

The Comparison of Work Motivation Between Generation Z and Millennials Generation

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Abstract

In line with the ever-changing era, understanding the work motivation of Generation Z and Millennials has become a highly significant issue in the context of human resource management and organizational productivity. Comparing work motivation between Generation Z and Millennials carries significant implications in the context of the workplace, human resource management, and corporate strategy development. Understanding the work motivation of these two generations can help organizations enhance employee engagement and performance. The comparison of work motivation is examined based on influencing variables, including the work environment, work commitment, and individual characteristics. This research employs a quantitative approach with subjects consisting of Generation Z and Millennials in the city of Samarinda. A questionnaire was distributed to collect data regarding their perceptions. The results revealed that work motivation in Generation Z is influenced solely by individual characteristics, while in Millennials, it is affected by the work environment and commitment.

1. Introduction

The rapid pace of development has drawn the attention of human resource management, particularly in Indonesia, to the phenomenon occurring in the world of work, which is the demographic changes in the workforce. Currently, the workforce's demographic composition includes three major generations: Generation X (born between 1965 and 1980), Generation Y (born between 1981 and 1996), and Generation Z (born between 1997 and 2012). Generation Z is often referred to as the iGeneration or known as the digital and internet generation. According to the 2020 Population Census (www.bps.go.id, 2020), the majority of the population in East Kalimantan is dominated by Generation Z, Millennials, and Generation X. The proportion of Generation Z reaches 29.07 percent of the total population (1.09 million people), while Millennials make up 27.55 percent (1.04 million people), and Generation X constitutes 21.50 percent of the total population in East Kalimantan (0.81 million people). Generation X and Millennials are part of the productive age group, which has the potential to accelerate economic growth.

In the present day, Generation Z has entered the workforce. Regarding work motivation, Generation Z tends to prioritize companies that align with their values. However, their ability to develop skills makes them more self-

reliant in achieving their social well-being and less dependent on the companies they work for. Similar to Millennials, Generation Z also exhibits strong financial motivation. Generation Z views financial success as a way to progress, while Millennials see it as a means to catch up. Generation Z is known for its high levels of motivation and work enthusiasm because they are determined to give their best for themselves. The differences in work motivation are due to variations in characteristics between these two generations.

Research has shown that each generation has different perspectives on work and the work environment. Generation Z appears to have different requirements and motivational factors than the previous generations. When they join an organization, this generation will bring their unique needs to the workplace. Therefore, it is essential for organizations to understand what matters to Generation Z beforehand to enhance their attractiveness, both within and outside the industry, and to shape the corporate culture and work environment that provide a specific advantage in attracting talented employees from Generation Z, which, in turn, will support the long-term growth of the organization. (Singh & Dangmei, 2016)

In a constantly evolving era, with rapid technological advancements, diverse labor market demands, and variations in generational values and preferences, understanding the work motivation of Generation Z and Millennials has become a crucial issue in the context of human resource management and organizational productivity. Comparing how various factors influence work motivation between Generation Z and Millennials is essential because it has significant implications for the world of work, human resource management, and corporate strategy development. Understanding the factors influencing their motivation can help organizations create a more balanced work environment. Thus, comparative research on work motivation between Generation Z and Millennials provides valuable insights that can assist organizations in meeting the needs and expectations of employees and achieving long-term success in an ever-changing market.

2. Methodology

This research uses quantitative research methods with a survey approach. The subjects of the study are Generation Z and Millennials who are employed and residing in the city of Samarinda. This research method was chosen to systematically collect data using a questionnaire specifically designed to measure work motivation, work environment, commitment, and individual characteristics. The questionnaire underwent validity and reliability testing before implementation. Data collection involved distributing questionnaires to selected respondents, who were requested to complete the questionnaire as per the provided guidelines using Google Forms. The collected data was subsequently analyzed using multiple regression analysis to identify the influence of independent variables (work environment, commitment, and individual characteristics) on the dependent variable (work motivation) for both Generation Z and Millennials. The results were then used to compare work motivation between Generation Z and Millennials.

3. Literature Review

3.1 Work Environment

By creating a conducive and comfortable working environment, it is expected that employees will feel secure and at ease when carrying out their tasks. This is anticipated to enhance employee motivation to perform better. Employees can be motivated by their working environment, particularly those who play pivotal roles in task completion. A highly motivated employee will execute their duties diligently without the need for constant supervision from their leaders. Motivated employees will willingly adhere to workplace regulations. Ultimately, highly motivated employees in their work endeavors are likely to succeed because they utilize their time efficiently to accomplish assigned tasks. This is because motivation propels individuals to strive for optimal outcomes, and it is no surprise that highly motivated employees also exhibit superior performance. The assessment of the working environment is based on its indicators which can be delineated into measuring the technological, human, and organizational aspects of the workplace (Insany et al., 2022; Dolot, 2018). By paying attention to a favorable working environment or creating a work atmosphere that can inspire, there will be a positive impact on employees' enthusiasm in carrying out their responsibilities.

3.2 Work Commitments

Organizational commitment is a combination of attitude and actions. When an individual is committed to an organization, it serves as a driving force for them to work to the best of their abilities in achieving common goals. In this context, commitment becomes a critical factor in realizing organizational success; high commitment among employees correlates positively with high levels of work motivation. Conversely, if employee satisfaction levels are low, their work motivation tends to decrease. Organizational commitment entails an effort to understand and engage with the organization while lacking a desire to leave it (Stephen, 2015). Organizational commitment encompasses an individual's relative ability to engage with a specific organization, and the level of individual

engagement in this organization is highly dependent on their personal values (T. Mowday et al., 1981). In the research conducted by (Busro, 2018), commitment indicators include Affective Commitment, Continuance Commitment, and Normative Commitment.

3.3 Individual Characteristics

The human resources within a company possess varying thoughts, feelings, and personalities, which give employees their unique qualities capable of forming individual characteristics. Whether these characteristics manifest positively or negatively in employees depends on how they are applied. These differences in characteristics are carried into the workplace, thereby resulting in varying levels of motivation among individuals. According to (Ghezanda et al., 2001), individual characteristics encompass elements such as aspirations, behaviors, and needs that individuals bring to their work environment. Individual characteristics as the differing perspectives, ambitions, desires, and strengths of each person. Even though people work in the same place, the level of satisfaction of each individual differs, and these differences can impact the workplace. According to (H. Fauziah, 2021), there are four indicators of individual characteristics: abilities, values, attitudes, and interests.

3.4 Motivation

Motivated employees will have a strong desire to achieve specific goals with a high level of effort (intensity) and the willingness to pursue them over a specific period (persistence). On the other hand, according to (Siagian & P, 2019), motivation is the force that drives individuals to contribute as optimally as possible for the success of the organization. By achieving the organization's goals, the individual goals of those within the organization are also accomplished. According to (Sedarmayanti, 2009), there are six indicators of work motivation: Achievement, recognition, advancement, the job itself, growth opportunities, and responsibility.

4. Results and Discussions

Before conducting data analysis, classical assumption tests were performed on the data, and it was found that the data in this study met the classical assumptions, including normality, homoscedasticity, and the absence of multicollinearity. With these assumptions being met, the results of the regression analysis become more valid and reliable.

Table 1 *Data analysis*

Generation Z				Millennials			
Adjusted R Square	0,208			Adjusted R Square	0,329		
F	11,681			F	16,016		
Sig	0,000			Sig	0,000		
	B	t	Sig		B	t	Sig
Constant	1,242	3,444	0,001	Constant	1,037	3,475	0,001
Work Environment	0,058	0,627	0,532	Work Environment	0,358	3,730	0,000
Commitment	0,141	1,544	0,125	Commitment	0,209	2,384	0,019
Individual Characteristics	0,392	4,558	0,000	Individual Characteristics	0,088	1,209	0,230

Based on Table 1, it is evident that simultaneous testing on both Generation Z and Millennials is significant. This implies that, simultaneously, the variables of the work environment, commitment, and individual characteristics have a significant impact on motivation for both Generation Z and Millennials. In other words, these three variables collectively explain the variations in work motivation observed in both generations. However, based on the coefficient of determination for both generations, it appears that the influence of these independent variables might not be exceedingly significant in work motivation. This indicates that there are other factors beyond the work environment, commitment, and individual characteristics that also affect the work motivation of these two generations. Furthermore, it is essential to consider that work motivation is a complex and multifactorial concept. Factors such as career development, job satisfaction, organizational culture, and changes in job demands can also play a role in shaping individual work motivation. Therefore, this research provides initial insights into the influence of the examined variables, but further research is needed to investigate additional factors comprehensively affecting the work motivation of Generation Z and Millennials. This can assist

organizations in developing more effective strategies to enhance work motivation and employee engagement for both of these generations.

Subsequently, in the partial test, it was found that only individual characteristics have a significant influence on the work motivation of Generation Z, whereas for Millennials, the significant factors are the work environment and commitment. This indicates differences in the factors affecting work motivation between these two generations, which can be considered as distinct 'treatments.' These differences underscore the importance for organizations to consider the varying characteristics and preferences between Generation Z and Millennials in their human resource management and employee motivation strategies. For Generation Z, the focus can be placed on recognizing personal values and individual preferences in their work, accommodating the need for recognition and appreciation of individual achievements. On the other hand, for Millennials, creating a work environment that supports career development and strengthens commitment to the organization can be a priority.

In the working world, individual characteristics can influence work motivation when an employee enjoys performing their tasks. This aligns with research conducted by (Ghezanda et al., 2013), which indicates that individual characteristics have a positive and significant influence on employee work motivation. Other studies, such as the one conducted by (Djari, 2018), also emphasize the significant influence of individual characteristics on employee work motivation. These findings are further supported by earlier research by (Setiawan & Bodroastuti, 2012), indicating that individual characteristics have a positive and significant influence on employee work motivation. It is essential for companies to pay attention to individual characteristics, including interests and attitudes, to enhance competence in the workplace, raise employee motivation, and satisfy their needs. Management that caters to the unique individual characteristics of Generation Z, which is known for its relaxed yet highly motivated work ethic, is particularly suitable. By acknowledging their work interests, appreciating individual job performance, and promoting a positive attitude toward work-related challenges, employee work motivation can be increased.

Generation Z exhibits distinct characteristics, including high self-confidence, a positive outlook on their future careers, and a tendency towards entrepreneurship. They are known for their creativity and innovation. Although they are active on social media, Generation Z tends to be less involved in civic activities compared to older generations. Studies indicate that they prefer working independently and are somewhat reluctant to engage in team-based projects. This tendency may be attributed to their preference for virtual communication, which often involves abbreviated language and affects their listening skills and social interaction abilities. Furthermore, extensive use of social media may negatively impact their formal communication skills, emphasizing the need for improving formal communication abilities (Maria, 2016).

The unique characteristics of each individual in Generation Z contribute to a diversity of work approaches. Interviews conducted with Generation Z representatives from various professional backgrounds reveal that their initial motivation to work is to fill their spare time while pursuing their studies. Additionally, (David & Jonah, 2017) book titled "Gen Z at Work: How the Next Generation is Transforming the Workplace" outlines seven key characteristics of Generation Z, one of which is "driven." It is evident that Generation Z has ambitious and high-curiosity spirits, eager for new experiences and a job that aligns with their passion. Some are even willing to venture outside their areas of expertise due to the challenge it presents. These characteristics result in Generation Z having low job loyalty as they consistently seek new experiences. Being the youngest age group in the workforce, they believe they need more experiences to reach their desired career ladder.

Interviews conducted with several millennials in Samarinda city emphasize the importance of colleagues in the work environment. Supportive colleagues who can collaborate make the work atmosphere enjoyable, ultimately enhancing work motivation. This aligns with indicators in the work environment, indicating that millennial employees highly agree that supportive relationships with colleagues help increase motivation and well-being. Millennials in Samarinda city express their desire for a clean work environment, good lighting, and freedom from external noise. Survey data from millennial employees in Samarinda city strongly agree that technological advancements significantly improve work efficiency, indicating that technological progress plays a substantial role in job efficiency, which, in turn, affects work motivation.

In conclusion, this analysis suggests that a better work environment created by an organization or company can provide comfort and security for work activities. As a result, most employees are motivated to work by showcasing their respective skills. As (Aktarina, 2015) states, the work environment in a company is essential for management to consider. A good work environment is safe, pleasant, peaceful, clean, free from noise, well-lit, and devoid of any threats and disturbances that could hinder employees from working optimally. These research findings are consistent with previous studies conducted by (Baribin & Cici Bela Saputri, 2020; Maytania, 2022; Nawawi et al., 2020), all of which showed a significant influence of the work environment on employee work motivation. Furthermore, findings by (Haslindah et al., 2021) indicated that the work environment has a significant impact on work motivation. Another study by (Arjun et al., 2022) revealed that a pleasant work environment can significantly enhance employee work motivation. These results are also supported by earlier

research conducted by (Ingsiyah et al., 2019), showing that the work environment has a positive and significant impact on employee work motivation.

Regarding Millennial work commitment, they desire flexible work schedules and seek opportunities to channel their creativity and contribute positively to the company. Work commitment among Millennials can be enhanced by providing opportunities for career development and clarifying the organization's vision, mission, and ideology. This is consistent with indicators of work commitment, where, on average, Millennials in Samarinda strongly agree that they are concerned about the difficulty of finding the same or better job. As (Nurhudiana, 2020) stated, high work commitment can motivate employees to work harder to achieve the company's expected targets and develop a stronger desire to continue working for that company. The results of this study align with research conducted by (Prasetyaningrum, 2020), indicating that work commitment has a positive and significant impact on work motivation. In other words, the higher the work commitment of employees, the higher their work motivation.

It is important to note that this research only focuses on the tested variables, and there are many other factors that can influence work motivation that need to be considered. Therefore, further research and in-depth analysis can provide a more detailed understanding of the work motivation of Generation Z and Millennials. The results of this study can serve as a foundation for developing human resource management and employee motivation strategies that are more effective within organizations. These results provide a deeper understanding of how organizations can effectively treat their employees based on their generation, ultimately enhancing employee motivation and performance. Therefore, customized human resource management strategies that consider the characteristics of each generation can help organizations achieve their goals and retain motivated employees.

5. Conclusion

In the context of the research on the comparison of work motivation between Generation Z and Millennials, the study results indicate significant differences in the factors influencing the work motivation of both generations. Work motivation in Generation Z tends to be more influenced by individual characteristics, such as personal values and preferences, while in Millennials, work motivation is more influenced by workplace factors and the level of commitment to the organization. These findings illustrate the complexity of the factors that influence work motivation among different generations. Generation Z tends to be more self-reliant and focused on personal needs fulfillment in the context of employment, while Millennials may be more open to the influence of workplace factors and commitment to the organization as drivers of their motivation.

The implications of these findings are that successful human resource management strategies and workplace environment development must consider the differences in work motivation between these generations. While the motivation of Generation Z can be enhanced through approaches that consider individual characteristics, Millennials may respond better to efforts aimed at improving a supportive work environment and the level of commitment to the organization. This research provides a better understanding of how organizations can optimize work motivation among these two generations, which, in turn, can contribute to better performance and long-term success in the ever-changing world of work.

6. Recommendations

Recommendations in the research on the comparison of work motivation between Generation Z and Millennials may include the following:

1. **Development of Human Resource Management Strategies:** Companies and organizations need to develop human resource management strategies that take into account the differences in work motivation between Generation Z and Millennials. These strategies should be designed to understand and support the work motivation needs of each generation.
2. **Leadership Training:** Leadership training should encompass an understanding of how to motivate and manage team members from both of these generations. Leaders need to learn how to communicate and support Generation Z and Millennial employees in a manner that aligns with their motivation characteristics.
3. **Creation of Supportive Work Environments:** Organizations should invest in creating work environments that support the motivation of employees, especially Millennials. This may involve improvements in the quality of work-life, the development of growth opportunities, and increasing employee engagement.
4. **Clear Career Development Programs:** Millennials tend to seek clear career paths. Therefore, organizations can consider providing structured and clear career development programs that help motivate and retain Generation Z and Millennial employees.
5. **Utilization of Technology and Communication Tools:** Generation Z and Millennials have grown up in the technology era. Hence, organizations can consider leveraging technology and communication tools that allow both generations to interact and contribute in ways they prefer.

6. Continuous Understanding: Further research and monitoring of changes in the work motivation of these two generations are essential. Organizations need to continually understand changes in values, preferences, and motivating factors that may evolve over time.

These recommendations can assist organizations in creating work environments that support the work motivation of employees from both of these generations, ultimately contributing to improved performance and long-term success.

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Conflict of Interest

Author declare that there is no conflict of interests regarding the publication of the paper.

Author Contribution

All authors confirm contribution on the paper. All authors reviewed the results and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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