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**THE APPROACH OF THE REPRESENTATIVES OF
THE Z GENERATION TO THEIR OWN DEVELOPMENT
AND FUTURE PROFESSIONAL CAREER
– STUDENT PERSPECTIVE**

**PODEJŚCIE PRZEDSTAWICIELI POKOLENIA Z
DO WŁASNEGO ROZWOJU I PRZYSZŁEJ KARIERY
ZAWODOWEJ – PERSPEKTYWA STUDENTÓW**

Abstract: Another generation of young people, after Y generation, who is currently standing at the threshold of their careers, and for employers - a new quality of employees, with specific attitudes, aspirations and expectations towards work and professional development, is the Z generation. Recognizing and understanding the attitude of the representatives of the Z generation to matters related to professional work is important from the point of view of constructing motivational job offers and building the involvement of young employees in organizations. The main goal of the research presented in this study was to identify the approach of the representatives of the Z generation to their own development and future career and their expectations related to work. The research aimed at achieving the above goal was carried out using the questionnaire method. It was conducted among students of the Faculty of Economic Sciences of the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, who represented the Z generation.

Key words: generation Z, students, approach to development and career, expectations towards work, motivating to work

Streszczenie: Pokolenie Z to kolejna, po pokoleniu Y, generacja młodych ludzi stojących obecnie u progu swoich karier zawodowych, a dla pracodawców – nowa jakość pracownika, o specyficznych postawach, aspiracjach i oczekiwaniach wobec pracy i rozwoju zawodowego. Poznanie i zrozumienie nastawienia przedstawicieli generacji Z do kwestii związanych z pracą zawodową jest istotne z punktu widzenia konstruowania motywacyjnych ofert zatrudnienia i budowania zaangażowania młodych pracowników w organizacjach. Podstawowym celem badań prezentowanych w niniejszym opracowaniu była identyfikacja podejścia przedstawicieli pokolenia Z do własnego rozwoju oraz przyszłej kariery, a także ich oczekiwań związanych z pracą zawodową. Badania służące realizacji celu przeprowadzono metodą ankietową. Objęto nimi reprezentujących generację Z studentów Wydziału Nauk Ekonomicznych Uniwersytetu Warmińsko-Mazurskiego w Olsztynie.

Słowa kluczowe: pokolenie Z, studenci, podejście do rozwoju i kariery zawodowej, oczekiwania wobec pracy, motywowanie do pracy

Introduction

In the light of socio-demographic conditions, an important challenge faced by employers is to manage people representing different age groups. Issues concerning generational diversity seems to be crucial from the point of view of the changes that take place on the labor market and the essential area of human resource management in organizations. Different socioeconomic conditions, in which particular generations have grown up, are reflected in their attitudes, behaviors, expectations and preferences related to professional work, development and career. In this perspective, the representatives of the Z generation, who are at the threshold of their professional careers, constitute a very specific group of people.

According to the modern approach, career, seen as a source of fulfilling professional aspirations, is associated with a life career and takes into account human de-

velopment at particular stages, through various forms of education and non-educational activities, as well as opportunities to gain experience, and what is inseparably linked with the above-mentioned is the processes of developing attitudes, system of values and motivation to increase one's value on the labor market and take up professional activity. Implementing a career should give a sense of internal satisfaction and fulfillment, be consistent with one's expectations and aspirations. This interpretation is important from the point of view of the employer, who, by providing employees with opportunities for professional development and meeting expectations related to work, can obtain benefits in the form of a high level of motivation and organizational commitment, which is reflected in the stabilization of employment of valuable employees and the effectiveness of the organization's functioning.

At a time when acquiring, retaining and building young people's as the basis for building competitive advantage become important challenges for human resource management in organizations, it becomes more and more significant to diagnose the approach and expectations with regard to work and career of the people who will be most wanted by employers in a few years. The group includes students, representing the Z generation, who are the population of future employees.

1. Generation Z – characteristic features

The concept of generation is understood as a group of people born in the same period of time who, due to similar age, grew up in similar conditions, experiencing similar situations and events¹. While the definition of generation is quite unambiguous, the issue of distinguishing generations depends on the convention adopted and may cast doubts in various cases. In the literature on the subject, numerous classifications of generations can be found that differ from each other in both the adopted nomenclature and the dates denoting the years of birth of their representatives. The following generational groups constitute the most frequently indicated ones²:

- The Traditionalists (Veterans) – born in the years 1922 – 1945;
- Baby Boomers (BB) – born in the years 1946 – 1964;
- Generation X – born in the years 1965 – 1979;
- Generation Y – born in the years 1980 – 1989;
- Generation Z – born after 1990³.

¹ M. Hardey, *Generation C content, creation, connections and choice*, "International Journal of Market Research" 2011, vol. 53, No. 6, p. 749-751; Ch. Shih Yung, *Millennials in the Workplace: A Conceptual Analysis of Millennials' Leadership and Followership Styles*, "International Journal of Human Resource Studies" 2012, vol. 2, No. 2, s. 72; T.H. Reisenwitz, R. Iyer, *Differences in generation X and generations Y: Implications for the organization and marketers*, "Marketing Management Journal" 2009, vol. 19, iss. 2, p. 91-103.

² I. Warwas, A. Rogozińska-Pawelczyk, *Zarządzanie zasobami ludzkimi w nowoczesnej organizacji. Aspekty organizacyjne i psychologiczne*, Wyd. Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, Łódź 2016, p. 80.

³ As for the Y generation (also referred to as Millennials), it is most commonly assumed that they are

The Z Generation, also referred to as Generation C (standing for such words as: *connected, communicating, computerized*), iGeneration, Net Gen, or Gen Tech, is most often described as a generation brought up among the achievements of modern technology: mobile phones, laptops, the Internet, computer games, etc. Modern technologies are natural for them and they are called "the children of the Internet"⁴.

It is believed that the Z generation is by far the most educated and most familiar with modern technology, which is not only a tool to improve their work and reconcile their private and professional life, but constitutes an integral part of life, in which working with technology has become second nature to them⁵. However, this situation has both advantages and disadvantages. On one hand, young people show great freedom in using modern technology, they can function in both real and virtual worlds simultaneously and use the technical achievements to collect various types of data and communicate with the environment, on the other – while living online, their skills to establish direct contacts and verbal communication are impaired, they have problems with concentration, as well as the analysis and evaluation of information⁶.

It is also believed that, with regard to technology, it is a generation that does not need an authority to have access to information⁷. Instead, what they do want and need is constant feedback, and what they are focused on is their own development⁸. Among the most important characteristics of the Z generation representatives the following are also mentioned:

- building and using networks of friends and acquaintances for professional and private purposes (*networking*),
- openness and assertiveness while communicating their own expectations,
- ability to find balance between private and professional life.

Generally, it is assumed that representatives of the Z and Y generations have many features in common, the latter proving to be more advanced in some areas than the former. However, some differences between the two generation can be indicated, as well (Table 1).

people born after 1980, in the case of the youngest generation, however, there is no such unanimity as far as the date of the generational change is concerned. Some studies also apply the concept of Z generation to people born after 1995 – A. Smolbik-Jęczyński, *Kształtowanie własnej kariery zawodowej w kontekście wielopokoleniowości*, Wyd. Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego we Wrocławiu, Wrocław 2017, s. 140 lub nawet po roku 2000 – L. Shepard, *How to Be the Employee Your Company Can't Live Without: 18 Ways to Become Indispensable*, John Wiley, Hoboken NJ 2006, p. 13.

⁴ P. Woszczyk, *Zarządzanie wiekiem – ku wzrostowi efektywności organizacji*, [in:] P. Woszczyk, M. Czernecka (red.), *Człowiek to inwestycja. Podręcznik do zarządzania wiekiem w organizacjach*, HRP Group, Łódź 2013, p. 45.

⁵ Ch. Espinoza, M. Ukleja, *Zarządzanie Milenialsami*, PWN, Warszawa 2018, p. 32.

⁶ Por. A. Żarczyńska-Dobiesz, B. Chomątowska, *Pokolenie "Z" na rynku pracy – wyzwania dla zarządzania zasobami ludzkimi*, „Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego we Wrocławiu” 2014, nr 350, p. 407.

⁷ Ch. Espinoza, M. Ukleja, *Zarządzanie Milenialsami...*, p. 47-48.

⁸ Ibidem, p. 32.

Table 1. Selected differences between representatives of the Y and Z generation

Tabela 1. Wybrane różnice między przedstawicielami pokolenia Y i Z

Generation Y	Generation Z
- familiar with the new technology	- the most technologically oriented generation, born in the digital world - close and friendly with the new technology
- optimistic about life	- more realistic and careful about life, materialistic - full of fears for the future
- self-confident	- self-confident
- diversity seems normal to them	- even more open and tolerant towards diversity - as a generation itself they are internally very diverse
- the „Me” generation, looking for fame and fortune - they recognize the problems of social responsibility	- the „Us” generation, more socially-oriented - strongly interested and involved in the problems of social responsibility - honesty and non-discrimination are more important than money and status for them
- learning and development process planned in advance - long-term professional career building	- learning, development in accordance with the principle of just in time learning - they want to have everything and know everything immediately, preferably online - the vision of long-term career building does not appeal to them - they have a particular approach to acquiring knowledge – it is important for them to get information quickly
- they strive for work and life balance	- professional and private life must constitute a whole in which they want to be themselves and follow the same values
- well-educated, intelligent	- even better-educated - growing up online, very early they have developed a variety of competences valued in the labor market - they are not afraid of taking risk and make decisions quickly

Source: A. Żarczyńska-Dobiesz, B. Chomątowska, *Pokolenie „Z” na rynku pracy – wyzwania dla zarządzania zasobami ludzkimi*, „Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego we Wrocławiu” 2014, No. 350, p. 408.

As far as the generation capital of the Z generation is concerned, specific characteristics concerning individual components, such as knowledge, skills, abilities, motivation, attitudes, values and health can be distinguished (Table 2).

Table 2. Z generation capital components

Tabela 2. Składowe kapitału generacji Z

Knowledge capital	- high knowledge acquisition rate
Skills capital	- appropriate use of networking - demonstrating their competences - coping with environmental pressure
Abilities capital	- multitasking skills
Attitudes capital	- openness and assertiveness towards others
Values capital	- autonomy, flexibility and transparency - work capacity and education - relative loyalty – dependent on the employer's meeting their expectations
Motivation capital	- primacy of intangible stimuli (development opportunities, ludic aspects, opportunities to combine work with family life and free time) over the material ones - risk motivation and achieving quick results - teamwork, but on line and based on "loose cooperation"
Health capital	- pragmatic optimism

Source: own study based on: A. Lipka, *Kapitał generacyjny versus kapitał multigeneracyjny*, [in:] A. Lipka, M. Król (ed.), *Gospodarowanie wielopokoleniowym kapitałem ludzkim. Wybrane zagadnienia*, CeDeWu, Warszawa 2017, p. 49-54.

Generation Z's capital of knowledge is associated with the rapid pace of its acquisition. What constitutes another characteristic feature of the representatives of the young generation is their *multitasking* skills, the ability to take quick, simultaneous actions and the divisibility of attention⁹. Among their key skills there are: *net-working*, the ability to use their competences and deal with environmental pressure, and their attitudes are characterized by assertiveness and openness towards others. Pragmatic optimism, constituting the Z generation's health capital¹⁰, has a positive impact on their condition and well-being, however, attention is also paid to their psychological problems, related to, among others, netoholism. The values shared by the young generation include autonomy, transparency and flexibility, which is expressed in, among others searching for most favorable professional opportunities through resigning from those that do not meet their needs. It is also associated with relative loyalty to the employer, dependent on meeting professional expectations. An important place in the Z generation's value system is attributed to work and edu-

⁹ A. Smolbik-Jęczmień, *Akumulacja kapitału kariery jako istotny czynnik warunkujący osiągnięcie sukcesu w kształtowaniu własnej kariery zawodowej*, „Zarządzanie i Finanse” 2016, vol. 14, No. 2, part 2, p. 343.

¹⁰ R. Kast, *Herausforderung Führung – Führen in der Mehrgenerationengesellschaft*, [in:] M. Klaffke (ed.), *Generationen-Management. Konzepte, Instrumente, Good-Practice-Ansätze*, Springer Gabler, Wiesbaden 2014, p. 235.

cation as qualities they assess people by¹¹. Their affiliation to teams is not of significant value, however, as they willingly cooperate in teams, but rather *online* and on the basis of loose relationships. Among the most important incentives motivating them to work are: development opportunities, maintaining life and work balance, as well as the ludic aspects. A characteristic feature of the young generation is also the motivation to take risk and achieve their goals quickly.

Statistics show that young people today delay their professional career and other important life decisions more than the previous generations. It can therefore be said that entering the labor market often constitutes the first major challenge of adulthood for them. In such a situation, however, they face a significant problem, which is lack of experience. Thus, acquiring experience becomes an important element of the professional development they want to strive for¹². In the literature on the subject, however, it is emphasized that the representatives of the Z generation, similarly to generation Y, do not pay much attention to the stability of employment, likewise, their preferences regarding the working time model are associated with flexibility¹³. Due to the fact that changeability is natural for them, they appreciate quick and practical actions, it is important for them to save time, and professional and private life constitute one whole, it can be said that working time flexibility is necessary for them to adapt to "their busy schedule"¹⁴.

Even though the literature on the subject describes a number of features of the young generation, characterizing attitudes and behaviors of the Z generation on the labor market and in organizations still seems to be very difficult due to the fact that only a part of this population has already gained work-related experience, whereas a significant part is just at the threshold of their professional career.

It can be said that currently all the features of the Z generation's representatives constitute undoubtedly a great challenge for employers, for they force them to change their approach and human resources management style, as well as their organizational culture and its values. It is necessary to recognize the preferences and expectations of the representatives of the young generation who will soon enter the labor market, with particular emphasis on their approach to shaping future careers and professional development.

¹¹ M. Klaffke, *Millenials and Generation Z – Charakteristika der nachrückenden Arbeitnehmer-Generationen*, [in:] M. Klaffke (ed.), *Generationen-Management. Konzepte, Instrumente, Good-Practice-Ansätze*, Springer Gabler, Wiesbaden 2014, p. 76.

¹² Por. Ch. Espinoza, M. Ukleja, *Zarządzanie Milenialsami...*, p. 83.

¹³ M. Król, *Generacyjne preferencje modelu czasu pracy*, [in:] A. Lipka, M. Król (ed.), *Gospodarowanie wielopokoleniowym kapitałem ludzkim. Wybrane zagadnienia*, CeDeWu, Warszawa 2017, p. 104.

¹⁴ M. Johnson, L. Johnson, *Generations*, [in:] *From Boomers to Linksters – Managing the Friction Between Generations at Work*, Amacom, New York 2010, p. 174.

2. Aim and method of the research

The aim of the present research was to identify the approach of generation Z representatives to their own development and future career, as well as their expectations related to professional work. The basic research to achieve the goal was conducted using the survey method¹⁵. The following research questions (problems) were addressed:

- What were the respondents' reasons for taking up university studies?
- What is the place of job/career in the hierarchy of life values of the young people?
- What does the concept of career mean to the students?
- What factors related to professional development during studies do the respondents consider important?
- Do the respondents take advantage of development opportunities provided by various forms of non-educational activity at university, to what extent, and which of them they consider the most valuable from the point of view of their future career?
- What features related to professional development do the students consider the most significant?
- What are the surveyed Z generation representatives' preferences and expectations regarding workplace and working conditions?

The study covered the Z generation students of the 1st year full time first cycle studies at the Faculty of Economic Sciences of the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, providing studies in the fields of management and economics. 307 people took part in the study (which constituted 86.7% of the total number of students in the analyzed group). The research was conducted in the academic year 2018/2019.

The majority of respondents (over 63%) were women (Table 3). In the studied population, management students (51.5%) slightly outnumbered the students of economics (48.5%).

¹⁵ The form of a direct auditorium survey (conducted during classes with students) was used in the research.

Table 3. Structure of the research sample

Tabela 3. Struktura badanej populacji

Specification	Number of respondents	Percent-age
Gender:		
Female	194	63,2
Male	113	36,8
Major:		
economics	149	48,5
management	158	51,5
Professional status:		
unemployed student	269	87,6
employed student	38	12,4
Place of residence:		
city over 100,000 inhabitants	76	24,7
city from 20,000 to 100,000 inhabitants	69	22,5
city less than 20,000 inhabitants	54	17,6
rural areas	108	35,2

Source: own study based on the research conducted.

The vast majority of respondents (87.6%) had the status of an unemployed person at the time of the survey. The majority of the students surveyed (64.8%) were city residents, whereas in the case of 24.7% of responses – it was a town with over 100,000 inhabitants.

3. Research results

Tertiary education is an important stage of life related to development, which may be of great significance for the future career. The research has shown that it was the above-mentioned perspective that the representatives of the study population took into account while making their study-related decisions.

The most important reasons for the respondents to take up university studies were: greater chances of finding employment in the desired field/industry (76.5%), personal development (60.3%), and improvement of one's own situation on the labor market (43.3%). However, the least frequently chosen were such responses as: the general trend of "studying" (13.7%), the lack of another idea for living (11.4%) and the prestige associated with having a student status (7.8%) – Table 4.

Table 4. The most important for undertaking studies among the respondents

Tabela 4. Najważniejsze motywy podjęcia studiów przez objęte badaniem osoby

Specification	Number of indications	Percentage
Greater chances of finding employment in the desired field/industry	235	76,5
Personal development	185	60,3
Improvement of one's own situation on the labor market	133	43,3
Desire to meet new, interesting people	99	32,2
Suggestions from friends/family	85	27,8
General trend of "studying"	42	13,7
Lack of another idea for living	35	11,4
Prestige associated with having a student status	24	7,8

Source: own study based on the research conducted.

Also, the choice of a particular major by the young people surveyed turned out to be most frequently associated with deliberate decisions related to development and professional career. What was decisive for taking up economic studies were mainly the following: willingness to find employment in their dream field/industry (65.5%) and intention to expand their knowledge in a given area (50.2%). However, the decisions were stated to be accidental in 15.9% of cases (Table 5).

Table 5. The most important reasons for undertaking a specific field of study among the respondents

Tabela 5. Najważniejsze motywy podjęcia konkretnego kierunku studiów przez objęte badaniem osoby

Specification	Number of indications	Percentage
Willingness to find employment in dream field/company	201	65,5
Intention to expand knowledge in a given area	154	50,2
Interests	72	23,4
Recommendations	68	22,1
Accidentally	49	15,9

Source: own study based on the research conducted.

Most respondents declared that it will be important for them to perform future work in accordance with the obtained degree – 66.4% of the surveyed population confirmed the statement, including 28.6% who confirmed it strongly. This issue

turned out not to be significant for 11.4% of respondents (including 5.3% of “definitely not” answers). Others (22.2%) chose the “hard to say” option.

The research results indicate that work/career does not occupy a high place in the hierarchy of life values of the students included in the study. This factor was selected by 25.1% of the surveyed population and was the last in the ranking, being overtaken by such elements as: loyalty (27.4%), money (32.6%) or education (33%) – Table 6. However, the most important life value in the opinion of the respondents was by far family (81.4% of responses). Among the most frequently indicated the following were also included: love (68.7%), health/physical condition (61.2%), realization of passions/interests (53.7%).

Table 6. The most important life values according to the surveyed students

Tabela 6. Najważniejsze wartości życiowe objętych badaniem studentów

Specification	Number of indications	Percentage
Family	250	81,4
Love	211	68,7
Health/physical condition	188	61,2
Realization of passions/interests	165	53,7
Honesty	143	46,6
Life comfort	125	40,7
Personal development	121	39,4
Peace/safety	111	36,1
Life/work balance	109	35,5
Education	101	33,0
Money	100	32,6
Loyalty	84	27,4
Work/professional career	77	25,1

Source: own study based on the research conducted.

The concept of “career” was most frequently (71.8%) understood by respondents as self-fulfillment, personal-accomplishment in life. Over half of the respondents also associated it with obtaining satisfactory income (56%), achieving own goals (54.2%) and personal development (50.2%). Rarely, however, it turned out to be related with working in a dream profession (10.1%) or with the very fact of performing professional work (11%) – Table 7.

Table 7. The meaning of the term "career" in the opinion of the surveyed students

Tabela 7. Znaczenie pojęcia „kariera” w opinii objętych badaniem studentów

Specification	Number of indications	Percentage
Self-fulfillment, personal-accomplishment in life	220	71,8
Obtaining satisfactory income	172	56,0
Achieving own personal and professional goals	166	54,2
Personal development	154	50,2
Climbing the career ladder	92	30,0
High social standing	49	16,0
Performing professional work	34	11,0
Working in a dream profession	31	10,1

Source: own study based on the research conducted.

What the respondents most frequently associated professional development during university studies with was the opportunity to gain the necessary experience (69%), acquire/ deepen knowledge in a given area (60.3%), establish useful future contacts (54.4%) and, to a lesser extent – realize their own passions and interests (38.4% of responses).

The university offers students numerous opportunities for non-educational activities valuable from the point of view of personal development and building professional potential. The respondents were asked which forms of such activities they take part in or intend to do so during their studies and which of them, in their opinion, may bring the most benefits for their future career. Apprenticeships proved to be the most appreciated opportunity – the vast majority of respondents (89%) consider them valuable from the point of view of their future career, and 80% intend to participate in apprenticeships. Professional internships and training programs offered by the university were also highly rated – over 60% of respondents plan to take part in them, and over 70% – recognize their developmental value. Such forms as various workshops dedicated to students, student scientific associations and other student organizations, participation in conferences/seminars or volunteering were indicated less frequently – interestingly, the surveyed students declare participation in the above-mentioned more often, while noticing their impact on the professional potential to a lesser extent. The opposite situation applies to travel abroad (international student exchanges) – the students surveyed rather see their benefits than intend to participate in such projects. None of the forms of non-educational activity has been assessed as worthless from the point of view of future career, however 15% of the surveyed students do not declare willingness to take part in any of them (Fig. 1).

An important issue raised in the survey was also young people's preferences related to professional work. The research has shown that the most desirable work-

place is a medium-sized enterprise (68.1% of responses), whereas big companies/corporations (36.8%) and micro or small enterprises (32.2%) were indicated less frequently. Over a half (50.2%) of the surveyed population considers setting up their own business. A significant portion of the surveyed (42%) also takes into consideration working in a public office or another public institution/organization.

Banking/financial industry turned out to be the most preferred sector (64.8%), followed by administration (42.7%), production (27.4%), trade (25.4%) and other industries (Table 8). For 24.7% of the surveyed population, the sector is not important while choosing the workplace. The least frequently indicated areas were construction and building (5.2%) and education/schooling (7.5%).

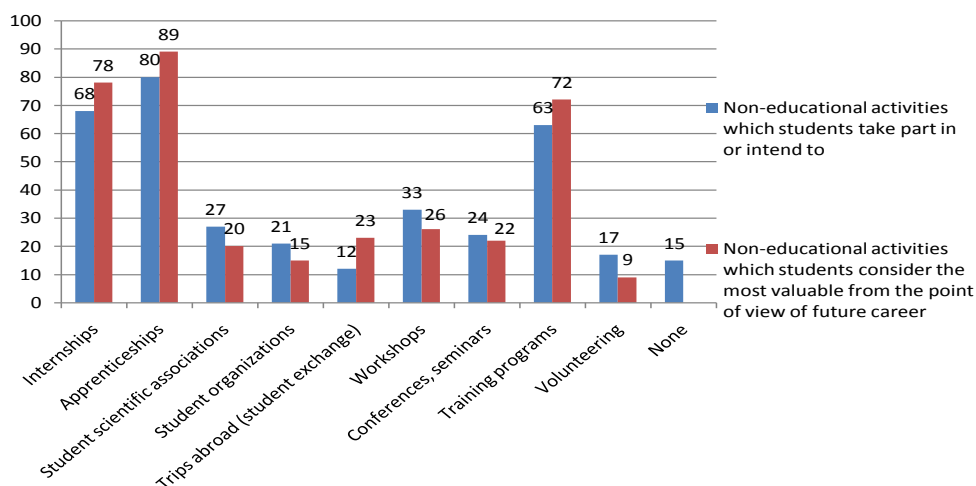


Figure 1. Forms of non-educational activity in which the students take / intend to take part in and those which, in their opinion, may bring the most benefits from the point of view of the future professional career (% of indications)

Rysunek 1. Formy działalności pozaedukacyjnej, w której objęci badaniem studenci biorą/zamierzają brać udział oraz takie, które ich zdaniem mogą przynieść największą korzyść z punktu widzenia przyszłej kariery zawodowej (% wskazań)

Source: own study based on the research conducted.

Table 8. Industries in which the surveyed students would like to work

Tabela 8. Branże, w jakich objęci badaniem studenci chcieliby pracować

Specification	Number of indications	Percentage
Banking/finance	199	64,8
Administration	131	42,7
Production	84	27,4
Trade	78	25,4
The sector does not matter	76	24,7
Automotive industry	72	23,4
Transportation	57	18,6
Insurances	57	18,6
Tourism	43	14,1
Education/schooling	23	7,5
Construction and building	16	5,2

Source: own study based on the research conducted.

What the respondents expect from the future job is mainly: satisfactory remuneration (86.3%), good working conditions (81.9%) and atmosphere (76.9%), as well as opportunities to gain experience (74%). The stability of employment (67.4%) and the opportunity to work in an interesting industry (63.9%) also proved to be important. Over a half of the surveyed population drew attention to such elements as: lack of boredom, monotony (58.6%), development opportunities (55.7%), low stress level (54.2%) and access to modern expertise/ technology (52.4%). Interestingly, a job giving the opportunity to go abroad (15.9%) or the prestige of the company (19.8%) turned out to be of minor importance. On one hand, the surveyed students perceive work with easy and simple tasks as unattractive (16.3%), but they also do not value much higher those jobs that pose challenges (21.6%) – Table 9.

Table 9. The desired characteristics of the future work according to the researched students
 Tabela 9. Pożądane przez objętych badaniem studentów cechy przyszłej pracy

Specification	Number of indications	Percentage
Satisfactory remuneration	265	86,3
Good working conditions	251	81,9
Good atmosphere	236	76,9
Opportunities to gain experience	227	74,0
Stability of employment	207	67,4
Interesting industry	196	63,9
Lack of boredom, monotony	180	58,6
Development opportunities	171	55,7
Low stress level	166	54,2
Access to modern expertise/technology	161	52,4
Real chances for promotion	123	40,1
Possibility to adjust working hours to one's own needs	109	35,5
Attractive fringe benefits	93	30,4
Work compliant with one's interests and competences/ qualifications	87	28,3
Interesting, diverse job	85	27,8
Work in the studied profession or similar	84	27,3
Autonomy and independence	79	25,7
Possibility to work in a young dynamic team	76	24,7
Dealing with challenging tasks	66	21,6
Working a well-established, prestigious company	61	19,8
Simple and easy tasks	50	16,3
Possibility to work abroad	49	15,9

Source: own study based on the research conducted.

As far as the expectations regarding the level of remuneration for work are concerned, the majority of respondents (78.8%) are interested in the amount above PLN 4,000 gross (of which 30.4% indicated the range above PLN 5,000). In the case of 19.8% of the surveyed people, a satisfactory level of pay would be in the range of PLN 3000-4000, whereas only 5.5% of the surveyed population would be satisfied with the amount of up to PLN 3000.

4. Final remarks

The research confirmed that the Z generation constitutes development-oriented young people who are aware of the importance of shaping their own careers. What turned out to be the most important reasons the respondents indicated for taking up university studies were the following: a greater chance of finding employment in the desired industry and the possibility of personal development, whereas the main reasons for choosing a particular major were: willingness to work in a desired industry and intention to expand knowledge in a given area. For the majority of students surveyed, it is significant to perform future work in accordance with the completed degree. The aforementioned results may indicate that studies are perceived as an important stage related to professional development, crucial for their future careers.

In the professional development taking place during university studies, the respondents recognize the opportunity to acquire the necessary experience and knowledge. The research results confirmed that the possibility of establishing useful contacts is also important for them at this stage.

The students surveyed perceive a number of benefits from the point of view of their future careers, which are related to the possibilities of non-educational activities offered by the university, among which the most appreciated were such forms as apprenticeships, internships or various types of training programs. However, despite widespread awareness of how significant they are, the respondents take part in such activities or declare their willingness to do so to a much lesser extent.

The study has shown that work/career is not, however, one of the young people's most important life values, among which priority has been given to family and love, followed by health/physical condition, as well as the realization of passions and interests. The very concept of "career" is understood by the respondents in a rather broad sense, as personal-accomplishment and self-fulfillment in life. It is rarely associated directly with work in a desired profession or with the very fact of performing professional work. Some respondents associate it, however, with obtaining satisfactory income, self-achievement and personal development.

As for the preferences of the young people surveyed related to work, the most desirable workplace turned out to be a medium-sized enterprise, while some respondents are also interested in working in an office or another public organization, as well as running their own business. The most preferred industries are banking/finance and administration.

On the other hand, what the respondents expect from the professional work is, first of all, to guarantee a satisfactory remuneration (which for the majority means a level close to and greater than the national average), good working conditions and atmosphere, the opportunity to gain experience and the stability of employment. The desired features of future work also include: the opportunity to work in an in-

teresting industry, the lack of boredom and monotony, the possibility of development, low stress level and access to modern knowledge/technology. However, such factors as the opportunity to work abroad turned out to be of minor importance.

Generally speaking, the results of the conducted research can reflect the previously presented characteristics of the Z generation related to the approach to shaping professional career, that mainly include focusing on self-development. The study has confirmed that what constitutes important issues related to development and career for young people are the opportunities to acquire knowledge and the necessary experience, as well as to build a network of contacts useful for achieving professional goals. The fact that work and professional career do not belong to their most important life values, giving way to issues related to maintaining social bonds, care for health and physical condition and the realization of passions, confirms that issues concerning maintaining life balance in this area are of great significance. The results of the research, however, show the image of a generation for whom, apart from the stimuli listed above, aspects related to remuneration and employment stability do matter, too, which has not been emphasized in the literature on the subject.

Entering the labor market and representing specific attitudes, preferences, hierarchies of life values and motivational factors, Generation Z can undoubtedly be a challenge for modern organizations, which involves the necessity to review the existing solutions in the area of human resource management. For many employers, this means the need to look for new ways of motivating and building organizational commitment that will meet young people's expectations, including their approach to self-development and professional career. Wanting to manage them effectively and use their potential, organizations should be adequately prepared, taking into account their needs and preferences concerning incentive solutions, bearing in mind that a characteristic feature of the Z generation is relative employer loyalty, dependent on matching their expectations in regard to professional work.

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