

# Satisfaction and Commitment in Work in the Opinion of Employees of the X and Y Generation (on the Example of the Health Care Sector and the Financial Sector in Poland)

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**Abstract.** Satisfaction with the job is one of the main factors determining not only the choice of the workplace, but also the desire to stay in the organization. The level of job satisfaction is related to the level of involvement of a given employee in it. This involvement significantly influences the success that the organization can achieve. Contemporary human resource management is a difficult task for the organization's managers. An additional difficulty is the increasingly visible generational difference in organizations. Generation X and Y differ not only in mentality and professed values, but also in the approach to work and tasks. The purpose of this article was to identify the level of self-commitment and job satisfaction performed by employees from generation X and generation Y. The authors additionally examined whether there is a relationship between the level of job satisfaction and commitment. The survey was conducted among 89 employees employed in enterprises operating in Poland in the health care sector and in the financial sector.

**Keywords:** Job Satisfaction, Commitment in Work, Generation X, Generation Y.

## 1 Introduction

The contemporary labor market is undergoing significant and dynamic changes. It is affected not only by economic conditions but also by the diversification of the population structure of people who are professionally active. What is more often observed is the phenomenon of the appearance of so-called generations of employees. The concept of a generation can be explained as a group of people of similar age who during the course of their lives witnessed the same events [2]. These generations are represented by people of different ages, with different skills, personality traits or different expectations towards work and responsibilities associated with it. The literature on the subject assumes a division into four generations: Baby Boomers

(born in 1946-1969), generation X (born in 1970-1979), and generation Y (born in 1980-1994) and generation Z (born after 1995) [3].

The emergence of different generations in the labor market is a big challenge for managers who need to manage this generational diversity in an appropriate way. In addition, in order to avoid high employee turnover, they need to take action to make employees more willing to remain in the organization. Such activities include building broadly understood employee engagement and stimulating the level of job satisfaction achieved by them [11].

Satisfaction with the work performed largely reflects the employee's attitude towards the tasks being performed. It is defined as positive feelings about the work being done. It also talks about the fact that the employee willingly performs his tasks because his work is carried out in accordance with his interests. In turn, commitment to work is defined as the individual's willingness to give up personal goals for the professional activity and organization in which he is employed [4].

The purpose of this article was to identify the level of self-commitment and job satisfaction performed by employees from generation X and generation Y. The study was conducted in two companies operating in Poland. Due to the mystery of the study, the authors have committed not to give the names of the surveyed companies. The first of the surveyed enterprises operates in the public health sector, while the second is a private sector enterprise [6].

### 1.1 Generation X and Y

Modern management becomes a more difficult and complex process. An important challenge faced by the managers of an enterprise is the management of human capital. This capital is the main factor thanks to which enterprises shape their level of competitiveness on the market. In order for the company to achieve above-average results, it should first of all ensure the employment of personnel with appropriate competences. The level of employee involvement as well as their attitudes vary depending on their age. Among the people employed in the company, each generation is distinguished by different features, so to be able to manage their involvement as well as influence the level of their satisfaction, it is necessary to know the determinants that influence the behavior [15]. Table 1 shows the characteristics of the X and Y generation that influence engagement in work.

**Table 1.** Characteristics of the X and Y generation [8, 14, 15].

	Generation X	Generation Y
Basic values	Balance, good education, entrepreneurship, independence, seeking work-life balance, pragmatism, independence, skepticism	Attitude for achievement, self-confidence, diversity, consumer enthusiasm, high tolerance, high level of education, optimism, realism
Approach to money	Caution, conservatism, saving attitude	Earning in order to be able to spend

Work ethics	Approach - "work smarter and more efficiently, but no longer", self-sufficiency, focus on single-tasking, results orientation, preferred loose work environment	Ambition, multitasking, persistence, entrepreneurship, obsession with personal development, high expectations towards superiors, goal orientation, striving for development in teamwork
Communication	Using a simple conversation - presenting facts, immediate, direct approach, avoiding abbreviations and company jargon, using e-mail as a key means	Courtesy, direct communication only if the message is very important, positive attitude, preferred electronic way of communication
Feedback and rewards	Self-sufficiency - concrete instructions are enough to overcome the need for control, freedom at work is the best reward, remuneration through free time, greater interest in non-financial remuneration, low value of public recognition	The willingness to receive frequent feedback, constant control, a high need for recognition, the need for clearly defined goals and expectations
Approach to career	A proactive approach to the development of one's qualifications through the acquisition of academic degrees, participation in trainings, seminars, not necessarily related exclusively to the position held	Entering the labor market with a lot of knowledge is characterized by their lack of experience. Big desire to develop their own skills

Table 1 shows that the difference in personality traits of given generations occurs in all groups of presented features. Generation X is distinguished by independence conservative approach to work focus on direct communication and awareness of the importance of qualifications. In turn, the generation Y is characterized by self-confidence, multi-tasking, the need for frequent feedback and focus on the development of its competences, especially those focused on industry knowledge, foreign languages and specialized computer systems [10].

A particular difference between the generation X and Y is the approach to the implementation and use of modern technologies. Generation X may be referred to as "digital immigrants" [2]. Although representatives of this generation treat the media as an important means of communication, they are not proficient in using new technologies. The reason may be the fact of growing up without digital solutions that were available to representatives of the Y generation during their youth period [1].

Adolescence has the greatest impact on the attitudes with which employees are guided in their professional lives. People from the older generation pay more attention to punctuality and to treating earned money with greater respect. The reason is the circumstances in which they were growing up. They did not have mobile phones to inform other people about the expected delay, so the agreed time and place were

binding. They did not grow up in the era of developed consumerism which is why their approach to money is more conservative. The generation Y is taught that money is an inseparable element of the use of life. The fact is that most of them are convinced that they work to be able to spend [13].

Therefore, the specific characteristics can be reflected in the advantages and disadvantages of each generation representatives (tab. 2).

**Table 2.** Advantages and disadvantages of representatives of the X and Y generation [14].

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Generation X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loyal to the employer,</li> <li>• prefer stabilization,</li> <li>• conscientious,</li> <li>• humble,</li> <li>• appreciate their situation</li> <li>• interested in innovation and the development of the workplace</li> <li>• Patience,</li> <li>• Involvement,</li> <li>• readiness to make sacrifices,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulties in adapting to new work environments</li> <li>• Low mobility due to poor foreign language skills</li> <li>• Attachment to traditional forms of work</li> <li>• Treating work as the most important part of life (workaholism)</li> </ul>
Generation Y	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural ability to use new technologies</li> <li>• High mobility</li> <li>• Multitasking - perform a few things at once</li> <li>• Ability to work in a team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of ability to solve non-standard problems</li> <li>• demanding attitude</li> <li>• Unrealistic expectations</li> <li>• Lack of patience</li> <li>• Low work ethic</li> <li>• Difficulties in interpersonal communication</li> </ul>

Basic differences can also be seen in the advantages and disadvantages of individual generations (tab. 2). Generation X is usually more conscientious, humble and has more patience in performing tasks. Assigning such features may result not only from the age in which there are employees of the X generation, but also from their professional and life experience. The greatest advantages of the Y generation can be their natural mobility and the ability to use new technologies. Generation Y are young people who do not have a specific life plan yet, and therefore often travel trying to find a suitable place for themselves. However, despite possessing advantages that are important from the point of view of the modern organization, the Y generation is very demanding. Employees of this generation expect high earnings, flexible working hours and other supplements that are not always adequate to their professional experience. In turn, the generation X is attributed to such disadvantages as: too much attachment to traditional forms of work and a negative approach to the implementation of innovative technologies.

## 1.2 Commitment and Satisfaction from Work

Work is an essential element in the life of every human being. It provides not only the opportunity to maintain oneself and the family but also affects human development. There are many definitions of this concept in literature, but there is still a belief that job satisfaction is a multidimensional concept that is difficult to define [17]. According to A. Wołowska, the concept of job satisfaction is a sociopsychological term and means a component of two types of satisfaction: general - which involves an emotional approach to work, and also a particular one - which refers to a specific factor resulting from work [16].

It should be noted that the concept of job satisfaction and the concept of satisfaction are not the same. The main difference that proves this is the time of occurrence of these phenomena. Satisfaction may be temporary, while the feeling of satisfaction is usually associated with a long period of time (tab. 3) [17].

**Table 3.** Factors affecting the level of job satisfaction [7, 16].

Personal	Social	Organizational
- needs	- organizational culture	- amount of remuneration
- age	-compliance with ethics	- a promotion opportunity
- sex	-relations with superiors	- the possibility of development
-experience	-cooperation with employees and clients	- working conditions
		- the content of the work

Knowledge of the level of job satisfaction is necessary to properly shape the level of employee involvement. This commitment is one of the most important factors that significantly affects the organization's success. There are many definitions and publications referring to employee involvement [7]. According to J.M. Moczyłowska, commitment "is an emotional attachment to the goals and values of the organization, to the role of the individual related to the implementation of these goals and to the organization itself for its good" [9]. Another definition of employee involvement is proposed by K. Kulikowski, who understands it as a particularly strong relationship with the effectiveness of tasks performed by employees [5]. There are three basic types of commitment: affective, duration and normative (tab.4) [12].

**Table 4.** Types of employee commitment [12].

Affective	Duration	Normative
- otherwise called emotional	- it is the feeling of an	- it is understood as a belief that
- determines to what extent the employee wants to stay in the organization in which he is employed	employee saying that work towards the organization is his duty	undertaking activities related to changing a workplace entails high financial and economic costs
- an employee involved affectively identifies with the company's values		

## 2 Methods

The purpose of this article is to identify the level of involvement and job satisfaction performed by employees from generation X and generation Y. The article adopted the following time frame: generation X - born in 1970 - 1979, generation Y born in 1980-1990. The study was conducted in two companies operating in Poland. The first enterprise is a hospital operating in the public health care system, while the second is a company from the financial sector related to the activities of banks. The survey was conducted using the original questionnaire. The survey includes questions about the level of self-commitment and the satisfaction of the job. Respondents assessed the issues addressed using a 6-point scale, where 1 meant complete lack of commitment or job satisfaction, and 6 - a very high level. Basic statistical measures such as mean, dominant, standard deviation and coefficient of variation were used to analyze the obtained research results. It was also checked whether there is a relationship between the level of own involvement and satisfaction, taking into account individual generations of employees. The characteristics of the research sample are shown in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Types of employee commitment [12].

	Health care sector		Financial sector	
	Generation X	Generation Y	Generation X	Generation Y
Number of respondents	31	16	28	14

Medical sector is one of the most important and most specific sectors operating in the country. This specificity consists in particular in regulating its activities with many legal acts. The main problem faced by managers of medical facilities is the shortage of personnel. Employee management in health care is a challenge for its decision makers. It should be noted that resource organizations are not only people, but the knowledge possessed by them. Appropriate management of human capital should apply not only to business entities, but also to public entities. The lack of adequate human resource base can make the functioning of the state in doubt.

A different example is the financial sector. There are usually large private enterprises operating in this sector, where the remuneration of employees is sometimes much higher than in the health care sector. The rationale for the choice of the financial sector is the possibility to compare the results of research between employees in the public and private sectors. It should be noted that despite different working conditions and the amount of employees' remuneration in the analyzed sectors, in each of them the most important resource is a human being. Therefore, in each of the sectors discussed it is necessary to properly manage human capital, especially the level of commitment and satisfaction felt by the work performed.

### 3 Results

Respondents were asked to determine the level of their own involvement in the work. The analysis shows that the respondents assessed their engagement very highly ( $M_0 = 6$ ). The value of the standard deviation and the coefficient of variation for the total response indicates a small variation in the scale of assessments of the respondents' own involvement. The results are shown in Table 6.

**Table 6.** Commitment to the work of the X and Y generation.

Specification	$\bar{x}$	$M_0$	Number of $M_0$	$SD$	$V$
Total	5.21	6	52	1.079971	20.73708
Generation X	5.19	6	36	1.129092	21.72508
Generation Y	5.23	6	16	0.971431	18.56238

Asked employees from both generations assess the level of their involvement very high ( $M_0 = 6$ ). It should be noted that the value of the calculated standard deviation and the coefficient of variation in the case of the Y generation is lower than in the case of employees from the X generation. This proves the lower variability in the scale of the assessments they provide. In addition, the average commitment among those asked from the Y generation is higher than the X generation. Such a structure of responses, in particular a high assessment of the own involvement of respondents from the Y generation may indicate their high self-esteem, regardless of their level of knowledge or competence. Generation Y is usually young people who are at the beginning of their professional career. Therefore, their involvement can be high, especially when the work in a given company is their first. Table 6 presents the evaluation of job satisfaction.

**Table 7.** Satisfaction from work of the X and Y generation.

Specification	$\bar{x}$	$M_0$	Number of $M_0$	$SD$	$V$
Total	4.37	6	30	1.398939	31.96670
Generation X	4.28	6	20	1.465636	34.23031
Generation Y	4.60	6	12	1.220514	26.53292

In the case of assessing job satisfaction, average values of assessments calculated both in total and for individual generations are lower than in the assessment of the level of own involvement. Despite the fact that  $M_0 = 6$ , the high value of the coefficient variation and standard deviation indicates that the diversity of the scale of assessments is significant. The main difference is the value of the average assessment of the level of satisfaction between the representatives of Generation Y and

Generation X. Generation Y exaggerates this issue much better than Generation X. Such a structure of responses may result from the seniority of the employees concerned. Generation Y as young people are interested in new work, and thus, they try harder. In addition, the current trend, the so-called an employee's market contributes to the fact that people are more and more often employed in enterprises related to their education or interests, which additionally has a positive impact on the level of job satisfaction.

In the case of employees of the X generation, a lower assessment of their own satisfaction at work may also result from the employment period. In this case, they are people working for more than 15 years in one organization, which is why it can be understood in such a way that a given employee in a given organization has already reached its maximum development. Consequently, without having the opportunity to develop their passions or to perform specific activities without any changes for a long time, the level of job satisfaction may decrease (tab.8).

**Table 8.** The relationship between the level of self-commitment and satisfaction with the job.

	Generation X	Generation Y
Spearman correlation coefficient R	<i>0.483114 (p=0.000020)</i>	<i>0.368089 (p=0.04557)</i>

The table presents the Spearman correlation coefficient for the relationship between the engagement and satisfaction of the surveyed respondents. The significance level was assumed to be  $p < 0.05$ . The analysis shows that the relationships between the level of self-commitment and satisfaction felt by the work performed are statistically significant in both generations. The described dependence is stronger in the case of generation X than generation Y. The values of the calculated ratio indicate that between the level of self-commitment and satisfaction with the work performed are clear.

To conclude, it should be noted that the surveyed representatives of both generations evaluate highly both the level of their own involvement and the satisfaction felt by their work. In the case of respondents employed in the health care sector, this may be due to the specificity of their profession. In the case of people employed in the financial sector, a high level of involvement may be determined by the expenditure of obligations and requirements set by the employer. In the financial industry, employees are required to achieve and develop specific financial results imposed by the employing company in advance. The relationship between the level of job satisfaction and commitment to it was identified. These relationships in both studied generations are statistically significant, however, the value of the calculated coefficient is higher in the case of generation X than generation Y.

#### **4 Conclusions and Recommendations**

In the literature on the subject, issues related to the management of human capital are increasingly discussed. Contemporary organizations are increasingly perceiving the



role of employees in the organization. Despite noticing the importance of the employee's role in the organization, enterprises operating in Poland are struggling with rotation or lack of employees, especially in the health care system.

As a result, keeping an employee in a given organization is an increasingly difficult challenge for managers. The level of involvement in the work significantly influences not only the results achieved by a given employee, but also by the entire organization. It was also shown that there is a statistically significant relationship between the level of commitment at work and satisfaction with it.

Exerting influence on employees' involvement in the financial sector is a quite specific process. At present, there is an intense development of enterprises offering financial services for individual clients, who more often reach for cash or mortgage loans. The development of this industry entails the need to employ sales specialists who, with appropriate motivation, can significantly influence the growth of the company's results. In order for a person employed in the financial industry to be distinguished by high commitment, it is first of all necessary to identify the employee with the company's mission and vision, and to maintain the conviction that the services offered will solve the problems of the clients, but not make them even more. In the group of medical professions, the level of employee involvement may result from personal values that employees profess. Certainly, it translates into both the quality of the services offered and the assessment of the staff by the patient. People who learn in the medical profession often have a desire to help others. However, paying attention to the level of remuneration in the medical sector and the increasingly observed staff shortages, the management of hospitals and other medical facilities should undertake activities aimed at increasing the level of both job satisfaction and employee involvement. Hospital managers should primarily invest in young workers and the latest medical equipment. Such improvement of working conditions will certainly have a positive impact on increasing the level of engagement and job satisfaction.

The research results presented in this article clearly show the existence of a relationship between the level of own involvement in work and the satisfaction felt by it both among employees of the X and Y generation. The surveyed respondents highly evaluate the studied relationships. Certainly, this is related to their personal feeling of the importance of their position and the duties they perform. It should be noted however that there is a need for further research related to the involvement of employees as well as the satisfaction felt by the work. These studies should take into account not only the assessment of employees, but also the opinion of their managers.

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