# Effective Motivation of Multi-generation Teams - Presentation of own Research Results

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*Abstract.* The interest of management practitioners, academics and researches in human capital management continues. Rapid changes in the business environment of contemporary organisation expand the scale and complexity of challenges faced by entrepreneurs. One of the challenges is a skillful management of employees of different age. Until now, the multigenerational character of employee teams has never been so often discussed by different forums. The importance of the issue has increased mainly through the extremely rapid development of modern technologies, which caused emergence of new management methods, new leadership models, modern techniques of communication and, last but not least, innovative motivation tools for people. The issue of effective motivating workforce of different age and an attempt, related to the issue, to create optimal models of motivation systems for multi-generation teams inspired respective empirical research (N=700) addressed by this paper.

*Keywords:* motivation, system, employee generation, multi-generation, HCM

## 1 Introduction

According to P.Szukalski, age, next to sex, has become the feature which determines social position of an individual among all other features of the individual. At the same time, in contemporary democracies, it is repeated with increasing frequency that the biggest threats for social cohesion is discrimination because of sex, race and age - sexism, racism and ageism, respectively (Szukalski 2004, 11-15). Accoding to R.B. Blancato and M. Ponder, "not each of us will fall victim to racism, not each of us will fall victim to sexism, either, but each of us will fall victim to ageism" (Blancato & Ponder 2015, 91). In 21. century there is a trend to categorise people by grouping them by generations such as. *Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y, Generation Z, Generation C*, etc. However, it may work very much against us to divide people by categories only because they come from different age groups and an impact of such approach on employees and the quality of their work may be devastating and have an adverse impact on the effectiveness of the entire organisation in the era of Web 2.0+. When presenting different types of workforce generations and their features, as done by many authors (e.g. Gessel 2010; Costanza at al. 2012, 375-394; Patterson 2007, 17-22; Simons 2010, 28-33; Levickaite 2010, 170-183), one should proceed with care and humbleness, as suggested by the Authors of this paper (see Wziątek-Staśko 2012; Wziątek-Staśko 2015). One should never forget that people are different even when they come from the same age group. As E.Sygit emphasises: "To understand mechanisms of discrimination, one should be aware of a certain property of human reasoning: creating scripts and categories, we take them for good. By dividing people into subgroups, we only notice their similarities and oversee those which make them different. The more we focus on human body when perceiving an identity of a person, the more impact it has on evaluating internal properties of the person (Sygit 2008, 157; also Bodner &Cohen-Fridel 2014), which may lead to emergence of a very dangerous phenomenon known as ageism (Dennis&Thomas 2007, 84-89; Malinen&Johnston 2013, 445-461; Raynor 2015, 58-63). Ageism is not only, as commonly believed, discrimination of persons

aged 50+ - ageism is discrimination of persons of any age (Bojanic&Nedic 2015, 485-497; Ling 2008, 334-340). Age has a stratification nature. The problem is that, apart from action, the factor differentiating and creating hierarchies of different age categories is the common belief in "age-specific" properties of individuals in such categories. (Levy& Banaji 2002, 50). According to B.Bytheway, "ageism is a set of beliefs, prejudices and stereotypes rooted in biological differentiation of people, related to the process of ageing, which concern competencies and needs of people depending on their chronological age. In consequence, calendar age is used to identify groups whose access to various social resources is subject to a systematic control. The process is called "negative or positive discrimination" (Bytheway 1995, 14).

Diversification of employees because of their age many significantly determine the model of managing contemporary organisations, in particular the HRM model. A stereotype-based assumption that people are different depending on their generation may result in a selection of management methods and tools selected strictly for alleged features and needs of these persons but, not necessarily, to the needs which they appropriately articulate. An intuition-guided approach in the management process does not always bring expected outcomes. In this context, the Authors believed that it would be interesting to find out about the actual preferences of employees of different age with regard to one of the most difficult management function, which is motivating. Does the age of employees influence their preferences in assessing effectiveness of some selected motivators and, furthermore, are there any differences in the structure of effective motivation systems for employees of different generations? Our quest for answers to these questions was the leading objective of our empirical research carried out for the purpose of this paper.

## 2 Age as differentiating category

As A.Abramowicz and A.Strzałkowska claim, contemporary employers and employees have little or no knowledge about real life of people in different age groups. In consequence, their thinking and actions are too often guided by stereotypes. It is important to understand what stereotypes and prejudices are and how they affect us and what image of the world they offer us. Stereotypes are our thoughts and beliefs about a given group of people. Typically, they are simplified and difficult to change. We are convinced about their true nature and ignore all the information that could undermine our opinion. Without stereotypes - beliefs that simplify and organise the world for us - we would not be able to operate because continuous analysing all information is not possible. However, we must be very careful to avoid operating in a reality which is untrue and everywhere where our behaviour or attitude could harm others, make sure that we are right. It is very important to remain open to new experiences and verify whether the knowledge that we have corresponds to the reality (Abramowicz&Strzałkowska 2012, 119-120).

Contemporary organisation is a place where representatives of several generations of employees meet. Analysis of available literature shows that authors do not offer the same definition or age brackets for representatives of each generation. According to (Simons 2010, 30), the most popular are: *Baby Boomers* (born between1946-1964), *Generation X* (1965-1976), *Generation Y* (1977-1998). In the opinion of (Levickaite 2010, 172) members of the *Generation X* were born between 1960-1974, members of *Generation Y* were born between 1975- 1989, while members of Generation Z could be those born between 1990 and 2000. Another classification is introduced by (Patterson 2007, 17). According to the author, the generation sequence is as follows: *Silent Generation* (born in 1930.), *Early Baby Boomers* (1946- 1955), *Late Boomers* (1956-1965), *Generation X* (1966-1975), *Generation Y/ Millenials* (1976- 1995). No matter what our generation is called, the more important is what features we are attributed and what consequences it has for us, in particular in the contemporary business world. The leading features which stereotypes attributed to employees from different generations are presented in the Table 1.

Table 1: Dominant features manifested by employees from different generation according to stereotypes

| Baby Boomers | Generation X, called "Sandwich Generation" | Generation Y, called "MTV Generation", "Millenials", "Generation Next", "Net Generation", "Peter Pan Generation". | Generation Z, called "Generation C", "I-Generation", "Multitasking Generation", "Digital Natives" |
|---|---|---|---|
| Born in patriarchal world, they understand the world through a vertical structure which requires going up the career, experience and position ladder from zero to a hero. | A category of people who wanted to hop off the merry-go- round of status, money, and social climbing that so often frames modern existence. | Those who do not want to grow up and stay home longer than their parents or grandparents did. | Generation of full technological users so-called "instant on-line". |
| In their opinion, their work ethos is the best expressed by "no pain, no gain" phrase. | Considered to be pragmatic, practical, individualistic. | Shaped by technological standing and inventions, „digital natives", because they have never experienced a world without technology. | They live in a virtual world and often don't understand the real world. |
| In their opinion, the key values are observing the rules, respecting authorities, solidarity and hierarchic loyalty. | They are sometimes perceived as working for a pay check rather than investing in a career, because they insist on a balance between their personal and family lives and the demands of their work. | They expect frequent feedback from their families and friends, and have similar expectations for their employers. | The world without smartphones, internet, computers, social media doesn't make sense for them. |
| Full of suspicion | Rejecting rules. | Members of this generation demonstrate confidence, optimism, civic duty, sociability, street smarts, inclusivity, collaboration, and open-mindedness. | They easily change their workplaces. |
| They are for negative selection and liquidation of exceptionality, go-getting energy for the sake of secure averageness. | They prefer casual, friendly work environment, flexibility and freedom. | They prefer structured, supportive work environment and personalized work. | They are the most connected, educated and sophisticated generation ever. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| They believe that change should only occur when a problem arises. | "Using technologies". | They are idealistic and have high expectations. | They live in the world- "without borders". |
| The fear loss of their jobs and are motivated by a loss. Justice is based on the rule: "I have as much as you do and it is fair". | They are self-reliant, global thinkers who value balance, fun, and informality. | They tend to be goal oriented. | They can realise a lot of tasks at the same time without problems. |
| **THEY LIVE TO WORK** | **THEY WORK TO LIVE** | **THEY WORK FOR FUN** | **THEY ???** |

Adapted from (Litwiński, Sztanderska 2013, 8), (Shragay, Tziner 2011, 143-150), (Hills, Ryan, Warren- Forward, Smith 2013, 267-275), (Gessel 2010, 21-24), (Costanza, Badgar, Fraser, Severt, Gade 2012, 375-380), (Simons 2010, 28-33).

The characteristics of employees of different generations presented in the Table 1 leads to the conclusion that management has entered a new era. Theories about the need to know how to manage diversity well must give way to the implementation of the HRM strategy in practice. The times when employees were perceived as objects and classified to "human resources" only, used to multiply entrepreneurs' profit without any regard to people's potential, their expectations and preferences, are long gone. Nowadays, it is a must to look at each employee with awareness and take this person as an individual with their specific and own features, needs, skills and knowledge (Wziątek-Staśko, 2016). As pointed out by M. Kraczla, among the many important determinants shaping the attitudes of the human, the individual personality is the special factor (Kraczla, 2016). Exactly the specific personality traits may be more or less useful in various organizational situations (Kraczla 2013). Presentation of features demonstrated by employees of different age clearly indicates that there is a number of differences which may come as a symptom of the times in which each generation has come to live. The outcome of their work together seems unpredictable. The issue of selecting the right management tools and methods to match the specifics of different employees has never been as urgent as it is now (Wziątek-Staśko, 2016).

**3 Managing a multi-generation team as a challenge for contemporary managers**

Modern HRM is a process which brings new challenges to contemporary managers. Can they cope with this challenge? Are their competences sufficient to allow for professional management of multi-generation teams? Do they understand the need for reflecting deeply on the role they play in their organisation Do they have the time and willingness start a true dialogue with their staff? Do they have the ability to notice a close link between the quality of leadership and the quality of employees' work, between the degree of employees' motivation and their motivation? Are they aware that there is correlation, proven by many researchers, between *employee empowerment* and company's profits (Ji, at.al 2015, 1043-1054; Sellaro, at.al 2014, 1-4). Do they understand the importance of caring for friendly atmosphere at work, elimination of effective destroyers of motivation such as injustice and unfairness, nepotism, mobbing, schizophrenia in the organisation, ignoring people's needs, responsible for counter-productive behaviour in the organisation such as anomy of the staff (Bugdoł 2014, 24; Chudzicka-Czupała 2013, 86; Kosewski 2012, 5; Maj 2012, 7; Celmer 2013, 133-154; Figueiredo-Ferraz, at.al 2015, 39-47; McTernan, at. al. 2013, 321-338; Trepanier, at.al 2013, 123-140)? Are they aware that, without mutual trust, effective motivation of the staff is not possible (Engelbrecht, at.al 2014, 1-9; Reychav& Sharkie, 2010, 227-247; Kath, at.al 2010, 1488-1497)? (Zhao& Wu 2014, 1345-1352)? Numerous challenges of the second decade of 21 century open a new chapter in thinking about

the quality of leadership in the contemporary world, where multi-generationality of employees becomes particularly important (Wziątek-Staśko 2016a, 37-46; Zhao& Wu 2014, 1345-1352).

M.Venus claims that "multi-generation teams have their specificity, create potential benefits but also generate some threats. The differences come from differences in generation of team members" (Venus 2011, 7-10). *Generation Z* is characterised by the highest unpredictability. According to M.Pawłowska, those born after 1990, who grew up in the times of prosperity and among state-of-the-art technologies enter the labour market during the crisis and economic downturn. Young members of *Generation Z* live in a virtual world and, in spite of their openness, do not entirely understand the real world. These are people who grew up in a world different from the world of their predecessors - the world of new technologies. To live, they need computers, smart phones and the Internet. They do not use libraries and do not like paper books and handwriting. They are perfectly aware of new products and have no problem with operating the latest gadgets. They replace real life and interpersonal contacts with contacts with the virtual world. What is on-line counts. They are not attached to their place of work. They leave when it does not meet their expectations. Representatives of the Generation Z are not afraid of remote work, operating complicated machines and IT programmes. For them, the reality does not need to be material and tangible. This way, they function well in a world without borders and restrictions. They feel that the world is small - one minute, they are Internet shopping in the USA and later talk to their fiends from China. They are also called the multitasking generation, since they do not have a problem with performing many activities at the same time. Brought up in the world full of IT solutions, they easily operate in several parallel activities, they also know who to follow few action films, chat and watch a film. They swiftly mater new applications and can communicate well in a foreign language. Their openness to the world makes them fascinated by phenomena perceived as threats by members of older generations (Pawłowska 2015). This opinion was confirmed by A.Klonowska-Szałek, who claims that "a digital Godzilla" is entering the market i.e. - *Generation C*: *connect, communicate, change,* - a generation of young people who will make the generation gap at the work place even deeper than before (Klonowska-Szałek 2015). Does it have to be this way?

According to I.Aronowska: "On the basis of many analyses, it becomes common knowledge that inter-generation teams work more effectively, efficiently and faster. For this reason, managers should be adequately prepared to manage such teams at work. The fact of age differences among employees comes as an additional complication but it also creates opportunities for potential use of such diversity" (Aronowska 2014, 115). The author confirms her earlier observation that management of a multi-generation team is a huge challenge for contemporary managers: "A multi-generation team represents a major challenge for a manager.. An organisation with a multi-generation team may gain a lot as long as its members can achieve mutual understanding. Manager's tasks will involve making the staff aware that they are not expected to be homogeneous. They share some features and values but they also have different experience and should make use and benefit from their diversity. It is worth remembering that different generations influence one another. A good exchange of knowledge between generations may affect effectiveness of an organisation" (Aronowska 2014, 118). For a manager and organisation to be able to benefit from age diversity of its members, it is very important to create a friendly work environment, taking into account the values by which members of the organisations are guided. It is important to focus not only on professional but also on private aspects. Another issue is to have the right division of tasks, taking into account needs and competences of team members. If managers want to use the potential that undoubtedly members of such teams have, the must act adequately to the specifics of their characters, skilfully manage, motivate and know how to keep talents in hand. They should work on building mutual trust by deepening informal relations between employees, increase mutual awareness of co dependence, co-responsibility and proper communication. If employees see this orientation to long-term relations, they will be ready to invest more effort into their work (Benson & Brown 2011, 1843–1865). An organisation with a multi-

generation team may gain a lot as long as its members can achieve mutual understanding. Manager's tasks will involve making the staff aware that they are not expected to be homogeneous. They share some features and values but they also have different experience and should make use and benefit from their diversity. It is worth remembering that different generations influence one another. A good exchange of knowledge between generations may affect effectiveness of an organisation. In addition, effective age management involves elimination of age barriers, promoting diversity, each person is able to deliver on their talents and potential irrespective of their age. Manager should care to have good communication in their teams, involving exchange of experiences and skills between young and older employees. Each generation has an unique set of features which affect its work ethics, values, respect and tolerance to others, interaction, communication and learning at a work place.

By showing its commitment, the management should be the example of inter-generation respect. Knowing and understanding intergeneration differences may be helpful in creating effective learning environment. Each generation has something exceptional to offer. Identification and adoption of the features which are different in different generations may prevent conflicts in a team while improving communication, collaboration and success. An effective manager continuously learns about their employees to learn how to bring the best out of them. But they would not become great leader by coincidence. Great leaders read, ask questions, make notes, make mistakes to learn from them. Successful management of a multi-generation team may be based on employment of different leadership styles. The wider range of styles is used, the better and some of them are particularly effective when applied to a generation. However, regardless of our dealing with a generation of older employees or with the Generation X or Generation Y, there is one thing that they have in common - these are the universal rules used to work out their joint vision and a value system (Aronowska 2014, 117-120; Cekada 2012, 40–44; Bell 2010, 7–10). Professional, effective management of a multi-generation team is hard work, which also involves full commitment in getting to know the people we came to work with.

In recent years, new so called *reflexive methods* have emerged. They include critical thinking, feedback and couching which are considered crucial for the learning process of all team members. These methods help, without a doubt, to facilitate the whole process of decision-making and motivate employees to ask questions and find alternative solutions for problems in organisations (Kormancová, Theodoulides, 2014).

## 4 Effectiveness of contemporary motivators according to employees from different generations. Research methodology

The empirical research was run in 2015 among Polish employees. A sample of 700 was randomly selected with 644 correctly filled out and returned questionnaires for assessment (women - 49%., men- 51%) In the research process, respondents from micro (14 proc.), small (20 proc.), medium (15 proc.) and large enterprises (51 proc.) were involved as well as employees from private (69 proc.), state-owned (27 proc.) and third sector (4 proc.) enterprises, divided into 5 age groups. In total, the respondents represented 15 economic sectors. An original, 3-part questionnaire was a tool used in the research process:
1/ Part I - tangible financial tools (6 parameters assessed).
2/ Part II - tangible non-financial tools (16 parameters assessed).
3/ Part III - intangible tools (25 parameters assessed).

In total, 47 selected instruments used to motivate people to work were analysed. Research participants were asked to assess the effectiveness of each motivator on a 5-point Likert scale (where "1" identified a motivator of no importance to respondent and "5" indicated that a motivator was the most effective in influencing the level of the person's motivation) The author's research questionnaire, in paper

version, was the analytical tool applied in the research process.. The collected fact-based material was analysed by using statistical reasoning in order to formulate appropriate hypothesis and verify whether they were true. The statistical reasoning was based on two non-parametric tests: Mann-Whitney's U test and Kruskal Wallis's ANOVA test. The significance level of α=0.05 was assumed for the purpose of the research. It is assumed that:

- when p < 0.05, a statistically significant dependence occurs (marked with *);
- when p < 0.01, a highly significant dependence occurs (**);
- when p < 0.001, a very highly significant dependence occurs (**);

Below, the main results are presented.

## 5 Research results and discussion

Scientific deliberations of the authors initiated in the research process involved checking assessment of effectiveness of some chosen motivators by respondents from different age groups. Two key questions had to be answered. First, do employees from different generations have a similar or different opinion on the effectiveness of tangible and intangible motivation tools?

Second, is age the key criterion to be considered when making the effort to construct an effective motivation system for a multi-generation team/ In Table 2 and 3, find respondents' opinions sorted by age and sex.

Table 2: Effectiveness of the motivators- men's opinion

| *MOTIVATOR SYMBOL* | *MOTIVATOR* | *MEN AGE* | | | | | *p* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 18 - 25 | 26 - 35 | 36 - 45 | 46 - 55 | > 55 | |
| A1 | *Basic salary* | 3.13 | 3.46 | 3.68 | 3.68 | 3.23 | 0.0315* |
| A2 | *Monthly bonus* | 3.38 | 3.43 | 3.49 | 3.52 | 3.23 | 0.9350 |
| A3 | *Yearly bonus* | 3.37 | 3.72 | 3.58 | 3.60 | 3.85 | 0.1501 |
| A4 | *Cash reward* | 3.44 | 3.69 | 3.49 | 4.12 | 3.38 | 0.0630 |
| A5 | *Stock, stock options* | 2.77 | 2.81 | 3.00 | 2.88 | 3.69 | 0.1055 |
| A6 | *Promotion with a salary raise* | 3.82 | 4.07 | 4.17 | 4.16 | 3.92 | 0.1956 |
| B1 | *Subsidised summer vacations* | 3.44 | 3.21 | 3.30 | 3.12 | 3.77 | 0.3037 |
| B2 | *Cinema, theatre tickets, gym & fitness* | 3.16 | 3.12 | 2.81 | 3.12 | 3.15 | 0.4924 |
| B3 | *Special assistance loans/benefits* | 2.95 | 3.00 | 2.68 | 2.56 | 3.15 | 0.2461 |
| B4 | *Low-interest loans* | 2.80 | 3.11 | 3.00 | 3.04 | 3.62 | 0.1160 |
| B5 | *Subsidised summer vacation camps for employees' children* | 2.80 | 3.20 | 3.53 | 3.20 | 3.54 | 0.0015* |
| B6 | *Company car, also available for private use* | 3.56 | 3.40 | 3.66 | 2.96 | 3.46 | 0.1821 |
| B7 | *Company laptop and cell phone, also for private use* | 3.13 | 3.20 | 3.57 | 3.28 | 3.62 | 0.2042 |
| B8 | *Cafeteria* | 2.94 | 2.57 | 2.96 | 2.44 | 3.62 | 0.0055* |
| B9 | *Additional insurance available to employees and their family* | 3.06 | 3.30 | 3.26 | 3.32 | 3.69 | 0.2490 |
| B10 | *Private medical services for employees and their families* | 3.23 | 3.63 | 3.49 | 3.56 | 3.54 | 0.1394 |
| B11 | *Financing crèche or preschool* | 2.87 | 3.44 | 3.11 | 2.72 | 3.54 | 0.0055* |
| B12 | *Fully or partly financed training events and courses* | 3.35 | 3.72 | 3.55 | 3.40 | 3.69 | 0.2190 |
| B13 | *Financing or co-financing vocational learning, studies, MBA.* | 3.40 | 3.92 | 3.91 | 3.72 | 3.62 | 0.0061* |
| B14 | *Scholarships and grants* | 3.16 | 3.09 | 3.00 | 3.24 | 3.15 | 0.8819 |
| B15 | *Financing membership fees in professional and business associations* | 2.59 | 2.61 | 2.64 | 2.52 | 3.08 | 0.6767 |
| B16 | *Financing business trips, entertainment allowance etc.* | 3.34 | 3.19 | 3.23 | 2.88 | 3.54 | 0.3456 |
| C1 | *Job security* | 3.81 | 4.01 | 4.06 | 4.24 | 4.31 | 0.1884 |
| C2 | *Company reputation and prestige* | 3.56 | 3.43 | 3.60 | 3.76 | 4.15 | 0.2138 |
| C3 | *Organisation's social responsibility* | 3.33 | 3.30 | 3.45 | 3.48 | 3.77 | 0.6573 |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| C4 | *Diversity management* | 3.47 | 3.61 | 3.40 | 3.52 | 3.85 | 0.7056 |
| C5 | *Friendly atmosphere at work* | 4.03 | 4.00 | 3.89 | 3.76 | 3.92 | 0.7328 |
| C6 | Good relations with co-workers | 4.06 | 3.92 | 3.94 | 3.84 | 4.38 | 0.4291 |
| C7 | *Working with interesting people* | 3.74 | 3.84 | 3.89 | 3.76 | 3.92 | 0.8965 |
| C8 | *Clearly defined career path* | 3.54 | 3.73 | 3.72 | 3.48 | 3.69 | 0.6871 |
| C9 | *Promotion opportunities* | 3.52 | 3.66 | 3.72 | 3.32 | 3.62 | 0.5608 |
| C10 | *Professional development opportunities* | 3.37 | 3.53 | 3.81 | 3.60 | 3.69 | 0.1586 |
| C11 | *Self-fulfilment opportunities* | 3.56 | 3.69 | 3.75 | 3.48 | 4.15 | 0.2940 |
| C12 | *Opportunities to demonstrate one's initiative, creativity* | 3.38 | 3.78 | 3.74 | 3.64 | 4.38 | 0.0024* |
| C13 | *Prestige coming from the position in the organisation* | 3.32 | 3.40 | 3.87 | 3.44 | 3.92 | 0.0183* |
| C14 | *Work content* | 3.13 | 3.40 | 3.62 | 3.40 | 4.08 | 0.0011* |
| C15 | *Flexi time* | 3.55 | 3.65 | 3.64 | 3.48 | 4.31 | 0.2902 |
| C16 | *Recognised importance of the life-work balance* | 3.68 | 4.00 | 3.74 | 3.76 | 4.15 | 0.2035 |
| C17 | *Work safety and comfort* | 3.55 | 3.66 | 3.66 | 3.72 | 3.92 | 0.7522 |
| C18 | *Well-organised work* | 3.66 | 3.62 | 3.81 | 3.48 | 4.00 | 0.5526 |
| C19 | *Independence in decision-making and performance* | 3.53 | 3.79 | 4.02 | 3.52 | 4.23 | 0.0204* |
| C20 | *Participation in management process* | 3.16 | 3.53 | 3.53 | 3.12 | 3.92 | 0.0182* |
| C21 | *Praise and recognition* | 3.72 | 3.51 | 3.60 | 3.64 | 4.00 | 0.5308 |
| C22 | *Excellent performance recognised in public* | 3.39 | 3.17 | 3.38 | 3.12 | 3.69 | 0.4158 |
| C23 | *Good relations with the line manager* | 3.89 | 3.74 | 3.77 | 3.64 | 3.92 | 0.7235 |
| C24 | *Swift and clear feedback* | 3.59 | 3.65 | 3.98 | 3.56 | 4.00 | 0.1370 |
| C25 | *Showing interest in personal problems of employees* | 3.34 | 3.26 | 3.49 | 3.32 | 3.69 | 0.6459 |

Adapted from: own research
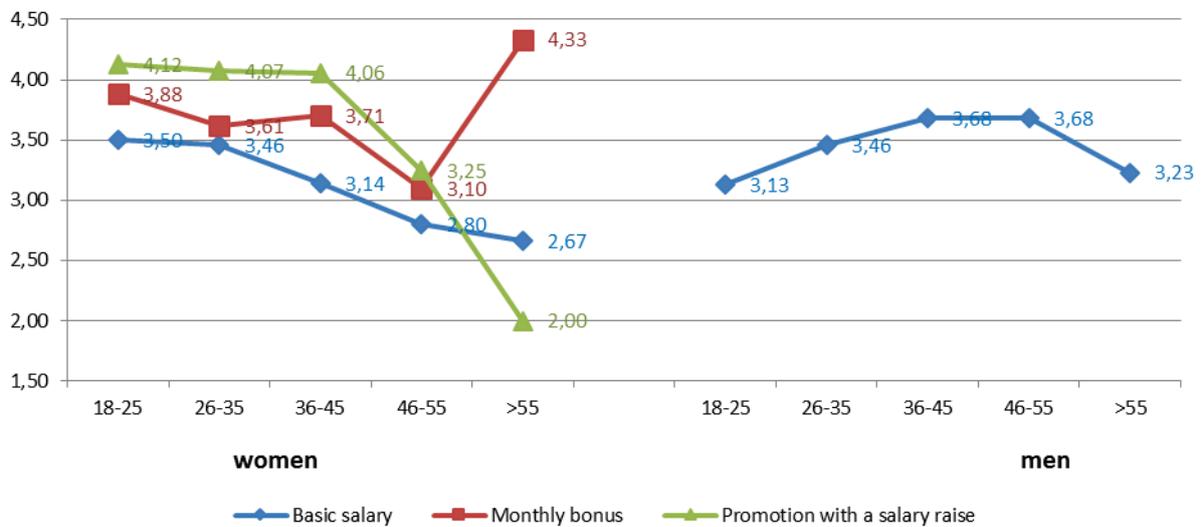
Table 3: Effectiveness of the motivators- women's opinions

| MOTIVATOR SYMBOL | MOTIVATOR | WOMEN AGE | | | | | *p* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 18 - 25 | 26 - 35 | 36 - 45 | 46 - 55 | > 55 | |
| A1 | *Basic salary* | 3.50 | 3.46 | 3.14 | 2.80 | 2.67 | 0.0314* |
| A2 | *Monthly bonus* | 3.88 | 3.61 | 3.71 | 3.10 | 4.33 | 0.0361* |
| A3 | *Yearly bonus* | 3.72 | 3.57 | 3.78 | 3.05 | 3.67 | 0.1187 |
| A4 | *Cash reward* | 3.66 | 3.70 | 4.00 | 3.30 | 3.33 | 0.1583 |
| A5 | *Stock, stock options* | 2.57 | 2.70 | 2.98 | 2.90 | 3.00 | 0.2266 |
| A6 | *Promotion with a salary raise* | 4.12 | 4.07 | 4.06 | 3.25 | 2.00 | 0.0004* |
| B1 | *Subsidised summer vacations* | 3.76 | 3.43 | 3.76 | 3.65 | 4.00 | 0.2189 |
| B2 | *Cinema, theatre tickets, gym & fitness* | 3.51 | 3.36 | 3.35 | 3.00 | 3.67 | 0.3927 |
| B3 | *Special assistance loans/benefits* | 3.05 | 3.05 | 3.02 | 2.75 | 3.00 | 0.8821 |
| B4 | *Low-interest loans* | 2.66 | 3.08 | 3.67 | 3.60 | 2.33 | 0.0000* |
| B5 | *Subsidised summer vacation camps for employees' children* | 3.06 | 3.29 | 3.75 | 3.05 | 3.67 | 0.0138* |
| B6 | *Company car, also available for private use* | 3.52 | 3.45 | 3.47 | 2.55 | 4.33 | 0.0116* |
| B7 | *Company laptop and cell phone, also for private use* | 3.49 | 3.41 | 3.12 | 2.85 | 3.67 | 0.0820 |
| B8 | *Cafeteria* | 3.01 | 3.10 | 3.00 | 2.80 | 3.33 | 0.8621 |
| B9 | *Additional insurance available to employees and their family* | 3.34 | 3.22 | 3.20 | 3.35 | 3.33 | 0.9187 |
| B10 | *Private medical services for employees and their families* | 3.50 | 3.47 | 3.59 | 3.10 | 3.67 | 0.6163 |
| B11 | *Financing crèche or preschool* | 3.28 | 3.33 | 3.27 | 2.60 | 3.33 | 0.2199 |
| B12 | *Fully or partly financed training events and courses* | 3.65 | 3.73 | 3.69 | 3.65 | 3.00 | 0.8287 |
| B13 | *Financing or co-financing vocational learning, studies, MBA.* | 3.88 | 3.96 | 4.02 | 3.70 | 3.33 | 0.6300 |
| B14 | *Scholarships and grants* | 3.59 | 3.29 | 3.61 | 2.85 | 2.67 | 0.0025* |
| B15 | *Financing membership fees in professional and business associations* | 2.82 | 2.69 | 2.71 | 2.30 | 2.67 | 0.3771 |

| B16 | *Financing business trips, entertainment allowance etc.* | 3.46 | 3.34 | 3.20 | 2.40 | 3.00 | 0.0032* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| C1 | *Job security* | 4.17 | 4.06 | 4.41 | 3.85 | 4.33 | 0.2300 |
| C2 | *Company reputation and prestige* | 3.60 | 3.52 | 3.67 | 3.45 | 4.00 | 0.8715 |
| C3 | *Organisation's social responsibility* | 3.65 | 3.59 | 4.00 | 3.50 | 3.67 | 0.2719 |
| C4 | *Diversity management* | 3.81 | 3.67 | 4.06 | 3.15 | 3.00 | 0.0310* |
| C5 | *Friendly atmosphere at work* | 4.30 | 3.92 | 4.12 | 3.70 | 3.67 | 0.0188* |
| C6 | Good relations with co-workers | 4.26 | 4.19 | 4.18 | 4.10 | 3.33 | 0.4846 |
| C7 | *Working with interesting people* | 4.01 | 4.04 | 3.84 | 3.65 | 4.00 | 0.5616 |
| C8 | *Clearly defined career path* | 3.88 | 3.69 | 4.06 | 3.35 | 3.33 | 0.0670 |
| C9 | *Promotion opportunities* | 4.10 | 4.04 | 3.86 | 3.25 | 3.67 | 0.0132* |
| C10 | *Professional development opportunities* | 3.71 | 3.92 | 3.71 | 3.20 | 3.33 | 0.1449 |
| C11 | *Self-fulfilment opportunities* | 3.82 | 3.75 | 3.96 | 3.10 | 2.33 | 0.0047* |
| C12 | *Opportunities to demonstrate one's initiative, creativity* | 3.57 | 3.71 | 3.78 | 3.10 | 3.33 | 0.1459 |
| C13 | *Prestige coming from the position in the organisation* | 3.59 | 3.71 | 3.67 | 3.40 | 2.67 | 0.4503 |
| C14 | *Work content* | 3.47 | 3.65 | 3.59 | 3.40 | 2.33 | 0.2061 |
| C15 | *Flexi time* | 3.75 | 3.80 | 3.90 | 3.50 | 3.67 | 0.7655 |
| C16 | *Recognised importance of the life-work balance* | 4.03 | 3.98 | 4.33 | 3.90 | 3.00 | 0.1141 |
| C17 | *Work safety and comfort* | 3.84 | 3.98 | 3.84 | 3.75 | 3.00 | 0.5237 |
| C18 | *Well-organised work* | 3.75 | 3.89 | 3.86 | 3.55 | 3.00 | 0.4401 |
| C19 | *Independence in decision-making and performance* | 3.44 | 3.80 | 3.76 | 3.75 | 3.67 | 0.1001 |
| C20 | *Participation in management process* | 3.20 | 3.51 | 3.67 | 3.20 | 2.67 | 0.0178* |
| C21 | *Praise and recognition* | 3.89 | 3.95 | 4.04 | 3.35 | 3.67 | 0.1613 |
| C22 | *Excellent performance recognised in public* | 3.57 | 3.65 | 3.88 | 3.40 | 4.00 | 0.4164 |
| C23 | *Good relations with the line manager* | 3.98 | 4.00 | 3.98 | 3.40 | 3.67 | 0.2124 |
| C24 | *Swift and clear feedback* | 3.88 | 3.88 | 3.88 | 3.25 | 4.00 | 0.1688 |
| C25 | *Showing interest in personal problems of employees* | 3.56 | 3.67 | 3.61 | 3.25 | 3.33 | 0.6618 |

Adapted from: own research

The fact-based materials collected in the research process provides many interesting conclusions. As regards tangible (material) pecuniary motivators (A), some statistically significant differences in assessing effectiveness of motivating impact of motivators were found for 3 of them, namely: A1 p<α (p=0.0314), A2 p<α (p=0.0361) and A6 p<α (p=0.0004). In the group of male respondents, this was the case of one motivator only, A6 p<α (p=0.0315). In the female group, the older the respondents are, the less importance they attach to the motivators A6 and A1. In case of A2 motivator, the trend is slightly different. A2 scored the highest among female respondents age 55+ and the lowest in the age group 46-55. In case of male respondents, the opinion on the effectiveness of A1 motivator was growing systematically with age to sink in the age group 55+. See graph 1 for graphic presentation of these interdependencies.
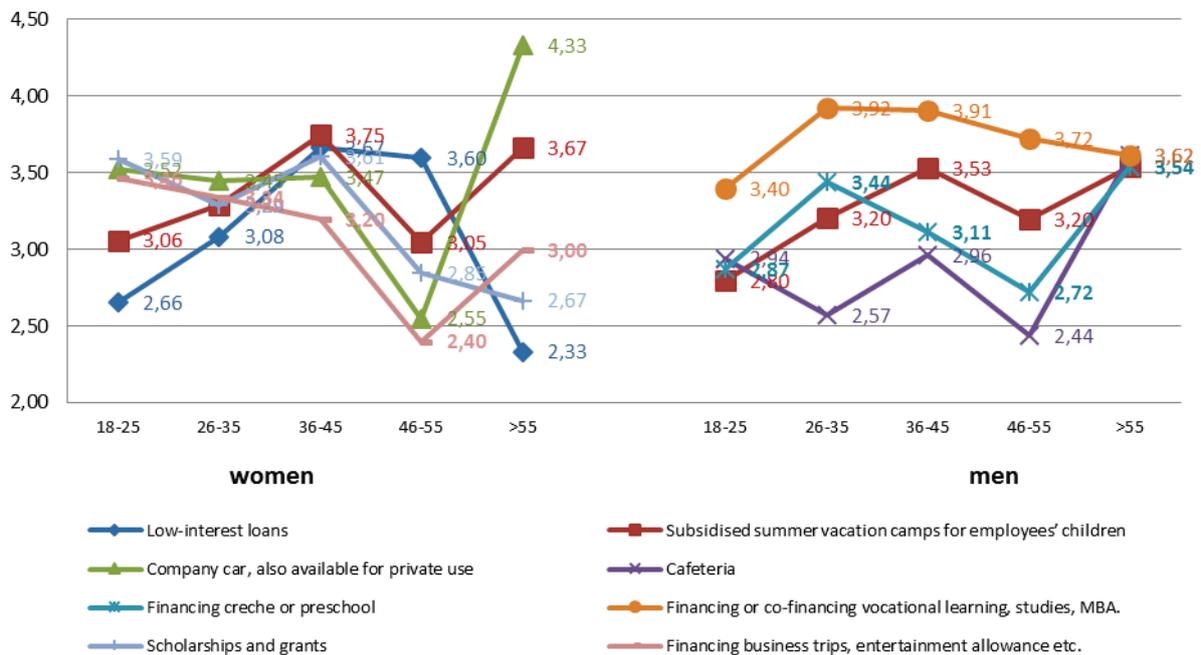
Graph 1. The average scoring of A motivators in the group of men and women by respondents' age.



Source: own research

In the scoring of effectiveness of non-pecuniary tangible motivators (B) by women, some statistically significant differences apply to the motivators: B4, B5, B6, B14 and B16. In case of men, these motivators were: B5, B8, B11 and B13. Scoring of effectiveness of B4 motivator is rising in line with age of the respondents, with the exception of the women from the age group 55+, whose appreciation of the motivator was the lowest. In case of B5 motivator, the trend is slightly different. B4 scored the highest among female respondents aged 35-46 and male respondents 55+. Female respondents aged 55+ (scoring 4.33) showed particular appreciation for B6 motivator, much less appreciated by female respondents from the age group 46-55 (2.55) which seems rather interesting. B14 and B16 motivators work more effectively on women in the age groups below 46 than on 46+. As for scoring given by men, B8 and B11 motivators received the highest scoring from men 55+ (which is rather unexpected), with considerably lower scoring given by other respondents, to B8 in particular. B11 motivator also scored rather high among male respondents aged 26-35. B13 motivator received a relatively high, similar scoring irrespective of age of the men, which seems to confirm high interest that employees show in the motivator. The average scoring of non-pecuniary tangible motivators mentioned above is presented on the graph 2.
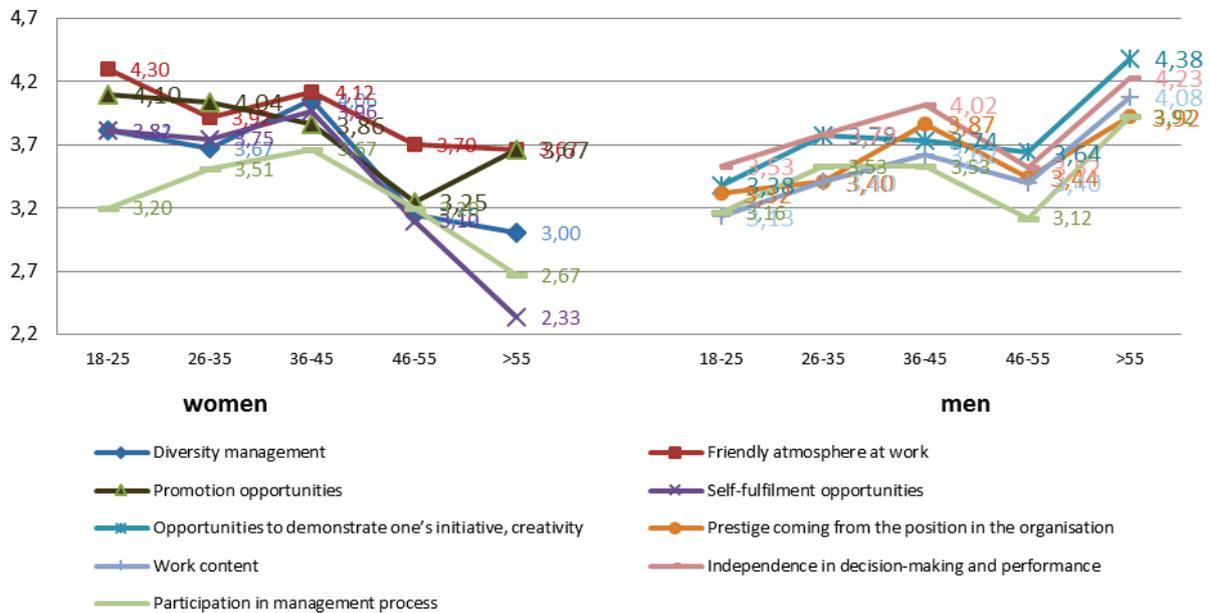
Graph 2. The average scoring of B motivators in the group of men and women by respondents' age.



**women** **men**

- Low-interest loans
- Subsidised summer vacation camps for employees' children
- Company car, also available for private use
- Cafeteria
- Financing creche or preschool
- Financing or co-financing vocational learning, studies, MBA.
- Scholarships and grants
- Financing business trips, entertainment allowance etc.

Source: own research

In case of intangible (C) motivators, some statistically significant differences in the scoring given by women were found in case of the following motivators: C4, C5, C9, C11 and C20 and, in case of men, in the motivators: C12, C13, C14, C19 and C20. The opinion and scoring of C4, C5 and C11 motivators lower with age of female respondents, except for women aged 35-45 whose opinion about the importance of the motivators was slightly better than that shared by other respondents. What is more, a downward trend was also observed for C9 motivator (with the exception of women aged 55+, who were of very high opinion about its effectiveness with the score of 3.67). However, effectiveness of C20 motivator was initially going up with the age to take a downturn. In case of male respondents, there is an opposite dependence - the older the men, the more importance they attach to the selected motivators C12, C13, C14, C19 and C20. In each case, respondents from the age group 46-55 were the exception. The average scoring of the effectiveness of the above-discussed tangible and intangible motivators are presented in the graph 3.

Graph 3. The average scoring of C motivators in the group of men and women by respondents' age.



Source: own research

In the research process, 47 motivators of different types were scored in terms of how effective their motivating impact was. For 20 of the motivators, differences in scoring attributed to respondents' age turned out to be statistically significant, out of which 13 applied to female respondents, 10 to male respondents while both groups shared just 3 of these differences, namely: A1, B5 and C20. For A1 and C20 motivators, the scoring of their effectiveness was very similar: A1 p<α (p=0.0314)-K, A1 p<α (p=0.0315)-M; C20 p<α (p=0.0178)-K, C20 p<α (p=0.0182)-M. The younger the women, the more they appreciate the amount of the basic salary. What is interesting, a reverse trend was observed among male respondents, with the exception of men aged 55+. In case of C20 motivator: "*Participation in management process*", it was observed that the importance of the motivator is increasing with age (by 45). Then it drops in the age group 46-55 to soar again. This phenomenon was reported both for male and female respondents. However, it it interesting that, in case of the eldest respondents (55+), the scoring was completely different (2.67-K, 3.92M). Also, note that the oldest men were those who, out of all respondents, appreciated involving them in the process of managing an organisation. The third motivation tool for which the analysis showed some statistically significant differences because of age was parameter B5: "*Subsidised summer vacation camps for employees' children*"- p<α (p=0,0138)-K; p<α (p=0,0015)-M, which received a relatively high scoring from all respondents. Considering the age category, the result confirmed the earlier trend for A1 and C20 motivators.

When it comes to other motivators whose scoring showed statistically significant differences, note the parameter A2: "*Monthly bonus*" which scored the highest among female respondents 55+ (4,33) and also quite high among representatives of other groups (3.10-3.88); C5 "*Friendly atmosphere at work*", particularly appreciated by the youngest female respondents (4.3) and the least appreciated by women 55+ (3.67). C9 motivator: "*Promotion opportunities*" also scored the highest in the group of female respondents aged 18-25 and the lowest in the age group 45-55. In the process of analysing the data, it was noticed that, in case of many motivating tools, the scoring of effectiveness has been going up, successively, in different age groups and then goes down according to persons aged 46-55 to soar among woman of 55+. For example, it applies to the motivators A4, A5, B10, C12, C15, etc. It is a

very interesting trend, which is also shown for men (e.g. B7, B15, C7, C15, etc.). As for the parameters: C12 "*Opportunities to demonstrate one's initiative, creativity*", C13 "*Prestige coming from the position in the organisation*", C14 "*Work content*", C19 "*Independence in decision-making and performance*" (statistically significant differences in scoring), they score the highest according to employees aged 55+ and the lowest in the age group 18-15 years.

Closing the paper, two research questions asked earlier above, should be answered:
a/ Do employees from different generations have a similar or different opinion on the effectiveness of tangible and intangible motivation tools?
Age of an employee has a significant impact on assessment of effectiveness of different motivators. The differences may be surprising at times, which emphasises the importance to eliminate stereotypical perception of their preferences in the process of modern HRM.
b/ Is age the key criterion to be considered when making the effort to construct an effective motivation system for a multi-generation team/
To develop an optimal, effective model of a motivation system, one must absolutely consider age of employees in the team.

The research results lead to many interesting conclusions helpful in optimising the process of motivating contemporary employees from different age groups. Multi-generation is not necessarily a reason for concern of managers of the 2nd decade of 21st century. They may be inspired by the phenomenon of multi-generation in their effort of creating an effective modelling motivation system to put the win-win approach (happy employee and happy employer) into practice.

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