Generation Z's Expectations from Future Leaders

by

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Generation Z's Expectations from Future Leaders

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To my mother and father for their love and support.

ETHICAL DECLARATION

I, Omar Bourhllal, hereby, declare that I am the sole author of this thesis and it is my original work. I declare that I have followed ethical standards in collecting and analyzing the data and accurately reported the findings in this thesis. I have also properly credited and cited all the sources included in this work.

Omar Bourhllal

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ABSTRACT

The significance of Gen Z's expectations of their dyadic relationship with their leaders was overlooked so far. In particular, the specific dynamics of leader-member exchange (LMX) and how this dyadic relationship applies to this generation Z were not explored by researchers, it is projected that in the near future, this generation will comprise a large percentage of the global workforce. This demographic shift brings about a transformation in expectations, beliefs, and values that are reshaping business leadership approaches. As Generation Z enters the corporate world, their distinct set of leader expectations can redefine effective leadership practices in this era. This paper examines the nuanced expectations Generation Z current students have for future working life, through qualitative research, allowing for an in-depth exploration of participants' thoughts, feelings, and experiences expressed during the in-depth interview conducted with ten students of Final International University, then analyzed using manual thematic analysis method, inductive in nature allowing for a flexible and nuanced exploration of the derived themes and patterns. This study found that when thinking of working, Gen Z students care most about money security, chances to grow, and workplaces that support them. At the same time, they feel stressed about starting their careers. Gen Z students have big hopes for their work life. They expect flexibility, chances to grow, teamwork, and a good work environment. Require security, integrity, flexibility, growth opportunities, and respect, highlighting recurring patterns in Generation Z's overall expectations of work. Finally and most importantly This study has shown that our proposition on whether generation Z's future employees will agree to work under the LMX model was revealed to be related to the organizational dynamics, the cohort's rejection of LMX is not rooted in the leadership style itself but particularly the divisive nature of the in-group and out-group filter. This exploratory study reveals key insights into Gen Z's expectations for future leaders and their inclination toward the LMX model. Indicating that this generation values personalized, supportive leadership that fosters mutual respect and engagement. The study underscores the necessity for leaders to adapt to these evolving expectations, providing a valuable framework for future research and practical leadership development. This is crucial for aligning leadership practices with the needs of emerging generations.

Keywords: Generation Z, Workplace, Attitude, LMX, leadership.

ÖZ

Z kuşağının liderleriyle olan ikili ilişkilerinden beklentilerinin önemi şimdiye kadar göz ardı edilmiştir. Özellikle, lider-üye değişiminin (LMX) spesifik dinamikleri ve bu ikili ilişkilerin Z kuşağı için nasıl geçerli olduğu, araştırmacılar tarafından incelenmemiştir, yakın gelecekte bu kuşağın küresel işgücünün büyük bir yüzdesini oluşturacağı tahmin edilmektedir. Bu demografik değişim, iş liderliği yaklaşımlarını yeniden şekillendiren beklentiler, inançlar ve değerlerde bir dönüşümü de beraberinde getirmektedir. Z Kuşağı kurumsal dünyaya girerken, onların farklı lider beklentileri bu çağda etkili liderlik uygulamalarını yeniden tanımlayabilir. Bu makale, Uluslararası Final Üniversitesi'nin on öğrencisiyle yapılan derinlemesine mülakat sırasında katılımcıların ifade ettiği düşünce, duygu ve deneyimlerin derinlemesine incelenmesine olanak tanıyan nitel araştırma yoluyla, mevcut Z kuşağı öğrencilerinin gelecekteki çalışma hayatından nüanslı beklentilerini incelemekte, ardından elde edilen tema ve kalıpların esnek ve nüanslı bir şekilde keşfedilmesine olanak tanıyan, doğası gereği tümevarımcı olan manuel tematik analiz yöntemi kullanılarak analiz edilmektedir.

Bu çalışma, Z kuşağı öğrencilerinin çalışmayı düşünürken en çok para güvencesine, büyüme şansına ve kendilerini destekleyen iş yerlerine önem verdiklerini ortaya koymuştur. Aynı zamanda, kariyerlerine başlamak konusunda stresli hissediyorlar. Z kuşağı öğrencilerinin iş hayatları için büyük umutları var. Esneklik, büyüme şansı, ekip çalışması ve iyi bir çalışma ortamı bekliyorlar. Güvenlik, dürüstlük, esneklik, büyüme fırsatları ve saygı talep eden Z kuşağının genel iş beklentilerinde yinelenen kalıpları vurgulamaktadır. Bu çalışma, Z kuşağının değerlerinin, liderlik beklentilerinin, karşılıklı saygı ve bağlılık üzerine kurulu kişiselleştirilmiş liderlik yaklaşımlarına daha yatkın olduğunu göstermektedir.

Son olarak ve en önemlisi bu çalışma, Z kuşağının gelecekteki çalışanlarının LMX modeli altında çalışmayı kabul edip etmeyeceğine ilişkin önermemizin örgütsel dinamiklerle ilgili olduğunu, kohortun LMX'i reddetmesinin liderlik tarzının kendisinden değil, özellikle grup içi ve grup dışı filtresinin bölücü doğasından kaynaklandığını göstermiştir. Bu keşif çalışması, Z kuşağının geleceğin liderlerinden beklentileri ve LMX modeline olan eğilimleri hakkında önemli bilgiler ortaya koymaktadır. Bu kuşağın karşılıklı saygı ve bağlılığı teşvik eden kişiselleştirilmiş,

destekleyici liderliğe değer verdiğini göstermektedir. Çalışma, liderlerin bu değişen beklentilere uyum sağlama gerekliliğinin altını çizerek gelecekteki araştırmalar ve pratik liderlik gelişimi için değerli bir çerçeve sunmaktadır. Bu içgörüler, liderlik uygulamalarının yeni nesillerin ihtiyaçlarıyla uyumlu hale getirilmesi açısından büyük önem taşımaktadır. Özellikle, yeni nesil liderlerin birey odaklı ve esnek yönetim tarzlarını benimsemesi gerektiği ve liderlik anlayışının bu beklentilere göre yeniden şekillenmesi gerektiği vurgulanmaktadır

Anahtar Kelimeler: Z Kuşağı, İşyeri, Tutum, LMX, liderlik.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DIY	Do It Yourself
FIU	Final International University
Gen Z	Generation Z
Gen Zers	Generation Z
IWB	Innovative work behavior
LMX	Leader-member-exchange
MTV	Music Television
OCB	Organizational Citizenship Behavior
PDA	Personal Digital Assistant
SMS	Short Message Service
VDL	Vertical Dyad Linkage
ZP	Generation Z participant

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

By 2025, it is projected that Generation Z will comprise 27% of the global workforce, surpassing Millennials as the largest generational cohort in employment (Mazlan & Jambulingam, 2023). This demographic shift brings about a transformation in expectations, beliefs, and values that are reshaping business leadership approaches. As Generation Z enters the corporate world, their distinct set of leader expectations can redefine effective leadership practices in this era. The expectations of this next generation of employees differ from their predecessors and understanding these differences could have major implications for the way organizations recruit, train, reward, and promote employees (Cismaru & Iunius, 2019). As researchers delve into understanding Gen Z attitudes toward leadership, it becomes clear that this generation has unique expectations and desires from their leaders (Vadvilavičius & Stelmokienė, 2019). This understanding is crucial for leaders to develop strategies and policies that create a productive and collaborative work environment for Gen Z employees. Additionally, Generation Z's exposure to electronic media has shaped their competencies and preferences, for instance, according to (Gaidhani et al., 2019) study that delved into the attitudes of generation Z towards workplace communication revealed that constant connectivity has led to preferences for communication that are rapid digital and capable of supporting multitasking in various environments. On another note (Aggarwal et al., 2022) stated that due to their upbringing in a digital world where responses and interactions are nearly instantaneous, Gen Z expects immediate feedback on their performance and clear communication from their leaders. For the same reason of the digital environment, as evidenced in the research of (Sakdiyakorn et al., 2021) regarding the understanding of Generation Z but this time about recognition, the authors assert that Generation Z has developed a preference for similar types of recognition in the workplace. They expect their achievements to be recognized not just privately but also publicly. This public recognition mirrors the immediate visibility of accomplishments they are accustomed to on social platforms. As to their anticipation about their leaders Gen Z workers anticipate that leaders will not only recognize their efforts but do so in a way that reflects an understanding of their personal career aspirations and contributions, making the recognition feel more authentic and meaningful.

This generation is more competent, adventurous, and willing to take risks. Generation Z, born approximately between 1997 and 2012, is the cohort that came of age in a world transformed by technology, characterized by the ubiquity of smartphones, social media, and instant access to information. They are often described as digital natives, having grown up with technology as an integral part of their lives, one example (Çoklar & Tatlı, 2021) research assessing the digital nativity levels across generations, finding that that Generation Z exhibits the highest level of digital nativity, indicating their intrinsic relationship with digital technology from a young age. Another is (Ufuophu-Biri & Ijeh, 2021) study highlighting the inherent digital proficiency within Generation Z compared to older generations.

As they enter the workforce in increasing numbers, they bring with them a unique set of perspectives, values, and expectations that are profoundly reshaping the dynamics of the modern workplace (Šikýř et al., 2019), leaving us with another topic worthy of discussion that is the linkage of their digital native status and leadership expectations as it is critical for organizations looking to effectively engage with this new generation in the workforce, in his study (Janssen et al., 2021) noted that gen z being digital natives expect leaders who are not only technologically adept but also capable of leading in a digital environment which includes facilitating communication and managing remote teams effectively. Moreover (Kolbet et al., 2024) recent research exploring the expectations generation Z has towards their (future) leaders, focusing on their values and characteristics highlighted that as digital natives, Generation Z values leaders who can not only navigate but also leverage technology to foster a more inclusive and engaging workplace. Conversely (Roblek et al., 2019) suggest that smart technologies are seen as social innovations by Generation Z, but also how these innovations bring complex social issues, such as the expectations of transparency and ethical behavior from leaders, which sometimes leads to dissatisfaction when not met. Furthermore regarding their perceptions of workplace and leadership (Leslie et al., 2021) study outlines that Gen Z prefers environments where they are empowered to act independently, challenging traditional leadership models that emphasize top-down control.

Speaking of Leadership, according to (Patejczyk & Kobos, 2022) Leadership is not confined to the boardroom; its impact extends directly to the everyday

experiences of employees. A skilled and empathetic leader can foster a workplace where employees thrive. They inspire loyalty, boost morale, and create an environment where job satisfaction flourishes, As a result, employees become more engaged, productive, and committed to the organization's mission. Conversely Maloni et al., (2019), poor leadership can lead to disengagement, dissatisfaction, and high turnover rates. Employees who do not feel supported or valued by their leaders are more likely to seek opportunities elsewhere. This turnover not only incurs significant costs for organizations but also disrupts the continuity and effectiveness of teams (Wu & Xu, 2017).

The changing dynamics of the contemporary workplace necessitate a significant shift in leadership theories and approaches. With each new generation entering the workforce, there is a need to accommodate their unique values, expectations, and preferences within existing leadership paradigms. For example, with the emergence of Millennials in the workplace came discussions on concepts such as servant leadership and transformational leadership that emphasized mentorship, empowerment, and social responsibility. As Generation Z begins to enter the workforce, organizations find themselves once again needing to reassess their approaches to leadership. Furthermore, grievances are already prevalent in the labor market: Studies reveal that 48% of 18-29-year-olds are considering quitting their jobs (Xing, 2023). In addition to low pay and high levels of stress, 27% indicated the leadership style of their leaders and managers is one of the reasons why they consider leaving the company (Xing, 2023). Another development that could also be observed in social media is the concept of quiet quitting, which for instance gained considerable momentum in 2022. The term describes the inner resignation from work and in conclusion, doing only the bare minimum. People who are in a quiet quitting stage most often do not see the purpose of their work (Harter, 2023). However, this raises the question, of what leadership skills is Generation Z looking for in their leaders and what can leaders do to attract and retain Generation Z.

1.1 Problem Statement

Most studies regarding leadership and Generation Z roll around their general expectations and preferences (Seemiller & Grace, 2017), The literature has been growing in number, though, with a large focus on the fundamental characteristics of the cohort itself and substantial styles of managing it and successfully engage with them (Jensen 2021). Additionally among the latest studies conducted by Gaan et al., (2023) that delved into the turnover intentions of Generation Z. Whereas researchers have conducted many studies of that nature, the significance of Gen Z's expectations of their dyadic relationship with their leaders was overlooked so far. In particular, the specific dynamics of leader-member exchange (LMX) and how this dyadic relationship applies to this generation Z were not explored by researchers, however (Jensen, 2021) emphasizes the need for more in-depth research on the interactions between Generation Z and their managers. This gap is what this study seeks to fill since Gaan et al., (2023) study stated that it is likely that managing expectations and reducing turnover among Generation Z could be highly dependent on how the leader-subordinate dyads interactions are managed.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this thesis is to comprehensively investigate the professional expectations of Generation Z from their future leaders. The objective is to gain a comprehensive understanding of these expectations, taking into account their diverse nature and how they align with existing leadership theories and practices. The ultimate aim is to develop a nuanced comprehension of what Generation Z seeks in their leaders and how these expectations may influence the evolving dynamics of leadership within organizations. To delve deeper into this complex issue, this thesis will employ the Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory as a lens to analyze these expectations for several reasons, initially it focuses on the quality of relationships between leaders and subordinates which is a crucial aspect for understanding a generation that values authentic, transparent and supportive relationships in the workplace, secondly differentiation among followers: LMX theory highlights that leaders form distinct relationship with each subordinate, this aspect can help in understanding what generation z values in a differentiated approach by leaders, reflecting their desire for personalization and individual recognition, last but not least by using LMX theory, we can specifically explore how the direct, personal interactions

between leaders and Generation Z employees could shape their perceptions of leadership and their satisfaction within their roles, which might be less emphasized in other leadership theories like transformational or transactional leadership models. This focus on the dyadic, personalized interaction is key to understanding the unique leadership needs and expectations of Generation Z.

1.3 Significance of the Study

It is crucial for organizations in the present era to understand the expectations of Generation Z regarding their future leaders because it affects organizational success by directly impacting its core elements such as engagement, performance, and the retention of the employee. This generation has a unique perception of professional life according to a (Popaitoon, 2022) study, highlighting that a sense of meaningfulness can be achieved by intrinsic job characteristics such as task significance, autonomy, and skill variety, which will lead to improved retention intentions among Gen Z employees. Furthermore, Pietroń-Pyszczek and Borowska (2022) underscored the value of mentorship as it is considered a means of personal and professional development by this cohort, moreover, Zehetner-Hirtenlehner (2023) and from a leadership style perspective noted that this generation prefers a leadership actively supports their development and that prioritizes understanding, which will create a more interesting and meaningful work atmosphere. Additionally, the same study also recommends not to overlook the diversity within the generation itself, although it may be described as universally similar, their perceptions vary significantly depending on the culture they grew up in.

The exploration of Generation Z's expectations within the context of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how the core dimensions of LMX, trust, loyalty, and respect are uniquely interpreted and valued by this new generation in the workforce.

To provide a comprehensive understanding of how the core dimensions of LMX theory that are trust, loyalty and respect are interpreted and uniquely valued by this new workforce this study will explore the expectations of this Generation within this context of leader-member Exchange focusing on their dyadic relationship with their managers, focusing our understanding on how the well-being and the engagement of this generation relate to the variation in LMX quality, for instance, Martin et al. (2023)

highlight that generation Z's job satisfaction is directly impacted by daily LMX fluctuations, hence maintaining consistent and high-quality exchanges is considered important. Also, this thesis investigates the alignment of LMX principles and Generation Z follower's perception as it is important for improving performance and OCB as noted by Yuan et al. (2023).

By matching Generation Z's values, organizations increase engagement and promote a culture of a devoted and driven workforce, which leads to improved personal and team performance, lower turnover rates, and strong goals achievement, all of which are essential for flourishing in today's era. However businesses shouldn't neglect the significant barriers that must be expertly navigated to align their leadership practices with the specific expectations of Generation Z, examples include Robak and Albrychiewicz-Słocińska (2019) study highlighting generational dynamics barrier which occurs in the form of resistance from other generational cohorts and might appear as confrontation or disengagement, particularly with employees that are accustomed to traditional management practices. Moreover, particularly regarding smaller organizations, technological adaptation poses substantial barriers, as the associated costs of technological integration limit the full engagement with this tech-savvy generation as their digital fluency requires that enterprises remain at the leading edge with advances in technology (Danylenko, 2020). Cultural transformation as well is considered a barrier as noted by (Zehetner-Hirtenlehner, 2023) because the shift is considered challenging as it requires thoughtful implementation strategies to ensure successful cultural integration without sacrificing organizational stability and disrupting established hierarchies.

By understanding and addressing these barriers, organizations can better prepare for a smooth transition that not only meets the expectations of Generation Z but also enriches the organizational culture, promoting a dynamic and inclusive workplace for all employees.

1.4 Research Questions and Hypotheses

The research aim is to establish the expectations that Generation Z has towards future leaders and leadership relationships with special emphasis on the working environment. To this end, the study employs the Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory to identify how university students from Generation Z perceive leadership,

particularly in aspects of in-group and out-group with regards to whether these organizational structures are a fit for the students. The central research question is: More specifically, the research questions are as follows: ‘What leadership qualities and workplace dynamics does the Generation Z university student expect from future leaders and how do those expectations shape their leadership and job satisfaction perception?’ The research also examines the general expectations of Gen Z regarding compensations, promotions, and organizational culture of the companies employing them. As an exploratory research, a qualitative, inductive approach is used to discover information about the values, needs, and leadership preferences of this new generation workforce.

1.5 Assumptions

It is important to ensure that the university students chosen as the sample accurately reflect the broader Generation Z population in terms of their expectations and perceptions, yet the organization's contexts may differ from what they expect. The university environment closely reflects the organizational contexts that individuals from Generation Z are expected to encounter after they graduate. However, these results must be taken with care in other organizational settings, because the university context might not be sensitive enough to truly replicate real-life organization’s structures and dynamics.

The respondents are expected to give honest and real answers from their standpoint concerning our topic. However, the strength of this study is in collecting the data which depends strongly on the participation of the participants and their willingness to be honest in their responses. To overcome this drawback, common ground with the participants was developed before the interview, via debriefing them about the theory used and also informing them about the anonymous nature of their responses and the relevance of giving their honest views. Such steps were taken to establish rapport and make them give better and more truthful responses. The chosen research methods and tools are well-suited to the unique attributes and preferences of Generation Z. This enables a thorough investigation into their expectations within the framework of LMX theory.

1.6 Limitations

Despite the method of sampling, there are some key limitations in this study such as a small sample size, nonetheless, the study involves students from diverse backgrounds living in different countries abroad, and attempts were made to increase the credibility of the findings through triangulation. This involved mapping themes and ideas derived from the respondents with the available literature and comparing the findings with other themes, which creates credibility for the interpretations.

Incorporating additional forms of triangulation such as involving more than one researcher or implementing other data methods collection could add more credibility to future studies. Moreover is crucial to note that the present study has largely utilized an in-depth and qualitative method; which has inherent drawbacks of the inability to prove causality. The exploratory nature of adopting qualitative research alignment with participants' perceived reality facilitates appreciation and explanation of issues, but fail to provide rigorous conditions of cause and effect. This means that the conclusions drawn are more so descriptive in nature than explanatory in insight. To overcome this limitation, future research could involve combined quantitative and qualitative research approaches, cross-sectional or experimental research designs that would confirm the relations revealed in this qualitative research, such approach would enhance the ability to establish causality and provide richer understanding of the covered topics.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Framework

2.1.1 Generational Theory and Generation Concept

The study of generations dates back to 1952, when the sociologist Karl Mannheim defined a generational group often referred to as a cohort as a collection of individuals who were born and reared in the same area and who had comparable experiences with history and society. In accordance with this interpretation of Karl Mannheim, individuals from many generations have similar experiences that have an impact on their attitudes and actions. As a result, while discussing generational differences, the traits and ideals of each generation are frequently taken into account (Mannheim, 1970). The foundational ideas of generational theory, such as the notions of generational location, generation as actuality, and generation units, were developed by Mannheim in 1952. These ideas are still relevant and in use today:

Location: a cohort of people is grouped according to their generational location, which is based on the cohort's birth years. The generation's potential will be impacted by this location.

Actuality: The fundamental tenet is that a cohort who shares a generational location also shares a set of formative experiences, including a certain set of social and economic circumstances. These common circumstances and experiences have a specific impact on the generational collective, which in turn shapes their ideas, values, and style of thinking, creating the generational persona. By extending this idea, it can be said that people who are part of the same generation go through comparable life experiences. Events that happened during those formative years had a particularly significant influence on the generation's enduring qualities, values, and beliefs.

Units: are the generational divisions that recognize variance within the generally 20–22-year generational location span.

Although there has been an increase in research on generational differences, the definition of the term generation and the context in which it is used have largely

not changed. Smola and Sutton's (2002) work demonstrates this reliability, they define a generational group as a collection of individuals who share the same historical and social life events and life experiences and were born at the same period. As a result, individuals from the same generation may have comparable perspectives on the world as well as similar beliefs and ideologies (Patterson, 2007; Smola & Sutton, 2002). Johnson shares the same point of view, a generation, in the words Johnson (2010), is a group of people who were born and are living contemporaneously and who share common knowledge and experiences that affect their thoughts, attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors.

Stereotyping is one criticism of the practice of categorizing people into generations and defining broad traits. Every person is unique, hence it is impossible to assume that all members of a generation think or behave in the same manner (Jeffries & Hunte, 2004; Solomon et al., 2011). Another prevalent complaint about generational disparities is that there isn't enough empirical evidence to support their importance (Salahuddin, 2010). Additionally, research supports the notion that people are more receptive to influence when they are younger, but it does not entirely support the notion that everyone in a generation would have the same early experiences.

The Crossover Effect and the Cusp Effect, on the other hand, have been given as two main arguments against a generational cohort hypothesis by a few scholars (Arsenault, 2004; Schewe & Noble, 2000), the term the cusp refers to those born at the start and end of generations. Tweeners are a common term for these folks. Due to their birth year, these tweeners are grouped into a distinct generational cohort even if they may have experienced the same life-defining and memorable moments as one generation (Arsenault, 2004). The crossover effect, as described by Schewe and Noble (2000), is the idea that extremely momentous events, like the 9/11 attack, have an impact on everyone, regardless of generation (Schewe & Noble, 2000

Table 1

Classification of Generations

Traditionalist	1925-1946
Baby boomers	1946-1965
Generation X	1965-1983
Generation Y	1983-1998
Generation Z	1998-2012
Generation alpha	>2012

Adapted from Basgoze, 2015; Hole, Zhong, & Schwartz, 2010; Jewelery MH, 2015

It is important to take into account the discrepancies in how scholars classify and label the generations before examining the traits of the various generations in the workforce. The year of birth or age is typically used to establish the borders of generational groupings, but the exact moment at which one generation finishes and a new one begins is still unclear based on current research (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000).

2.1.1.1 Silent or Traditionalist. The Traditionalists, often known as Veterans or the Silent Generation, are the oldest generational group. Depending on the source, the birth window for this generation might start as early as 1925 and finish as late as 1945. The "adaptive" Silent generation, raised as the overprotected offspring of "civic" GIs, was the start of the millennial cycle in which we presently find ourselves. This generation evolved first into risk-averse conformists and then as indecisive arbitrator-leaders with less regard for their civic elders. This generation numbers around 52 million people. After experiencing oppressive childhoods, Silents spoiled Boomer "idealist" kids who, although becoming narcissistic as they grew older, went on to cultivate morals and principles and become visionary seniors. Boomers continued the permissive cycle by producing "reactive" Xers who, after being ridiculed and under-protected as children, grew up to be risk-taking, alienated adults prepared to take on practical leadership roles (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002; Strauss, 1991).

2.1.1.2 Baby-Boomers. According to Lancaster & Stillman (2002), the 80 million people born between 1946 and 1964 are known as boomers. Depending on stereotypes, baby boomers are independent, competitive free agents who have a great desire for self-fulfilment via personal development. This group has a high level of employment engagement, which promotes financial stability and professional achievement

(Jackson et al., 2011). They are referred to as "digital immigrants" since they did not grow up in the digital age. Face-to-face, telephone, or conventional mail are the preferred methods of contact for them. Baby Boomers are more inclined to make a single, nearby stop for shopping. This generation often places a higher priority on items that are dependable, reasonably priced, and cost-effective (Williams and Page, 2011). According to Brosdahl and Carpenter (2011), they are also described as placing a greater emphasis on their families, income, and access to healthcare, as well as new items and technology that make their lives simpler and save them time. The formation of widespread "modes of behaviour, feeling, and thought" was influenced by significant social events that occurred during the boomer generation's lifetime, including the first man on the moon, the civil rights movement, the women's movement, the assassinations of public figures, student activism, and the anti-war movement (Mannheim, 1952: p. 291).

2.1.1.3 Generation X. The term Generation X refers to the 46 million people who were born between 1965 and 1980 and was made popular by Douglas Coupland's book of the same name (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002). Xers are more adept and at ease with communicating through computers. However, they frequently overlook advertisements that are targeted to them and reject all marketing strategies (Lisitsa and Kol, 2016). The moniker Generation X came to be associated with an MTV generation of cynical twentysomethings lacking in ambition, education, and economic opportunity, adopting the title and principles advocated in Coupland's writing. The biggest difference between Xers and baby boomers is that Xers are more negatively affected by their occupations (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002; Manolis, 1997). In general, they enjoy using social media sites like Facebook and mobile devices to interact, but they are less at ease in person than earlier generations and dislike traditional written correspondence like formal letters. They favor straightforward, simple communication, which affects their buying behavior as well. These individuals, however, have no trouble posing inquiries. They are savvy shoppers and consumers when it comes to goods (Brosdahl and Carpenter, 2011).

2.1.1.4 Generation Y. According to Lancaster and Stillman (2002), these are the 76 million individuals who were born between 1981 and 1999. According to Howe and Strauss (2000), this generation is well-off, educated, and racially diverse. They

comprehend the value of cooperation, moral behavior, and success while also emphasizing modesty. Due to the availability of technology and communication, another trait worth mentioning is that they are becoming a global community in the more industrialized countries. The Internet Generation or digital natives are other names for Generation Y. People from this generation tend to be self-assured, aspirational, multilingual, and goal-oriented. They keep up with current events, search for advancements and improvements, and often make purchases after conducting previous studies on the subject (Lisitsa and Kol, 2016). According to Howe and Strauss (2009), this generation is characterized in particular by seven traits: team-oriented, special, accomplishing, under pressure to do well, confident, conventional, and sheltered. The life experiences that melded Millennials created a generation that trusts in centralized authority, believes in group action, and is optimistic about the future (Jeffries & Hunte, 2004; Salahuddin, 2010). This is shown by the fact that they had a relatively peaceful and prosperous upbringing (Patterson, 2007). However, according to Patterson (2007), incidents like 9/11 have reduced their optimism and taught people to be more cautious with their aspirations for the future. In the workplace, millennials are frequently perceived as being less independent and needing structure, supervision, and guidance. However, for individuals to do the task effectively and efficiently, these criteria must be paired with the appropriate level of autonomy and flexibility (Bennett et al., 2012; Martin, 2005; Reisenwitz & Iyer, 2009).

2.1.1.5 Generation Z. The generation known as Generation Z was born between the middle of the 1990s and the early 2010s; the precise dates vary depending on the source, but are most frequently between 1995 and 2010. It is also referred to as Generation C (connected, communicating, content-centric, computerized, community-oriented, and clicking) (Friedriech et al. 2010). Born between 1995 and 2009 (McCrindle 2014) or 2010 (Seemiller and Grace 2016; Koulopoulos and Keldsen 2016). Since Gen Z was born and raised in a digital and technological environment, they are considered to be the first true digital native generation (Lanier, 2017). They have grown up using technology, learning how to use it, and interacting on social media from an early age. They even exhibit some signs of technology addiction. Gen Zers, post-Millennials," or "iGen" are some names for this generation's members (Magano et al., 2020). Is the first generation to have grown up in a technologically

advanced, globally linked society (Cilliers 2017; Turner 2015). On the other hand Mobile generation as well refers to Generation Z, which has recently entered the corporate world and was primarily born after the year 2000 in literature. The World Wide Web, MP3 players, SMS, mobile phones, PDAs, YouTube, iPads, and media technologies are all part of their upbringing (Kapil and Roy, 2014: 10–11). The social web played a role in Generation Z's development, and the online environment is crucial to their sense of self. They are also referred to as members of Generation I, Gen Tech, Digital Natives, Gen Wii, etc. Since they were raised in it, they are more dependent on technology and the digital world than any previous generation.

Table 2

Technology use and Preferences of Generations X, Y and Z.

	Generation X	Generation Y	Generation Z
Iconic technology	VHS Walkman IBM PC	DVD Internet, E-mail, SMS Gameboy-Xbox-iPod	Google, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, iPad, smartphone, PS4, Wii
Popular culture	Ripped jeans Extreme colors piercing	Hat Men's cosmetics Hawaiian style	Tight pants V-neck wearable technology
Buying motivation	Specializations	Friend reference no brand loyalty	Brand obsession trends
Ideal leader traits	authoritarian	collaborator	Inspiring Co-creator
Marketing management	Direct marketing balance	Viral references Electronic marketing	Interactive campaigns brand
Training methods	Spontaneous Interactive Comfortable environment	Multi-sensory Image Cafe style Music-multi model	Hall style Multi-stimulus Student-focused kinesthetic

Adapted from Mccrindle, 2012

2.2 Importance of Leadership in Organizations

Leadership plays a crucial role in the success of organizations, significantly influencing both employee satisfaction and productivity. In this exploration, we delve into the critical role of leadership in shaping workplace satisfaction, boosting productivity, and meeting the expectations of Generation Z in the 21st century. Understanding how leaders impact job satisfaction is important especially when exploring the expectations of Generation Z, as they tend to value workplace satisfaction and a positive work culture (Benítez-Márquez et al., 2022). Moreover exploring the relationship between leadership and productivity is also essential in our context as this new generation may prioritize environments that encourage productivity and provide career development opportunities (Rakhmatia & Riyanto, 2020), making this an integral aspect to consider. As a result by examining the correlation between leadership and job satisfaction as well as productivity, we will be providing insights into how leaders can align their approaches with the expectations of the new generation which might have practical implications for leadership development and organizational success in the evolving professional landscape.

On one hand, Leadership fosters employee satisfaction by providing them with the necessary tools, resources, and direction. Paais and Pattiruhu's (2020) study showed that leadership has a major influence on worker job happiness. It also showed a strong and positive relationship between leadership and worker job satisfaction among Samarinda City's transportation department personnel. More specifically, the leadership variable indicator showed that highly influential abilities were decision-making, creative idea generation, and successful employee interaction. Likewise, Purwadi et al. (2020) stated that leadership has a positive impact on job satisfaction in several ways. Firstly, it can create a work environment that values open communication, trust, and respect. Secondly, it can help employees feel fulfilled by helping them understand their roles and responsibilities. Thirdly, giving employees recognition may boost their drive and contentment at work. Fourthly, leaders who offer chances for development and progress can also boost employee job satisfaction. In addition, Nugroho et al. (2021) contend that meeting employees' requirements well can result in their feeling satisfied with their jobs. These needs include creating a safe and pleasant work environment, giving learning opportunities, and encouraging a sense of camaraderie among them.

On the other hand, the connection between Leadership and productivity is highlighted by studies such as Prayogi and Lesmana (2021), a leader who inspires and motivates their team members to work harder and more effectively will see an increase in productivity. Effective leadership is defined as one that fosters a work environment where employees feel valued and supported, which can result in higher job satisfaction and increased productivity. Conversely, ineffective leadership can have the opposite effect, leading to lower motivation and lower productivity. Overall, the authors assert that a leader who offers employees encouragement, support, and clear guidance helps them realize their full potential, which boosts output and results in success for the company as a whole. Moreover, Research on the relationship between productivity and various leadership styles (Tewari et al., 2019) has demonstrated that several mechanisms related to leadership have a significant impact on productivity. Among these mechanisms is 1. Employee motivation is more effective under the Transformational style of leadership because it is characterized by inspiration and consideration for each individual. This style increases employee motivation and commitment, which in turn increases productivity. 2. Leaders may improve productivity by reducing uncertainty via clear communication and by enabling staff members to participate in decision-making. 3. Employee well-being, progress, and recognition are critical components of increasing productivity and decreasing attrition. Leaders who place a high priority on these aspects benefit from their subordinates' contentment.

Since the evolution of the workforce, understanding their expectations is getting ever more significant particularly with the most recent generation, to do so we need to delve into their standards related to Leadership, in that way, we will gain insight into how leadership must adapt to meet those standards and benefit the organization, Rakhmatia and Riyanto (2020) explored the commitment of generation Z through job satisfaction and work motivation, the study discussed the distinctive traits of this generation and what they expect from their workplace, as result the key findings were provided as follow: first this generation is recognized for often changing employment looking for new chances in order to grow, find a fulfilling work and being appreciated for their ideas and opinions at work. they also values education and skill development, access to cutting-edge technology and flexible work schedules, in the end among workers especially those of generation Z, Job satisfaction and work

motivation were considered crucial in influencing organizational commitment. Moving on we come to the research of Gigauri (2021), which sheds light on the expectations of young employees regarding leadership in organizations, the key findings related to our discussion can be presented as follow: the generation Z employee members prefer supportive leaders during the work processes, value leaders who create favorable conditions and promote innovation, the leader's gender was found to be irrelevant to them, leadership skills and traits are considered important factors for successful leaders; notably communication and interaction, in this context the study also emphasizes the preference of face-to-face communication over digitalization, Lastly the research revealed that job satisfaction, employee stress, corporate culture and financial performance of an organization are impacted by leadership. Elsewhere, (Benítez-Márquez et al., 2022) conducted a bibliometric analysis consisting of 102 publications between 2009 and 2020, using four keywords; generation Z, workplace, workforce, employee. The research uncovered that gen Z members value profoundly honesty and open communication from their leaders, also favor face to face communication and enjoy transparency in leadership, desire to be heard, listened to and esteemed for their contributions by their leaders, Finally they expect their organization to prioritize the well-being of its employees, customers and the community at large.

In conclusion, organizational success is the result of employees performance, employees performance is tied to the workplace which is captained by the leaders, leadership impact the workplace by having direct effect on job satisfaction and productivity of the employees, in other words, to be considered successful; organizations must adapt their leadership strategies in accordance with the evolving needs of the new cohort, because leaders who are aware of the link connecting their actions and satisfaction/productivity will be more capable to adjust regarding this new generation expectations.

2.3 Leadership Evolution and Generation Z Expectations

In this section we aim to investigate the relationship between Leadership and generation Z, with the objective of testing the applicability of LMX model to this cohort group, to do so we should first understand the generational perspectives on leadership since we are witnessing diverse and rapidly changing workforce, whether

they happen to be gen Z's, millennials or baby boomers; each cohort distinguish itself by its own values, preferences and expectations, in our context it is crucial for effective leaders to be able to adapt their leading styles so that they can get the maximum from their subordinates, and motivating them, Yet this is not the only reason why we must understand the perspective of Gen Z on leadership; Bako (2018) comprehensive study titled Different leadership style choices, different generations", revealed six different reasons that make this understanding essential: effective leadership, Talent management, succession planning, organizational Culture, Conflict resolution and finally Innovation and Adaptability.

As we reviewed the importance of leadership in organizations in the previous heading, and after highlighting the need to understand the generational perspective of leadership, we now move to explore the intersection of leadership and generation Z to investigate how the LMX model applies to this generation and what understanding it provides for their future leaders? To have an answer to that question and fully grasp the complexities of this topic, it's essential that we first explore the Leadership Concept and its evolution, and then we delve into existing literature to understand what leader-member exchange theory is about.

2.3.1 Leadership Evolution

The concept of leadership has been subject to change throughout history, characterized by alteration in the perspective, from the behaviors of leaders to the relationship of leaders and followers and the context in which the leadership is practiced, popular in the 19th Century the Great Man Theory asserted that the qualification of a leader to leadership roles is independent, leaders come to the world with inherent features (Carlyle, 1841). Trait theories further elaborated on this in the mid-20th century, implying that effective leadership could be predicted by certain qualities, trying to identify the distinctive traits that leaders held (Stogdill, 1948). Subsequently Lewin, Lippitt, and White (1939) introduced the Behavioral theories shifting the point of interest in the direction of actions and leaders styles, analyzing their effects on followers' satisfaction and performance, identifying autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire leadership styles. Following this Contingency theories (1960-1970) emerged arguing that in a multitude of contexts behaviors or traits or both of them are considered insufficient for effective leadership, scholars such as Fiedler

(1964) and Blanchard's (1969) discussed in their models called Fiedler's Contingency model and Situational Leadership Theory that the nature of the task and the degree of control the leader has over a situation determine the effectiveness of leadership styles.

Contemporary styles: in response to the inability of earlier leadership theories to fully and well explain the complex nature of leadership, researchers recognized the limitations and developed more comprehensive models starting with Transactional and Transformation Leadership that were both introduced by Burns (1978), in brief transactional style was defined as an exchange, the motivation occurs through rewards if the task is done successfully or as punishment if not, on the other hand the Transformational one later refined by Bass (1985) emphasizes inspiration and personal development of followers, characterized by motivating and inspiring followers to pursue shared goal for the sake of the organization over individual interests, to illustrate; idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration are the mechanisms through which Transformational leaders motivate followers, this reflects the motivational aspect that Leadership have towards subordinates (Baker & Hoidn, 2023). In the same time, Servant Leadership introduced by Greenleaf (1977) as a style prioritizing the followers needs over the leaders one, empathy, listening and stewardship are the key factors ensuring the well-being of the subordinates, this approach is considered ethical and built upon empathetic principles (Darvishmotevali & Altınay, 2022). Amid this development of leadership styles, a novel viewpoint emerged as groundbreaking, which is the Leader Member Exchange (LMX) theory focusing on the the relationship between leaders and followers in a two-way interaction. First conceived in the 1970s by Dansereau, Graen, and Haga (1975) representing a shift from the standardized styles and methods, promoting the idea that leaders forge distinct bonds and relation with each follower where the quality of these relationships have positive impact on trust, respect, and obligation; high-quality exchanges are associated with an increase in trust, respect, and mutual responsibility. Which according to (Martin, Ono, Legood, Dello Russo, & Thomas, 2023) results in better job satisfaction, deeper organizational commitment, and elevated performance levels.

The transition over time from traditional to modern leadership styles highlights the evolving understanding of leadership as a nuanced and intricate concept,

additionally, LMX theory stands out as a critical and crucial progression, refocusing the attention toward the quality of the relationship between leader and follower, it furnishes a solid framework for investigating how these relationships can be harnessed to attain superior organizational results.

2.4 Leader-Member Exchange Theory: An Evolutionary Perspective on Leadership Dynamics

The Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory derived from the VDL, Vertical Dyad Linkage Theory developed by (Dansereau et al., 1975) claims that the latitude that a leader and member have when negotiating issues related to their jobs is determined by the structure of the vertical exchange, this model came during the early 1970s to demonstrate that managers have a different relationship with each of the followers, thus it is deemed improper to assess a common managerial leadership style, LMX then derived and progressed throughout the 1980s, with a switch in the emphasis from work units to the traits of dyadic leader-member interactions and how they contribute to work antecedents and outcomes. Graen & Uhl-Bien (1995) explained in their book titled 'Leadership Quarterly' the switch and described that the leader and member connections develop from poor to medium to a high level, whereas the poor or low-quality LMX also referred to as stranger relationship usually lean more on management than leadership, the moderate-quality is characterized with more of social interchange and knowledge sharing compared with the low-quality relationship.

Finally, the high-quality LMX reflects a mature partnership in which members rely on one other for loyalty and support. In other words the relationships progress from being based on contracts, limited trust in one another, having a lack of mutual understanding, and requiring more formal communications at the low end to being partnerships, with high levels of trust, mutual respect, and strong commitment to one another at the high end.

2.4.1 Key Components of LMX Theory

Dyadic Relationships: The essence of LMX theory lies in its focus on dyadic (two-way) relationships between leaders and followers. (Erdoğan & Bauer, 2015 approach emphasizes the individualized character of professional interactions and how they subsequently influence organizational behavior. By fostering these dyadic

relationship, LMX improves the effectiveness of leadership and lays the groundwork for creating cohesive teams. The decision making process, allocation of resources, duties and mainly the members performances are directly impacted by the quality of these dyadic relationships characterized by loyalty, support, respect and trust.

In-Group and Out-Group Dynamics: The member is viewed as an out-group member when the leader uses monitoring techniques and forbids considerable work-related negotiations, however social interactions and persuasion techniques when implemented establishes a bond between the two and, the member then is given the chance to work out job-related issues and considered as in-group (Singh et al., 2018). Members of the in-group have advantages not available to members of the out-group, which can ban intangible such as more time with the leader, or tangible like nicer offices or better assignments,

Role of Social Exchange: LMX is fundamentally based on social exchange theory. According to this idea, a subjective cost-benefit analysis and an alternative comparison lead to the development of human relationships. An atmosphere rich in loyalty, trust, and professional respect is fostered by leaders and followers who see reciprocal advantages in a social exchange framework that produces high-quality LMX connections. Significant levels of reciprocal trust, respect, and regard characterize this social engagement as high quality (Bauer & Erdoğan, 2014).

2.4.2 Adaptability and Contemporary Relevance of LMX

Anand et al. (2018) point out that the Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory now applies to many organizational settings, including virtual and global ones. This growth shows how LMX theory can handle today's leadership challenges proving its lasting value in today's changing work environments.

Personalized Leadership: LMX theory stresses how important it is to tailor leadership styles to boost follower satisfaction and performance. It suggests that leaders who build strong relationships can create a workforce that feels more motivated and engaged (Ayoko et al. 2022).

Employee Retention: Studies show that employees in strong leader-follower relationships are less likely to quit highlighting how these connections matter for

keeping staff. Niu and colleagues (2022) looked into how Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) affects staff's plans to leave. They focused on how feeling connected to leaders and the company plays a part, and how a leader's skills make a difference. They discovered that good LMX ties make staff less likely to quit by making them feel more connected to their boss and company. A leader's skills also boost LMX's positive effects on these feelings of connection, which helps keep employees around.

Team Effectiveness: It has been demonstrated that high-quality LMX relationships enhance the team's relatedness and productivity. According to her study, An Examination of Leader-Member Exchange and Team Effectiveness (Brooke B, 2016), LMX relations are instrumental to the overall success of teams. The idea of granting more personal resources to the team's leader over and above the common vision leads to team stability and high performance, provided that the leader shows enough respect for the team and its innovative potential. This study emphasizes the relevance of LMX in the development of better team management.

Innovation: It is also important to note that recent studies have explored the role of LMX in the team's capacity to innovate. Further, the (Mulligan et al., 2021) model affirms that high quality LMX increases innovative behavior through the mediating effects of mindfulness and work engagement. In a similar way, within an organizational context, mindfulness typical of employees and work engagement are identified as sticking jets through which the high quality leader-member relations enhance followers' innovative work behavior (IWB). A study in with 17 companies in Spain employees found out that mindfulness and engagement acted as full mediators on the relationship between LMX quality and IWB. This indicated that such factors can be used to foster an innovation culture in organizations.

These results have a big impact on how companies plan and lead. When bosses build strong ties with their team members, it boosts job performance and helpful behaviors. It also creates a work environment that supports new ideas and adapts to change (Mulligan et al. 2021).

In addition, recent research has expanded the use of LMX theory examining its effects in modern workplaces such as remote work and virtual teams

As remote work grows, scientists have explored how online environments shape relationships between leaders and team members. Their research shows that virtual leaders who communicate and can forge strong bonds mirroring those in traditional office settings (Hahn & Semrau 2022). Hahn and Semrau's 2022 investigation examined how digital interactions have an impact on team learning and performance, with a focus on leader-member relationships in virtual teams. They uncovered that solid relationships could lessen the negative effects of virtual work on team learning from errors. This indicates that well-handled online interactions boost team efficiency. It underscores the importance to keep strong leader-member connections in online spaces to achieve optimal team results. To summarize: LMX theory remains crucial to grasp the intricate bonds between leaders and their team members in modern workplaces. The next chapter, "Generational Shifts and LMX," will examine how Gen Z's aspirations align with LMX concepts. Grasping how different age groups' expectations mesh with LMX will provide useful insights to shape current leadership approaches and help organizations thrive.

2.5 Generational Dynamics and LMX Alignment

This section delves into the intersection of generational dynamics, specifically Generation Z, and the principles of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX). It explores how understanding Generation Z's expectations can help align LMX theory with their needs and drive positive organizational outcomes.

The entrance of Generation Z into the workforce has sparked significant interest in understanding their unique characteristics and expectations. This generation, born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s, brings a distinct set of values, aspirations, and perspectives to the workplace, differing markedly from their predecessors. Concurrently, the Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory, with its emphasis on the quality of the relationship between leaders and followers, offers a lens through which to examine and enhance workplace dynamics in the context of these emerging generational trends. This literature review aims to explore the alignment between Generation Z's workplace expectations and the principles of LMX theory, identifying areas of convergence that can inform effective leadership strategies in today's evolving organizational landscapes.

2.5.1 Characteristics and Expectations of Generation Z in the Workplace

This literature review aims to explore the alignment between Generation Z's workplace expectations and the principles of LMX theory, identifying areas of convergence that can inform effective leadership strategies in today's evolving organizational landscapes.

The evolving landscape of the workplace is significantly influenced by the entrance of Generation Z, a cohort born between 1995 and 2009 (McCrindle 2014), characterized by their upbringing alongside advanced technologies also referred to as generation C (connected, communicating, content-centric, computerized, community-oriented, clicking) (Friedriech et al. 2010). This generation, often described as "digital natives" generation (Lanier, 2017), exhibits a unique blend of traits such as greater freedom of expression and greater openness towards different kinds of people (Francis and Hoefel, 2018, p. 2), expectations (Magano et al., 2020), and workplace behaviors that challenge traditional management strategies and organizational structures as (Scholz, 2019) argued that Gen Zers believe that companies care about employees only when they need them.

While (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014) study suggested that according to the evidence in the literature, it is speculated that generation Z preferred leadership style will be the Transformational one Leslie et al. (2021) classify Generation Z into three separate groupings: Social Investors, Chill Worker Bees, and Go Getters, each with distinct interests and perspectives at work, particularly with one common widespread desire for their employers to uphold the highest moral and ethical conduct. Given the variety of Generation Z, it appears that corporate culture and management cannot be approached in a one-size-fits-all manner, highlighting how critical it is to understand the subtle variations within this group. Supporting (Leslie et al.'s 2021) findings, Benítez-Márquez et al. (2022) highlight the expectations of Generation Z for social responsibility from their employers as well as their preference for openness, direct communication, and a strong need for a meaningful work-life balance. These traits fit well with the wider ideals of the group, which include the need for flexible work schedules, meaningful employment, and a healthy balance between personal and professional lives. Furthermore, Gabrielova & Buchko (2021) and Mahmoud et al. (2020) contribute to this narrative highlighting the tech prowess, social awareness, and

inclination for diversity and inclusiveness in the workplace of Generation Z. They also highlight the financial intelligence, self-reliance, and entrepreneurial spirit of Generation Z, traits that call for a review of conventional leadership and management techniques in order to meet this generation's demands for development, guidance, and creativity.

Integrating the insights on Generation Z's expectations from leaders with our previous discussion on their workplace preferences offers a holistic view of this cohort's professional ethos. Generation Z's distinctive expectations from their workplaces and leaders reflect a paradigm shift in what is valued in the employment relationship, emphasizing flexibility, growth, technology, diversity, social responsibility, authenticity, and collaboration. These expectations necessitate a leadership approach that is not only inclusive and technologically adept but also genuinely invested in the personal and professional development of its employees.

2.5.2 Workplace and Leadership Expectations

Generation Z is different from others in terms of distinct expectations, as reported by (Smith & Jones, 2021) they place a strong focus on job stability and prospects for career progression, demonstrating their aspiration to achieve a balance between individual development and economic stability. The findings of Sidorcuka and Chesnovicka's (2017) study on the perception of current methods of attracting and keeping employees in Latvia show that Generation Z workers are not looking for lifelong employment, put forward their unique values, and expect their employer to accommodate their needs for flexible working hours and flexible jobs where they can apply their individuality. Furthermore (Green, 2023) study concerning the work-life balance of this cohort uncovered that this generation prefers adaptable workplace conditions comprising remote work. And care about working together, getting feedback, and talking with their team members (Schroth, 2019). From the same angle and via student examination Meret et al. (2018) carried out a study on a Generation Z student sample, mostly from Italy and several East European nations findings out that opportunities for learning and growth, trust, and job stability were the three most crucial considerations shaping Gen Zers profession choice. Diverse workplaces are considered mandatory (Doe, 2022), additionally according to (Brown, 2023),

incorporating technology is also another indispensable requirement since this generation's desire for workplaces to implement technology in order to boost efficiency and innovation is substantial for many of them. Switching gears to leadership preferences and expectations of this cohort, Grow and Yang's (2018) study investigating Generation Z and leaders unveiled that fairness and confident leadership, interpersonal skills, and welcoming traits together assemble the profile of the ideal boss figure, additionally, McGaha (2018) took a different approach focusing on leadership styles preferences of the gen Z, suggesting that the Transformational style were the most preferred highlighting that is considered preferred leader; one who promotes equality, provide assistance, demonstrate emotional intelligence, being highly competent, having an engaged personality, who foster supportive environment and most importantly who is effective and strong communicator.

Comparatively, research conducted by (Leslie et al., 2021) revealed that the generation Z cohort not only favors communication in leaders, in fact, they are also willing to work with the ones demonstrating a welcoming attitude, fostering an open dialogue environment and actively investing in their professional success and career advancement, they simply seek guidance and chances to sharpen their skills. Similarly, Mahmoud et al. (2020) stress that Generation Z's employment expectations satisfaction can be achieved through flexible work schedules, career chances, and high-tech work settings. Gabrielova & Buchko (2021) further break down and detail these expectations acknowledging that they are in harmony with Transformational leadership, described by fairness, open-mindedness, and confidence, indicating that Gen Zers members support collaborative and caring leadership styles.

The intersection of generation Z's characteristics, workplace, and leadership expectations showcase their quest for significant, growth centered, and socially responsible employment opportunities, now and to ultimately meet our research objective, we thoroughly delve into the fundamental aspects of generation Z's workplace and leadership expectations and the tenets of leader-member Exchange (LMX) theory, to explore whether there is an alignment between them.

CHAPTER 3
METHODS

3.1 Research Design

This study is exploratory research because it aims to explore and understand the nuanced expectations Generation Z has from working life. Qualitative in nature "Qualitative research is a craft that relies on the skills and insights of the researcher, involving careful attention to the complexities and subtleties of human experience." (Kvale, 1996, p. 67), as it focuses on discovering specific perceptions and opinions of generation Z student members regarding their future work life expectations what makes it well suited for uncovering new insights, themes, and patterns that have not yet been fully explored in the existing literature. Qualitative research allows for an in-depth exploration of participants' thoughts, feelings, and experiences, this depth is crucial for understanding the complex and multifaceted expectations Generation Z holds, which might not be captured through quantitative methods. Qualitative research seeks to understand phenomena from the perspective of the participants, emphasizing the richness of the data and the depth of understanding over numerical measurement (Kvale, 1996, p. 12).

Generation Z is a diverse cohort with varying backgrounds, values, and experiences, by allowing participants to express their unique viewpoints in their own words qualitative research enables the capturing of their diversity, and facilitates the emergence of new hypotheses and propositions that can be tested in future research, it is important to note that this research does not intend to make broad generalizations or definitive conclusions that apply universally. Instead the focus in on gaining deeper insights and identifying potential trends that may inform future research and practice. Consequently, the findings from this study should be interpreted with caution and within the specific context of the research.

3.2 Population and Sampling

This research aims to explore Generation Z's expectations, providing preliminary insights into the emerging area of study. An exploratory study often starts with a smaller sample size to identify key themes and patterns which can be further investigated in larger studies. The study focuses on gaining in-depth qualitative insights rather than achieving broad quantitative generalizations, a smaller number of 10 participants allows for more detailed comprehensive interviews ensuring a rich and nuanced understanding of each participant's perspective. Another reason for choosing 10 participants is feasibility and time constraints, since the study was conducted within the university, and given the limitations in funding and access to participants, focusing on a smaller, manageable number of participants seemed to be more feasible. The Population of this research is all Z generation individuals, this research is based on generation Z students, who came from different countries to pursue their studies in TRNC, and the sample is 10 students of Final International University from different branches. The students were selected randomly from the university library during the pre-final exams period. Random selection was chosen to ensure a representative sample of students from different academic disciplines and backgrounds.

3.3 Instruments and Procedures of Data Collection

In this study, semi-structured interview forms were used as a data collection tool, in-depth interview from a small sample is a qualitative analysis tool that will generates in-depth Data. The interview is a powerful tool for qualitative research, providing access to individuals' personal narratives and the meanings they attribute to their experiences (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 31)

The interviews were conducted after obtaining the participants consent. The semi-structured interviews were conducted using a set of 4 open-ended questions. Students were approached in the university library during the pre-final exams period and asked if they would be willing to participate in an interview, Participants were briefed on the study's purpose, their rights, and the confidentiality of their responses. Consent forms were provided, read and signed before proceeding. Demographic data such as age, gender, and parent's occupations… were collected using a pen and sheet. The participants were interviewed in the last week of June 2023 some in the morning, others in the afternoon, and recorded, using a phone after obtaining explicit consent

from them. Participants were briefed about the LMX theory to provide context for relevant questions.

In the in-depth interview with the Z-generation participants, the following topics are generally discussed:

Name, gender, age, occupation of parents, family income range, department of study.

What comes to mind first when you think of working?

What are your expectations from working life? And workplace?

In terms of working conditions, what are your two requirements?

Do you agree to work with a leader under LMX theory?

The decision to ask a limited number of questions (4 in this case), was due to participant burden, asking fewer questions can reduce participant burden, especially during a hectic period like pre-final exams. This increases the likelihood of obtaining quality responses without overwhelming participants.

During the interview, the questions in the form were asked in order, care was taken to not interrupt them so they could express their own views completely, each time the participants got stuck helpful questions were directed.

3.4 Data Analysis Procedures

A narrative analysis seemed to be the most appropriate for this case since it focuses on the tales people tell. It is beneficial because it will allow us to summarize the results of this case study, which is important because the goal is to comprehend this new generation.

Audio recordings were transcribed using TurboScribe for accuracy, each interview transcript will be read multiple times to identify initial codes and themes, and codes will be grouped into broader themes through repetitive review and comparisons across transcripts. Themes will be refined and validated through continuous comparison with raw data and revisiting of transcripts. Finally, findings and interpretations will be

discussed with peers or advisors to ensure the credibility and conformability of the analysis.

The data will be analyzed using a manual thematic analysis approach, where the themes and patterns will be derived directly from the data, allowing for a flexible and nuanced exploration of participants' responses. Manual coding was chosen due to practical considerations such as limited resources and the manageable size of the dataset. This approach ensures thorough exploration of qualitative data without the need of specialized software due to its feasibility. Responses from interviews will be manually coded into themes and sub-themes (if needed) based on recurring patterns and concepts, coding will be performed manually using transcripts, highlighting and annotating relevant segments of texts; manual coding allows for a detailed and nuanced analysis of qualitative data, ensuring deep understanding of participants' perspectives and opinions.

CHAPTER 4
DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Table 3

Demographic Data

Generation Z participant	Gender	Age	Education level	Field	Interview duration /min	Occupation of parents Mother/father
ZP1	male	25	Master's	Business administration	5:48	House wife/employee
ZP2	Male	23	Master's	Business administration	7:59	Employee/deceased
ZP3	Male	20	Bachelor's	Software engineering	4:49	House wife/ security
ZP4	male	21	Bachelor's	architecture	5:52	House wife/ airport agent
ZP5	female	20	Bachelor's	finance	6:28	Logistic/logistic
ZP6	male	24	Master's	Business administration	4:34	House wife/ rental and sales agency
ZP7	female	20	Bachelor's	Architecture	5:05	Teacher/pharmacist
ZP8	female	18	Bachelor's	Architecture	6:53	House wife/ civil engineer
ZP9	female	20	Bachelor's	Business administration	4:40	House wife/ accountant
ZP10	female	20	Bachelor's	Architecture	5:14	Deceased/architect

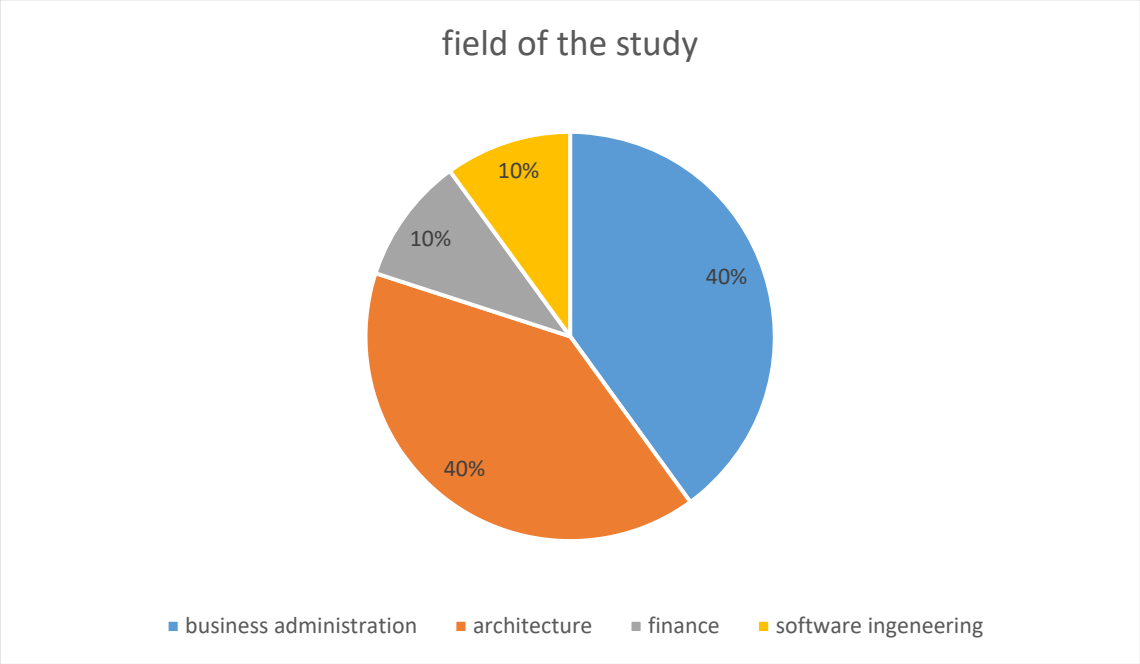
4.1 Demographic Data Representation

The following figures illustrate the demographic information of respondents sampled for this study; the data are provided in terms of gender, age, educational level,

and field. Essential in the presentation of this study is the selection of particular demographic information because it highlights the features that are vital in providing a thorough picture of the participants and their relevance to the research questions. The demographics considered presumably fit the study's aims and research questions.

Figure 1

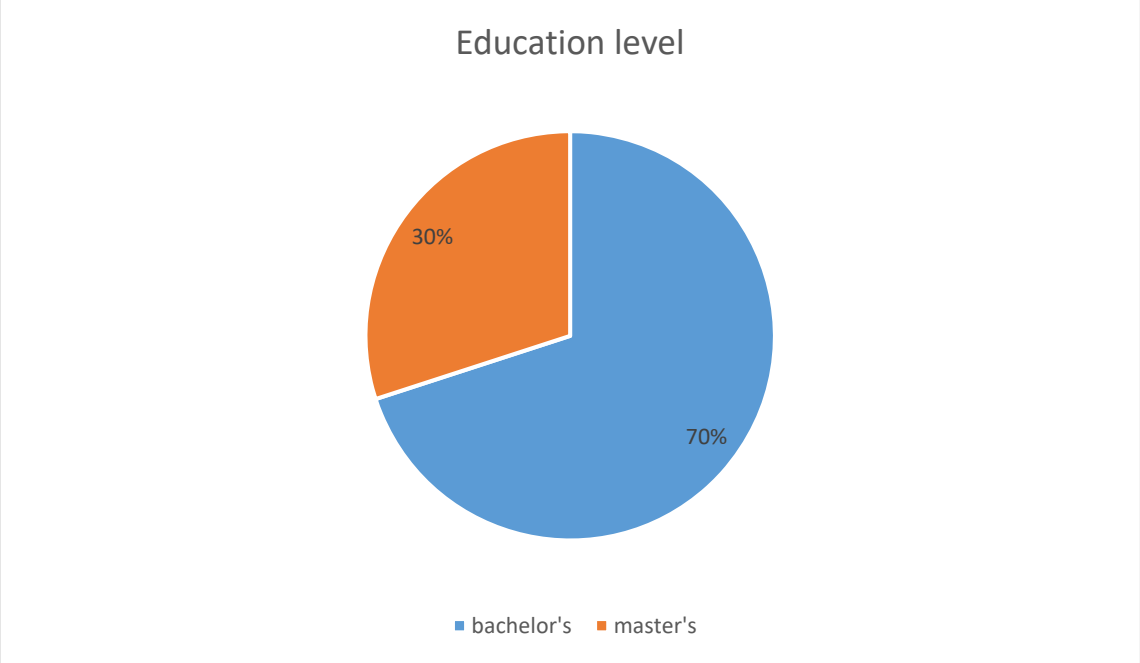
Field of the Study



The pie chart illustrates the distribution of the fields of study among the participants. The four primary fields of study represented in the sample are Business Administration, architecture, finance and software engineering. Both the Business Administration and Architecture are the most represented fields, each accounting four participants, the remaining two are represented by one participant from finance and one software engineering. This diversity enriches the study by incorporating multiple perspectives and expertise areas, ultimately contributing to a more holistic understanding of generation Z and help to formulate a comprehensive view of the qualities and competencies that Generation Z values in their future leaders.

Figure 2

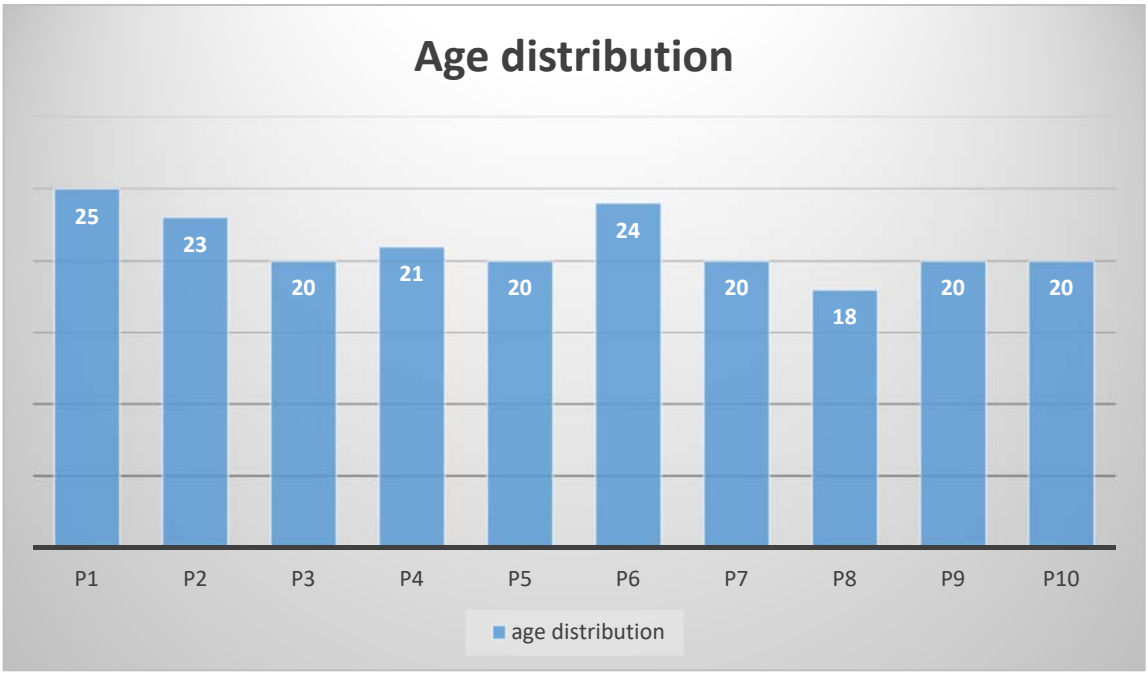
Education Level Distribution



Regarding educational background, the participants had 2 varying levels of education, all of them finished high school, 7 participants are studying bachelor and the 3 remaining are master students. This diversity in educational attainment provides a comprehensive understanding of how education may influence the perspectives and responses of the participants.

Figure 3

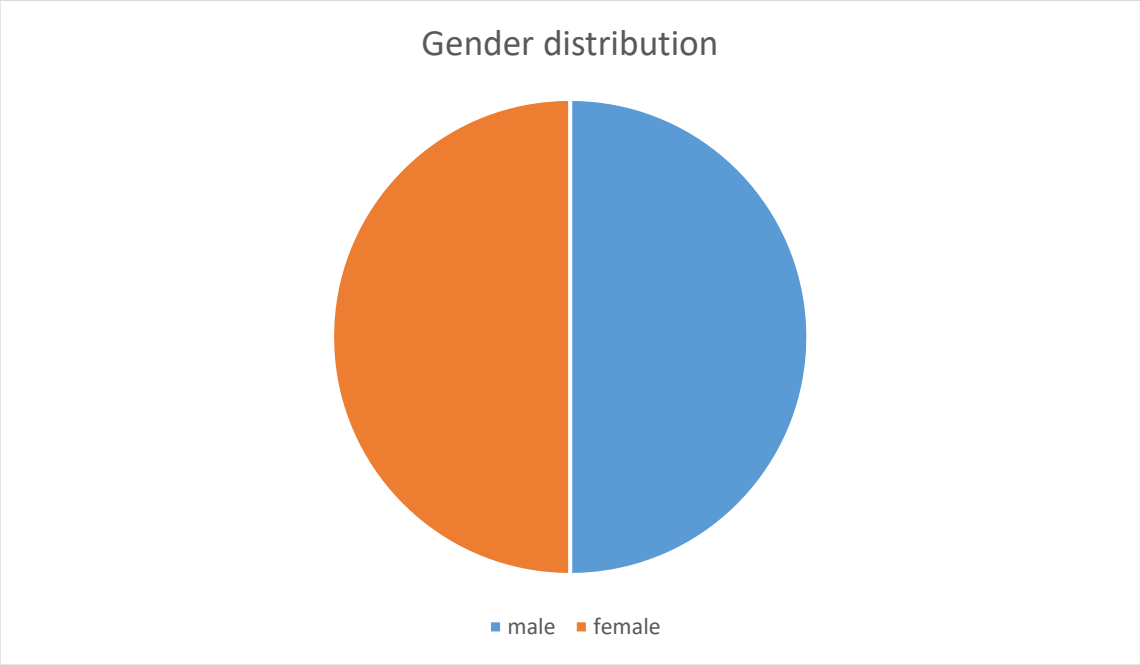
Age Distribution



The age distribution of the participants ranged from 18 to 25, with an average age of 21.5. The majority of participants fell within 20 years old age group, indicating that the sample is relatively young in age. This age distribution is significant as it reflects the relevance to the study by respecting the cohort Gen Z age range.

Figure 4

Gender Distribution



The gender breakdown of the participants included 5 males and 5 females. This results in a gender ratio of 50%50% illustrates a balance in gender representation within the sample. The gender distribution is essential for understanding potential differences in perspectives of experiences that may arise due to gender-specific factors.

4.1.1 Parental Occupation Analysis in Relation to Participant Fields of Study

Among the 4 participants of Business Administration, one participant has a father in business-related field (sales agency), and another one has an accountant father, indicating some influence from parental professions. Regarding Architecture, two participants have fathers in related fields (civil engineer and architect), suggesting a significant influence on their choice of study.Both parents of the Finance participant are in logistics, which might have influenced the participant's interest in finance.

Finally the software engineering participant's choice seems independent of the parent's occupation. Parental occupations have a varying degree of influence on the participants' fields of study, in fields like architecture and business administration, there is a notable correlation where participants are influenced by their parents' professions. In contrast, fields like software engineering and finance show less direct

influence, indicating that generation Z participants might also be guided by personal interests and external factors.

4.1.2 Family Income Analysis

Income range distribution:

Middle: 5 participants

Upper-Middle: 2 participants

High income: 3 participants

The analysis of the family income ranges among the participants reveals that five come from middle-income families, two from upper-middle-income families, and three from high-income families. However, it is important to note that these results are not representative or significant due to several factors:

Lack of scale: there was no standardized income scale provided, making it difficult to draw meaningful comparisons.

Geographic diversity: the participants are from different countries where the cost of living and average income levels vary significantly. This geographical diversity introduces a bias, as what constitutes middle, upper-middle or high income in one country may differ greatly in another.

Therefore while the data provides a basic overview of the income distribution among the participants, the lack of standardized income scale and the variations in economic conditions across different countries limit the representativeness of these findings, thus we determined that income levels do not have a significant impact on the specific outcome we are examining in this study, as such including income data would not contribute meaningful insights or affect the conclusions of this analysis, in other words it is biased and it only reflects the participant's opinion.

4.2 Interviews Findings

This chapter aims to give a thorough breakdown of the study's results connecting them to current research and examining their significance, it seeks to make sense of the data gathered through an inductive thematic analysis offering insights on how Generation Z sees and expects work to be. The chapter goes through the findings question by question and theme by a theme to build a full picture of how Gen Z students view the working world and how these views shape their acceptance or rejection of specific leadership models, LMX in our study's case

4.2.1 What comes to mind first when you think of Working

Table 4

First Question's Emerging Themes

Financial Considerations	Responsibilities and Obligations	Personal and Professional growth	Work satisfaction and Enjoyment	Work environment and Relationships	Pressure and Unreadiness
Money Income Salary Stable income Compensation	Obligation Duties Tasks Responsibilities	Experience Learning skills Career growth	Enjoying work Positive atmosphere Love for job Productivity Contribution to society	Organization Commitment Work ethics Relationships professional relationships freedom	Pressure Unreadiness

Theme 1: Financial Considerations, participants frequently highlighted financial considerations, such as money, salary, compensation, and income, as key factors when thinking about work. For example, ZP5 emphasized, "In my mind first comes money… salary because I think it's one of the important things in the working process." This reflects a practical outlook where work is seen primarily as a means to achieve financial security. Similar patterns were noted by ZP2, ZP3, and ZP4, who underscored the importance of financial stability, aligning with existing literature that identifies financial security as a primary motivator for Gen Z (Kubátová, 2016).

Theme 2: Responsibilities and Obligations, work was also perceived as a structured environment involving duties and responsibilities. ZP1 noted, "You're obliged to do the duties and tasks you have been given," highlighting a sense of accountability and commitment. This theme was echoed by ZP6 and ZP7, reinforcing the idea that Gen Z sees work not just as a job but as a set of obligations that must be fulfilled

Theme 3: Personal and Professional Growth, participants such as ZP4 and ZP5 viewed work as an opportunity for personal and professional growth, prioritizing learning new skills and gaining experience over immediate financial reward. As ZP4 stated, "Experience comes first," indicating that development and long-term career goals are highly valued. This supports findings that Gen Z places a strong emphasis on growth and learning opportunities (Meret et al., 2018).

Theme 4: Work Satisfaction and Enjoyment, several participants emphasized the importance of work satisfaction and enjoyment, seeking roles that provide a sense of fulfillment beyond financial rewards. ZP10 mentioned, "Place where you can be free… You go there willingly," reflecting a desire for meaningful and enjoyable work. This aligns with the literature that suggests Gen Z values workplace satisfaction and positive work culture (Benítez-Márquez et al., 2022).

Theme 5: Work Environment and Relationships, a supportive work environment, and positive relationships with colleagues and superiors were identified as critical factors by participants. ZP10 highlighted the need for a pleasant atmosphere, stating, "Place where you can be free… in friendship with your boss," emphasizing the value

of positive interpersonal dynamics. This mirrors the social exchange theory, which links supportive environments with increased job satisfaction (Schroth, 2019).

Theme 6: Pressure and Unreadiness, the final theme, expressed by ZP8, centered on feelings of unreadiness and anxiety about entering the workforce. ZP8 noted, "Working is very pressuring to me," indicating concerns about handling job responsibilities. This theme emerged inductively, highlighting a need for additional support as Gen Z transitions into the job market, providing fresh insights into their unique challenges.

In summary, the responses to the first question highlight that students perceive work in various dimensions. Based on the emerging dominant theme of financial considerations, it can be adduced that monetary aspects feature very strongly in their perception of working. There is, in addition, a sense of responsibility and obligation ascribed to work, thus showing a feeling of duties and tasks attached to employment. The personal and professional growth desire was reflected through the experience and development of skills, whereas work enjoyment and satisfaction highlighted fulfillment and an enabling positive environment in the workplace. Lastly, pressures and readiness for work reveal the emotional and psychological challenges students face as they prepare to join the workforce. These insights will thus help in a much better understanding of what shapes students' perceptions of work and therefore may lead to formulating strategies that will support their career development and well-being.

4.2.2 What are your Expectations from Working Life and Workplace

Theme 1: Work-life Balance and Flexibility, participants emphasized the importance of work-life balance and flexibility, such as remote work and adaptable schedules, to better manage personal and professional responsibilities. ZP1b noted, "The timing should be flexible… my preference would be working remotely," while ZP6b stressed, "I should have enough time to spend with my family." This reflects a growing trend among Gen Z towards valuing flexibility and balance in the workplace, aligning with research that highlights their preference for adaptable work conditions (Benítez-Márquez et al., 2022).

Theme 2: Challenges and Personal Career Growth, the desire for personal and professional growth and facing new challenges was prominent. ZP7b expressed the need for continuous learning and engagement, stating, "New challenges, new projects… will keep me in the work because if it's just the routine I would hate it." ZP2b echoed this sentiment, emphasizing the importance of tackling difficult tasks to avoid boredom. This focus on growth reflects Gen Z's broader expectations of dynamic, engaging work environments.

Theme 3: Collaborations and Teamwork, collaboration and teamwork were valued highly, with participants expressing a preference for supportive, team-oriented settings. ZP3b mentioned learning from colleagues, while ZP6b highlighted the importance of a collaborative work culture: "The working environment should be like a team." This aligns with Gen Z's team-oriented nature and preference for inclusive and interactive work environments, Gen Z values working together and being part of a team. They often look for jobs that focus on teamwork. This backs up what Howe and Strauss stated back in 2009 about Gen Z's traits. The first trait they mentioned was that Gen Z is a team-oriented cohort.

Theme 4: Positive Work Environment, a positive work environment, characterized by respect, ethics, and inclusivity, was frequently cited as essential. ZP4b stressed, my expectations are respect and a non-racism workspace, while ZP6b noted the importance of competitiveness as a motivational factor. These responses underscore Gen Z's desire for ethical and supportive workplaces that foster mutual respect and positive dynamics.

The initial literature review didn't dive deep into respect and empathy as key expectations for Gen Z, research acknowledges the value of a positive work environment in organizations. Also, new studies indicate that Gen Z prioritizes inclusivity and ethical standards, which shows broader generational shifts toward valuing respectful workplace dynamics (Deloitte 2019). These findings back up the idea that a positive work environment plays a crucial role in engaging this group.

Overall Generation Z expects that work life and the work environment provide financial stability, an excellent work-life balance, and flexibility. Even higher appreciation for gaining experience and facing new challenges in this way grows toward continuous learning, personally or professionally. Collaboration with people in a team and toward preferably inside a supportive and inclusive work environment is indispensable, just like respect, ethics, and a good atmosphere, which are necessary for their well-being. Such insights underpin the fact that Generation Z expectations must shape workplaces designed to be sensitive to a broad range of requirements.

4.2.3 In Terms of Working Conditions, What are your two Requirements.

Theme 1: Security, ZP1 emphasized the importance of health insurance and enough pay as key parts of Security. This shows a basic need to feel secure and protected. It hints that Gen Z puts a high value on job settings that look after their health and money situation; "I give my hundred percent and they do better for me, like in, in mean of my health, they should have my health insurance. Also due to inflation or current situation. They should think of the needs I have, my, uh, that the income I'm getting, is it enough or not…"

This desire for safety matches up with Maslow's hierarchy of needs where money stability and health protection from the base (Maslow, 1943). Studies also reveal that

Gen Z often dealing with money worries puts a high price on job safety and benefits (Schroth, 2019).

Theme 2: Integrity and Order, Integrity and organizational structure were also emphasized by ZP2, expressing its need to engage in ethical practices and have a well-organized working environment. "…The first one I would say ethics. Second, you need organized people…" ZP2. Such desires indicate a precarious need and want in people to have ethical leaders who are fully open to their subordinates and organization and have full ethical processes and orders that benefit both fairness and trust. This emerging theme is consistent with the finding of Leslie et al. (2021) regarding the three classifications of Gen Z with one common widespread desire for their employers to uphold the highest moral and ethical conduct. Also, more, Gen Z needs a certain structure because they require a predicted and unambiguous environment at work.

Theme 3: Work Environment, This theme also appeared significantly in response to the second question about expectations at the workplace focusing on its relevance for Generation Z. In both cases, many participants talked about the need for a supportive, well-equipped environment that would help them improve the quality of work Good environment of working, good equipment ZP3. Such repetition also emphasizes endogenous importance for Gen Z that relates to the physical and social work environment, "Well, the technologies that would help and would make the work easier. Of course, that's a must-exist in the workspace. Then we can say that respect in the workspaces and obligatory of course, those are the two things that have to exist…." This means that a pleasant work environment is not only a desire but a necessity for the given generation.

Good equipment and technology is the expected environment of this cohort, Availability of technology is highly valued, and this aligns with most of the studies defining this generation, then those delving into their characteristics, for instance (Çoklar & Tatlı, 2021) research assessing the digital nativity levels across generations, finding that that Generation Z exhibits the highest level of digital nativity, indicating their intrinsic relationship with digital technology from a young age.

Theme 4: Respect and Fairness, a major emerging theme of the third question, respect and fairness were consistently mentioned in six of the participants' responses

suggesting an underlying entitlement for fairness in the workplace as mentioned by ZP3 "…if I'm doing my effort to provide you with some data or information or any outcome from the job I'm doing and I get like a very down value treatment or disrespect, I wouldn't like that for sure.". They want to be respected "…Respect should be there…ZP7 and they look for fairness in everything at work, from their peers and employers "…respect and this is about like how some like managers and people with higher authority in the workgroup in the in the work environment, they kind of disregard your ideas they have higher power over you…" ZP8.This emphasis on respect and fairness matches the findings of Gabrielova & Buchko's (2021) study that outlined the expectations of this generation from leadership, showing that Gen Gers members expect collaborative and caring leadership styles.

Theme 5: Recognition and Responsibility, some participants preferred to get recognition for their work and to be responsible or to have accountability for their work. They want credit for their work and clear job duties. This shows Gen Z's need to feel valued and have defined roles highlighting how important recognition is in their job experience, "recognition, and recognition of efforts…"ZP6. This theme supports (Sakdiyakorn et al., 2021) work in developing an insight on generation Z, where it was revealed that as to their expectation from their leaders Gen Z workers expect their leaders to notice what they are doing and also understand or appreciate what they are doing within the context of the workers' personal career expectations thus making the notion of recognition more meaningful and authentic.

Theme 6: Growth and Flexibility, this sixth theme reflects elements that have already emerged in previous questions: where growth was brought as one of the critical expectations in the first question and flexibility as one of the major themes in the second question. Because these aspects have been broadly covered, it is not possible to describe them once again here. Nevertheless, the constant appearance of these aspects guarantees their significance for Gen Z, thus underlining the significance of the idea that the possibility of career growth and the availability of conditions that allow changing jobs' requirements are essential for this generation. This continuity makes it possible for us to confidently conclude that growth and flexibility still play a critical role in defining Generation Z's work expectations.

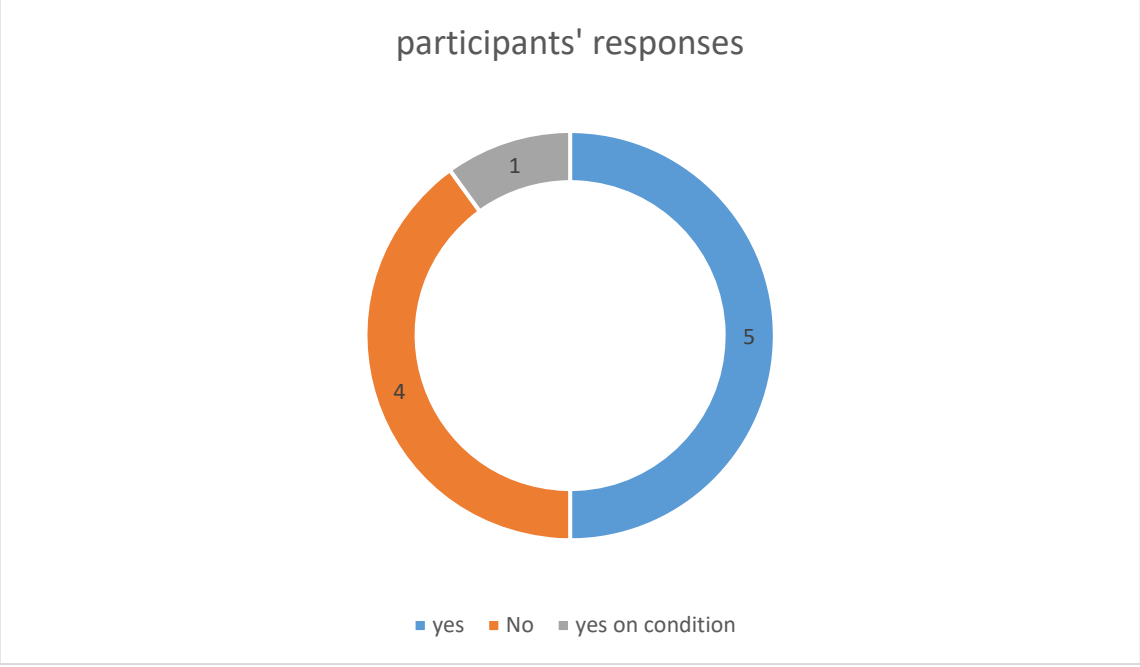
Theme 7: Atmosphere, only highlighted by one participant, the workplace atmosphere as stressed by ZP10" good atmosphere and good architecture." on the need to create a good, beautiful and well-designed workplace. This goes further to affirm the fact that people do not only require workspaces that are efficient, but also beautiful and comfortable.

In summary, the responses to the third question pinpoint that workers' needs are quite a lot and differ significantly. Security, ethical practices, a supportive work environment, respect, recognition, growth opportunities, flexibility, and a pleasant atmosphere are the most expressed dominant themes that have come out. This means that Gen Z require stability, integrity, and mutual respect in their professional lives. They also emphasize environments that offer professional development and a work-life balance. The understanding of the priorities is insightful toward how Gen Z expects and needs to be handled in workplaces, leading to the design of strategies aimed at boosting job satisfaction and productivity for this cohort.

4.2.4 Do you agree to work with a Leader under LMX theory

Figure 5

Age Distribution



The participants' responses regarding working under LMX theory indicate a division of three categories, those who agree, and those who disagree and finally who agree conditionally, the results can be presented as follows:

Table 5

Fourth Question's Results

participant	response	Argument
ZP1	disagree	Concern about not being heard once ending up in the out-group.
ZP2	agree	Belief of ending up as in-group member, sees mutual benefit of it and anticipates the manager's support.
ZP3	agree	Confident and comfortable with performance-based evaluations.
ZP4	agree	Appreciate challenging assignments and is ready to be evaluated based on performance.
ZP5	disagree	Believes that grouping process might unfairly punish talented people due to collective mistakes.
ZP6	agree	Views it as a chance to embark on tasks and flourish.
ZP7	disagree	Finds the classification monotonous and unchallenging.
ZP8	agree	As perfectionist, he believes that he will end up in the in-group, which would lead to more opportunities and promotions.
ZP9	disagree	The fear of being excluded.
ZP10	Agree conditionally	Worries about envy among groups, yet maybe receptive to it if this issue is managed.

The answers regarding working under the LMX theory brought division amongst the subjects. Those who agreed noted the benefits of mutual support, performance-based evaluation, and promotion opportunities (ZP2d, ZP3d, ZP4d, ZP6d, ZP8d). These subjects perceive LMX as a means of showing their skills and ensuring a promotion through loyalty and good performance.

On the contrary, disagreeing participants expressed fears of sidelining in case they were members of the out-group, unfair penalization with respect to group dynamics, lack of challenges, and irreversible categorization as a member of the out-group (ZP1d, ZP5d, ZP7d, and ZP9d). Such concerns speak to a fear of injustice and potential negative morale and motivational impacts.

Finally, ZP10d submitted conditionally, realizing this prospect of the potential for partition and jealousy but open if these issues can be worked out. This general analysis indicated that the participants were ambivalent toward the LMX theory; that is, it showed potential benefits and concerns of significance to manage for successful implementation.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Conclusions

Here we consider participants' answers to the final question about the extent to which they would accept work under an LMX theory with leaders, while also relating those responses to their answers to the first three questions, which concern what comes to mind when they think of work, what it means to them and what constitutes a good employment experience for them. It allows us to provide a conclusion in the form of an integrated understanding of how the attitudes of Generation Z toward work, expectations, and requirements impacts their evaluations of leadership styles, and it provides significant insight into whether Gen Z's work values are suited to or not for the dynamics of the LMX dyad. It is quite informative how participants' responses on working under LMX theory matched or diverged with other organizational expectations. Some of the individuals rejected LMX, not because of its style of leadership but due to its categorization modality of creating in-group and out-group employees. This division is contrary to their core preferences and expectations such as clear communication, fairness, security, and fair treatment which are important when people feel they are valued and appreciated in their workplace. These factors include concerns related to the perceived unfairness in categorizing people based on tasks, as well as the apprehension of exclusion; lack of challenges also played a part for these respondents who prefer organizations that are dynamic, inclusive, and promote growth and development based on individual work and talents.

On the other hand, those who accepted LMX were driven by the belief of ending in the in-group and the possibility of getting the rewards of it which include recognition, support, and promotion. Their acceptance conforms to one of their major life objectives of pursuing good institutions that reflect performance-based culture and career ladder progression. They consider LMX as a model that can enhance career advancement, signal out high achievers, and give them the recognition they desire despite the anticipated relational difficulties. Thus, the range of responses is evidence of the fact that approval or dismissal of LMX depends not only on the proficiency of the theories translating organizations dynamics, but largely on the correlation between

different leadership styles and certain core organizational values such as the employees' perception of fairness, inclusion, and growth at the workplace.

Overall, the analysis reveals that the cohort's rejection of LMX is not rooted in the leadership style itself but rather in its organizational dynamics, particularly the divisive nature of the in-group and out-group filter. Participants who value inclusivity, respect, and fairness are particularly wary of these dynamics, as they undermine the supportive, equitable work environments that Gen Z seeks. Those who favor LMX are driven by the perceived benefits of recognition and growth, believing they will thrive within the model. This divergence underscores the critical role that organizational dynamics play in shaping Gen Z's acceptance of leadership models, emphasizing that alignment with their core values of inclusivity, fairness, and growth is essential.

5.2 Implications and Recommendations

Looking at the answers to the first question shows that Gen Z students care most about money security, chances to grow, and workplaces that support them. At the same time, they feel stressed about starting their careers. However, these findings come from a small-size sample of students from different countries who are living abroad, limiting the generalizability of the study, but provide us a starting point to understand how Gen Z sees work, highlighting the need to do more research with bigger and more diverse samples.

Although there's not much research about Gen Z's focus on empathy and ethical work environments, this finding sheds new light on how younger employees see the ideal workplace. It fits with the general view of Gen Z as a group that cares about inclusion ethical rules, and supportive social settings pointing out areas for further exploration.

Looking at the second question, we see that Gen Z students have big hopes for their work life. They want things like flexibility, chances to grow, teamwork, and good work environment. But we should keep in mind that these findings come from a small group of students from different countries who are living abroad. These insights show how Gen Z's expectations are changing. This means companies might need to change their work setups and rules to bring in, adapt with, and keep that new group of workers.

To attract and retain Gen Z talent, companies must offer competitive salaries, clear paths for career growth, and financial benefits such as bonuses and rewards. Transparency around pay structures and opportunities for advancement will boost job satisfaction and loyalty.

Additionally, Gen Z employees thrive in roles with clearly defined responsibilities and expectations. Companies should ensure that job roles are well-structured, provide regular feedback, and offer the necessary training and tools to support employee success. A positive work culture is essential to maintaining motivation and productivity. Organizations should focus on creating inclusive environments where employees feel valued and appreciated. Regular team-building activities, open communication, and recognizing individual contributions will foster a sense of belonging.

To further meet the needs of Gen Z, companies must provide ethical and respectful work environments. High standards for respect and ethics should be a priority, as well as offering support for stress management, especially for new employees. Health care, ergonomic improvements, and modern technology are also key to ensuring Gen Z employees' satisfaction.

Ultimately, recognizing and rewarding employees’ efforts whether formally or informally creates a motivated workforce and encourages long-term commitment.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Gender

Age

Occupation of parents (Mother/Father)

Family income range

Department of Education

What comes to mind first when you think of working?

What are your expectations from working life? And workplace?

In terms of working conditions, what are your two requirements?

Do you agree to work with a leader under LMX theory?

APPENDIX B

SIMILARITY REPORT



Generation Z's expectations from future leaders, an Exploratory Inductive Research

ORIGINALITY REPORT

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APPENDIX C

ETHICAL APPROVAL

ULUSLARARASI FINAL ÜNİVERSİTESİ

İÇ YAZIŞMA / INTER OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Gönderilen/To: Omar Bourhllal **Tarih/Date:** 13/07/2023

Gönderen/From: Prof. Dr. Hüseyin YARATAN
Rector **Ref/Sayı:**100/050/REK.001

Konu/Subject: About ethical approval

In line with the decision taken at the Ethics Committee meeting on July 7th, 2023, it was decided that your study was ethically and scientifically appropriate.

Distribution: Chair of the Ethics Commitee

Ethics Committee Decision:

Karar Sayısı 2023/023/02:
Omar Bourhllal's proposal, titled "Generation Z's expectations from future leaders", and to be carried out under the supervision of Assoc. Prof. Dr Şafak Gündüz, which he submitted to the Ethics Committee, was discussed, and the proposed research was found ethically and scientifically appropriate, with the justification, purpose, approach and methods specified in the application.

SK/HY