexperienced workers will acquire more knowledge, probably will not repeat the same mistakes and they would also be more motivated because they feel valued despite their current role and position.

10) In your opinion, what is a good relationship between a leader and you as a follower, i.e., employee? What characteristics would you look for in a leader?

A: Confidence in what he or she is doing, knowing how to communicate with followers, inspiring, knowing how to get respect and having dignity, adaptive and knowing how to handle change.

11) Would you prefer to work for a company with a leader who is more task-oriented or interpersonal relationship-oriented? What would make you more motivated and why?

A: Interpersonal-oriented, that approach will form good relationships and motivate me more, which would result in myself being more committed to achieving tasks and doing my job right.

12) How would you perceive and feel in working environment in which leader is strongly oriented towards task achievement? To better illustrate, employees get a reward after doing the job right and establishing interpersonal relationship is not necessary.

A: I would consider it old-fashioned in some way, too repetitive, demotivating as only incentive to do something is receiving that reward. I work better in situations in which my intrinsic motivation is also targeted.

13) What is your opinion on organizational hierarchy with clear chain of command? How does the clear organizational structure where each

employee has their own tasks, clearly assigned roles and responsibilities influence you motivation to work?

A: It improves my motivation as I would not be confused in what I do and I would know what my leader's expectations are, however, I would be even more motivated if there are at least some opportunities which encourage teamwork or collaborative input, as that would improve our collegiality and be more interesting.

14) How would you perceive working environment in which leader encourages all employees to participate in collaborative thinking and decision-making? To better illustrate, employees express their own opinion, develop new ideas with colleagues and participate in problem-solving. What is your opinion on power-sharing?

A: I think companies would benefit from including inexperienced employees in collaborative work in terms of opinion sharing and discussions, as it would improve their knowledge but also confidence and eagerness to gain more expertise. Being able to handle mistakes is necessary for development, however, I think decision making has to be done by superiors with experience.

15) Would you be more motivated to work for a leader who appreciates your achieving tasks and doing the job right after which you get a reward, or you would rather be motivated to engage in collaborative thinking, discussion and decision-making at work despite all your formal work responsibilities?

A: I would be more motivated when I gain recognition and reward for something that I did, same which I would prefer to apply for all employees. Ignoring formal work responsibilities in the purpose of having discussions and collaborative thinking seems pointless to me as it should be done in formal meetings with certain goal.

16) How would you perceive the working environment in which leader inspires and seeks open-minded employees inclined towards innovation, creativity and leaving an impact on the future? Would it make you feel stressed and under pressure, or you would it rather inspire you and make you want to participate?

A: I have a positive perception on this, it would inspire me to participate. Especially speaking about circumstances in which the leader is enthusiastically communicating company's mission and vision with aim to gain followers' trust and eagerness for involvement. Although there are high levels of trust and cooperation needed, I think both parties would benefit from embracing growth inclination towards change.

8.2 Appendix 2 – Respondent 2

1) Could you please introduce yourself with your name and age?

Answer: My name is Daria, 21 years old.

2) Could you please indicate your educational level (high school, university, masters) and country where you study, as well as your chosen field of study?

A: Currently studying in university in Austria, International Management.

3) Please briefly explain your previous work experience, i.e., have you taken part in internship or were you employed? What was or what is your position and role at work? To which industry was it related?

A: I have previous work experience in PR, as well as most work related to marketing management.

4) Overall, were you satisfied with the leadership and management style at your company? Has such management style been an influencing factor of you quitting or staying at that job and company?

A: I was satisfied with the values that were shown by the company throughout my work there, the management style was definitely influential for my work there because it was a very friendly work environment where the top management could also speak freely with their employees, therefore it was not the factor that influenced my leave.

5) What positively affects your motivation to work and achieve organizational objectives? Please name some factors of your choice and add a brief explanation.

A: One factor that affects my motivation to work at a company are definitely the monetary rewards, as i am currently a student it is very helpful for me. Another factor is the environment of the workplace, this includes the employees and overall ecosystem that is present. Lastly, the tangible aspect such as prospects of working somewhere else after leaving the job, or any measurable characteristics that I know

i can work towards (becoming a manager) working towards a certain position is also a bonus.

6) What does negatively affect your motivation to work? Please name some factors of your choice and add a brief explanation.

A: The values of the company are something that really catch my attention from the beginning, if they are working strictly for profit that is something that does not motivate me. Another thing is the people that work there- if their work ethic is not strong and they do not believe in working towards goal that is something that demotivates me. Lastly, the idea of working from 9-5 without doing any real work is not interesting for me.

7) In your opinion, what is the most effective communication between a leader and you as an employee? Do you prefer an open-door policy with your leader in which you can informally discuss and express your opinion, or you rather prefer more structured relationship with clear established roles and formal meetings?

A: I believe in an open-door policy between the leader and their subordinates. Considering that I know many companies with such a way of dealing with company matters, I think that being able to express opinions openly to leaders and managers will lead to a generation of better ideas.

8) During your current or past working experience, did you have any opportunity to express your opinion or participate in any decision-making? If yes, please briefly describe the situation and state if you feel confident in such situations considering your current experience and knowledge.

A: I am personally the type of person that enjoys sharing my opinion on matters that I am knowledgeable, therefore it is something that I would like to engage in when i get the chance. Currently I am working on a project where I got to the role that I am working on due to the fact that I stepped up and explained why I would be the most suitable.

9) How important do you perceive situation in which the leader allows inexperienced employee to be engaged in important organizational activities?

A: I think it is important because that also enables for a good learning process.

10) In your opinion, what is a good relationship between a leader and you as a follower, i.e., employee? What characteristics would you look for in a leader?

A: A good relationship is being able to discuss important cases for work with trust, being able to share knowledge and experiences, be open about personal needs as well as have a balanced work-personal life.

11) Would you prefer to work for a company with a leader who is more task-oriented or interpersonal relationship-oriented? What would make you more motivated and why?

A: I would be more open to work with a leader that is task-oriented but one that values having open discussions, in that way it would keep me motivated, because i would know that i can rely on an honest opinion.

12) How would you perceive and feel in working environment in which leader is strongly oriented towards task achievement? To better illustrate, employees get a reward after doing the job right and establishing interpersonal relationship is not necessary.

A: I would be able to work in this environment as it would keep me focused, especially at the beginning. However, in the long run I believe that it is not that good as some other factors also need to be considered, targeting some intrinsic motivators and considering the mental state of the employees.

13) What is your opinion on organizational hierarchy with clear chain of command? How does the clear organizational structure where each employee has their own tasks, clearly assigned roles and responsibilities influence you motivation to work?

A: I am the type of person that usually likes to rely on my own knowledge and abilities when organizing something, even at my home. Therefore, I would be more drawn to this.

14) How would you perceive working environment in which leader encourages all employees to participate in collaborative thinking and decision-making? To better illustrate, employees express their own opinion, develop new ideas with colleagues and participate in problem-solving. What is your opinion on power-sharing?

A: I would be fine with this, if there was equal employee involvement. However, in my opinion when it comes to more important things than solely brainstorming, negative aspects would include being obliged to make group agreements, put collective interest first and sometimes struggle with understanding other's point of view when it completely differs from your own experience and knowledge.

15) Would you be more motivated to work for a leader who appreciates your achieving tasks and doing the job right after which you get a reward, or you would rather be motivated to engage in collaborative thinking, discussion and decision-making at work despite all your formal work responsibilities?

A: It depends on the job that needs to be done, however I do believe in being recognized for achievements,

16) How would you perceive the working environment in which leader inspires and seeks open-minded employees inclined towards innovation, creativity and leaving an impact on the future? Would it make you feel stressed and under pressure, or you would it rather inspire you and make you want to participate?

A: I actually do see myself inclined towards innovation and doing something that can positively impact future in some way. When it comes to leadership, it would be extremely motivating for me if there is some attractive company vision communicated by leader who aims to engage employees in the process. However, a leader who knows how to establish mutual trust and respect is necessary for this

kind of environment. Thus, I would say such situation would only increase both employee motivation and commitment.

8.3   Appendix 3 – Respondent 3

1) Could you please introduce yourself with your name and age?

Answer: Yes, my name is David, and I am 23 years old.

2) Could you please indicate your educational level (high school, university, masters) and country where you study, as well as your chosen field of study?

A: Bachelor's, University in Rome, related to marketing management.

3) Please briefly explain your previous work experience, i.e., have you taken part in internship or were you employed? What was or what is your position and role at work? To which industry was it related?

A: I have worked as a social media marketing manager for one startup.

4) Overall, were you satisfied with the leadership and management style at your company? Has such management style been an influencing factor of you quitting or staying at that job and company?

A: I was satisfied to an extent, taking into consideration that my field of work requires much creativity and collaborative work- most of my colleagues were task-oriented which over time made me look for another company to work in.

5) What positively affects your motivation to work and achieve organizational objectives? Please name some factors of your choice and add a brief explanation.

A: What motivates me most is knowing that I am working for a company which develops my both technical and soft skills, knowing that I am doing something positive for myself in terms of self-development. Being able to gain recognition and promotion, the ability to advance at work. Of course, satisfactory monetary compensation is a must for me to stay at the company.

6) What does negatively affect your motivation to work? Please name some factors of your choice and add a brief explanation.

A: If I am required to be involved in a teamwork, I will get discouraged working with closed-minded and uninspired colleagues. Next, I would say autocratic boss who look at his employees as objects. Also, being required to work overtime and having no incentive to do so; or at least seeing some benefit of such work.

7) In your opinion, what is the most effective communication between a leader and you as an employee? Do you prefer an open-door policy with your leader in which you can informally discuss and express your opinion, or you rather prefer more structured relationship with clear established roles and formal meetings?

A: I would say open door policy. Otherwise, in my opinion the working environment cannot remain healthy if there is lack of communication between superiors and subordinates. Of course, there should be hierarchy to respect, however, sharing opinion and being able to report certain circumstances to supervisor/manager is a must.

8) During your current or past working experience, did you have any opportunity to express your opinion or participate in any decision-making? If yes, please briefly describe the situation and state if you feel confident in such situations considering your current experience and knowledge.

A: Yes, my main task was based on teamwork and collaborative discussion and as I am naturally eager to participate and state my opinion, I did feel confident. However, when it comes to final decision making, superiors and higher managers were concluding the final decision each time.

9) How important do you perceive situation in which the leader allows inexperienced employee to be engaged in important organizational activities?

A: I think it's important as that way inexperienced workers can gain more knowledge and observe how the things can be done better. Still, they should not have too much influence on some important decision-making as leaders need to keep their role and respect.

10) In your opinion, what is a good relationship between a leader and you as a follower, i.e., employee? What characteristics would you look for in a leader?

A: I think leaders have to be treated with respect and they need to maintain their authority. They need dignity, confidence and good communication skills.

11) Would you prefer to work for a company with a leader who is more task-oriented or interpersonal relationship-oriented? What would make you more motivated and why?

A: Interpersonal relationship oriented as that way I would be more motivated to work even without their supervision and I would try harder to achieve something even when not considering monetary compensation.

12) How would you perceive and feel in working environment in which leader is strongly oriented towards task achievement? To better illustrate, employees get a reward after doing the job right and establishing interpersonal relationship is not necessary.

A: If it's the job that I truly like I think I would be satisfied with described situation if the reward is very high salary… But I think it wouldn't last for too long, or my motivation will significantly decrease as I would feel as if I was machine rather than human being.

13) What is your opinion on organizational hierarchy with clear chain of command? How does the clear organizational structure where each employee has their own tasks, clearly assigned roles and responsibilities influence you motivation to work?

A: It seems to me that such situation would be more efficient as there is no confusion, which would most likely increase the motivation level owing to the fact there is no fear of making mistake and disappointing the boss.

14) How would you perceive working environment in which leader encourages all employees to participate in collaborative thinking and decision-making? To better illustrate, employees express their own opinion, develop new

ideas with colleagues and participate in problem-solving. What is your opinion on power-sharing?

A: I would be pleased, I think such working environment provides employees with objectivity, people become more open-minded and can learn something new when seeing or listening to other's opinion and ideas. Also, it can be easier as tasks do not depend only on you. However, looking at firm's productivity and overall success, power-sharing would most likely lead to more mistakes, time delays and interest conflicts.

15) Would you be more motivated to work for a leader who appreciates your achieving tasks and doing the job right after which you get a reward, or you would rather be motivated to engage in collaborative thinking, discussion and decision-making at work despite all your formal work responsibilities?

A: I would be more motivated to participate in such collaborative environment and teamwork if the first one means that leader only appreciates my task achievement and sees no other contribution that I bring in the workplace as an employee.

16) How would you perceive the working environment in which leader inspires and seeks open-minded employees inclined towards innovation, creativity and leaving an impact on the future? Would it make you feel stressed and under pressure, or you would it rather inspire you and make you want to participate?

A: It would probably inspire me to work harder to prove myself and get my manager's attention.