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FAMILY OR CAREER? INTERGENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES IN VALUES

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ABSTRACT. Structurally disadvantaged regions are looking for ways to attract and retain educated people who are the pillars in community for economic, social, and cultural prosperity. This research is aimed at gaining insight into the values and preferences of such people in order to better understand their decision-making. The study sample ($n = 1350$) was formed using quota-wide sampling (university-educated people). The data was collected by a specialized research agency using an electronic survey. The values and preferences were first determined using a semantic differential scale, and then the significance was verified by a Kruskal Wallis test followed by a post hoc test. Based on the statistical analysis, it was found for all generations that the ideal place to live is a quiet village or smaller town with good civic amenities, transport accessibility, and proximity to nature. This offers an opportunity for several villages that saw a large loss of population in the past when inhabitants left for big cities at the end of the last century. Another common value across generations is the preference for family over single life. However, Generation Z differs from Generation X and Y in their preference for career over family and even their preference for career over leisure time, which is not entirely consistent with Inglehart's theory on the preference for post-materialist values.

Keywords: values, Generation X, Y and Z, brain drain, family, career, work-life balance

Introduction

The prosperity of a country is largely determined by the composition and education levels of its population. While some countries can retain talented people and, in addition, attract qualified professionals from abroad, other countries struggle with this. Grecu and Titan (2016) reported that Switzerland, Norway, and Finland are the best at retaining and attracting talent in Europe. Conversely, Bulgaria, Romania, and Poland are the countries that have the greatest difficulties in this area, ranking at the bottom of the list. Schiff and Docquier (2016) reached similar conclusions. But this is far from being a problem for only these three countries - many

states or regions are currently addressing the same issues. This phenomenon is referred to in the literature as "brain drain" and has been the subject of numerous research studies and investigations. For example, Solutana-Anna (2019) dealt with the departure of experts from Greece, Cattaneo et al. (2019) addressed the departure of academics and scientists from Italy, while Grenčíková et al. (2017) compared the reasons for the migration of Czechs and Slovaks. Various reasons lead to the departure of educated people, ranging from political (e.g., Fetzner and Millan, 2015) to security (wars) and economic factors (Cerdeira et al., 2015). The reasons for migration may also change. Bobek (2020) found that young Polish migrants who left their country after EU accession for Ireland around 2004 were primarily motivated by higher earnings but, in the end, they stayed in the host country for non-monetary reasons. The socio-demographic composition of the region deserted by the educated people was thus distorted and the educated part of the population – the bearer of economic prosperity – was noticeably absent. Therefore, significant effort is being made to attract highly qualified people to the region and to further stabilize their living situation there.

Some authors conclude that the phenomenon of brain drain can also be beneficial for a particular country (for example, in the case where part of the earnings from abroad are sent to the family that stays in their home country) or in the case when they return from abroad after a certain period with a higher level of education, new know-how, knowledge of technology, etc. These phenomena are reported, for example, in Ailenel, Badea and Dima (2015), Ha, Yi and Zhang, J. (2016), and Boström, Öhlander and Pettersson (2018), amongst others.

The mobility and migration of people are significantly influenced by their orientation in terms of values. Therefore, it is important to know the basic values associated with family, housing, career, and leisure time (work-life balance), as these preferences will significantly influence the mobility and migration of people.

Values likely change over time (Inglehart, 2008). It is therefore appropriate to ascertain values and preferences concerning the membership of a particular generation. Research on intergenerational differences has been and, given the current relevance of the topic, continues to be studied by some authors (Helve, 2023; Scheling and Richter, 2021; Çevik, 2022; Bejtkovský, 2016 and others). The originality of this research lies in the fact that it looks at intergenerational differences among university-educated people. Education, as one of the important socio-demographic factors, can influence values and preferences. This socio-demographic characteristic is crucial given the broader context of the research (the brain drain phenomenon). However, the fact that only university-educated people (both those who have completed and those who are currently studying at university) were included in the research may result in findings that are at odds with existing knowledge. This research thus provides unique findings on a strategically important segment of the population and addresses the following questions in more detail:

- What does the ideal place to live look like? Are there differences in these ideas between generations?
- Are there statistically significant differences between Generations X, Y, and Z in their preferences regarding core values related to career, family, leisure time, mobility, and living arrangements? What does each generation prefer?

A deeper understanding of these aspects can significantly help set government policies and measures that will create better conditions for stabilizing highly qualified and talented people. Taking into account the different generations of university-educated people and their expectations, it will be possible to formulate these measures in a more targeted way.

1. Literature review

There is no doubt that some differences can be observed between individual generations. They have been described in the literature since after World War II, when fundamental changes in external conditions, both economic and security-political, took place. While the generation growing up during the war years had to face material scarcity and the ever-present danger of war, the post-war generations were not exposed to real threats to their lives and direct danger during their formative years. Their youth was a time of economic prosperity. Based on these observations and more, Inglehart (2008) formulated the theory of intergenerational values in the 1970s, which springs from the fact that materialist values prevail among older generations and post-materialist values are more prevalent among younger generations. These post-materialist values are related to the fact that people are beginning to place more emphasis on autonomy, self-expression and quality of life. This change is related to the changing existential conditions - in adolescence, the feeling that survival is uncertain prevails, whereas in adulthood the feeling that survival is to some extent taken as a given. With these theoretical foundations as the starting point, the theory of intergenerational change is based on two key hypotheses, namely the scarcity hypothesis and the socialization hypothesis. The scarcity hypothesis is similar to the principle of diminishing marginal utility or Maslow's well-known hierarchical pyramid. People tend to primarily satisfy their material needs and have a strong need to live in safety. When the satisfaction of these needs is threatened, they place more emphasis on materialistic goals. In times of prosperity and peace, there is a shift of interest toward post-materialist values such as respect, morality, belonging, and intellectual development. Inglehart points out that the link between the material conditions in which one grows up and the values one holds is not immediate. It is conditioned by the process of socialization, that is, the resulting orientation towards values that have their roots in the periods of childhood and adolescence. As a result, each successive generation growing up in peace and material abundance has on average more post-materialist values than the previous one (Inglehart, 2008).

Helve (2023) also points to a generational change in values in one of her most recent studies. In her work, she compared the values and attitudes of youth solidarity in Finland between Generation X (born in the 1960s and 1970s) and Millennials (born in the 1980s and 1990s). The data was collected in 1992, 1995, 2011, and 2015, and the values and attitudes studied were related to solidarity, labor, gender, immigration, economic, political, and environmental issues. As a result of the study, it was found that there are common value structures between the two generations (humanism, individualism, traditionalism, globalism) and that the decline in post-materialist values is particularly evident in times of economic recession. At this time, for example, solidarity positions are changing. Generation X people tend to show solidarity towards fellow citizens in general, while Generation Y people tend to show solidarity towards the poor. Both generations had very similar attitudes to gender. Women of both generations were more likely to prefer post-materialist values of gender equality, globalization, environmentalism, and tolerance of different ethnic groups. Men, on the other hand, were more focused on materialistic values and oriented towards science and technology.

The research, which investigated the hierarchy of values, was conducted in Turkey by the team of authors Ceylan-Dadakoğlu, Özdemir and Dadakoğlu (2023). Using the Rokeach Values Survey, they looked for the most important values of students in secondary school. It is not known if the same method has been used to detect results in generations X and Y. Generation Z, which is slowly starting to enter the labor market, becoming an interesting purchasing force, setting trends in many areas, is increasingly becoming a subject of interest for researchers (Zatwarnicka-Madura, Nowacki and Wojciechowska, 2022; Jaska, Werenowska and Balińska, 2022; Tidhar, 2022).

Intergenerational differences are given multidisciplinary attention. They are of interest to sociologists, psychologists, and, last but not least, economists. Some studies aim to identify who buys more due to having higher disposable income or more leisure time, etc. (Lissitsa et al., 2016). Brosdahl and Carpenter (2012) compared shopping behavior from the perspective of generations as well as from the perspective of gender and forms of shopping. The different generations are also closely monitored by HR personnel because each generation must be approached differently, from the recruitment phase to the adaptation, training, and development process through to overall performance management. Each generation has different expectations and priorities. Meriac, Woehr, and Banister (2010) examined research on work ethics concerning generational affiliation. They point out that failure to respect intergenerational differences can cause conflict in the workplace. Preventing misunderstandings in the workplace is also a goal of Petronella et al. (2017). The results of their study suggest that understanding the differences in work values of various generational cohorts is important for both conflict resolution and setting the right human capital management strategy.

Inglehart's theory was also a starting point for several other authors. For example, Scheling and Richter (2021) focus on the values of different generations in the context of relationships. Between 2000 and 2015, an annual cross-sectional survey asked respondents aged 17 years ($n = 6,581$) the following question: "Do you believe that a person needs a partner to be truly happy, or do you believe that a person can be just as happy or even happier alone?" Based on this research, it is concluded that the estimated importance of relationships for personal happiness among adolescents has, on average, declined with each generation since the year 2000. Socialization, parental relationships, the father's year of birth, and the education and gender of the respondent were confirmed as significant predictors. Surprisingly, however, some socio-economic factors such as parental education and the mother's year of birth played no role.

Many authors and research teams have looked at the differences between generations. One of the most recent studies (Çevik, 2022) focuses on the differences within the generation known as Millennials. This refers to the generation consisting of Generation Y (first wave) and Generation Z (second wave). It is based on Mannheim's work from the 1950s, criticizing approaches that judge new generations by the standards of previous generations. The new generation is considered a mere subset of society. It concludes that young people are seen as passive beneficiaries of programs and policies that are driven by the older generation. The active role of this younger generation is not sufficiently appreciated.

The above-mentioned study by Çevik reveals several problems that arise in the context of generational analysis. This is both a different theoretical anchoring and a considerable inconsistency in defining the individual generations. As far as the definition of generations is concerned, the most common approach is to delimit a given generation by the year of birth. However, there are some inconsistencies between different authors. A very thorough overview of the different definitions and approaches is provided by Bejtkovský (2016). This study shows that it is not only the year of birth that is important for a person's membership of a particular generation but also the socio-economic environment in which the person grew up. Therefore, the boundaries may be shifted from country to country. They can thus respond to specific historical milestones and events (economic, political, social) related to the country in question. In the introduction of his paper, Bejtkovsky cites the Center for Generational Kinetics and other sources that distinguish the generations into the iGen, aka Generation Z (born 1996 and after), the Millennials, aka Generation Y (born 1977 to 1995), Generation X (born 1965 to 1976), the Baby Boomers generation (born 1946 to 1964), and the oldest generation represented by the Traditionalists, born 1945 and before (Bejtkovsky, 2016). The above breakdown will be used within the context of this research.

2. Methodological approach

This research aims to better understand people's basic values in the areas of housing, family, and career about membership in a certain generation. To achieve the objective, a quantitative approach was chosen. The following research questions and hypotheses were formulated:

VO1 What does the ideal place to live look like? Are there differences in these ideas between generations?

H1. There are statistically significant differences between generations in the idea of the ideal place to live

To find out the answer to this hypothesis, the question "What do you think the ideal place to live looks like?" was formulated. It was constructed as an open-ended question. Six choices of answer were predefined and the last seventh choice was left open. Respondents could choose only one of the options offered. The wording of the possible answers is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Preferred type of housing

In your opinion, what does the ideal place to live look like?	
1	An apartment in the center of a busy city full of shops, entertainment, and social events
2	An apartment in a block of flats on a housing estate with good civic amenities
3	An apartment in a modern apartment building in a newer residential zone
4	A detached house in a satellite town with a small plot of land
5	A detached house in the countryside with a large plot of land
6	A remote house
7	Other, please state...

Source: *own compilation*

A second hypothesis was constructed to enable the identification of priorities by generation:

H2 There are statistically significant differences between generations in their preferences for basic values related to career, family, leisure time, mobility, and living arrangements.

In this case, the question was constructed to use the semantic differential. Respondents were asked: "I will now present you with some contrasting pairs of life preferences. Choose a number between one and ten according to your preferred life preference." The construction of the semantic differential is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Construction of the semantic differential

	Field 1	scale	Field 2
Rp_1	Career	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Family
Rp_2	Commuting to a well-paid job	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Relaxed work in your place of residence
Rp_3	Living in a village or small	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Living in the big city
Rp_4	Big family	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Single life
Rp_5	Career driven	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Emphasis on leisure time

Source: *own compilation*

The study population ($n = 1350$) was based on nationwide quota sampling. The quotas were age and education (current university student or graduate). The method for data collection was an electronic questionnaire. The data was collected through a professional agency specializing in market research and public opinion.

Given the formulated hypotheses, the research sample was divided into individual generations, where Generation Z included respondents born after 1996 ($n = 290$), Generation Y consisted of people born between 1977 and 1995 ($n = 531$) and Generation X consisted of people born between 1965 and 1976 ($n = 529$). The generational breakdown according to Bejtkovsky (2016) was used.

The data were processed using SPSS statistical software. To answer the first hypothesis, confidence intervals for the proportion (percentage) of people choosing the given answer were calculated for the question from Table 1 in each generation (Řezanková, 2010). Subsequently, a test of the hypothesis that the parameters of the two binomial distributions $Bi(n, \pi_1)$, $Bi(m, \pi_2)$ concur was performed (Řezanková, 2010). In this test, the test criterion is given by the relationship

$$t = \frac{p_1 - p_2}{\sqrt{p(1-p)\left(\frac{1}{n} + \frac{1}{m}\right)}}$$

Where $p_1 = x/n$, $p_2 = y/m$ and $p = \frac{x+y}{n+m}$

To answer the second hypothesis, the Kruskal-Wallis test (Hendl, 2015) with subsequent multiple comparisons was chosen.

$$H = \left[\frac{12}{n(n+1)} \sum_i \left(\frac{(SR_i)^2}{n_i} \right) \right] - 3(n+1)$$

Such a non-parametric test was chosen because the data did not have a normal distribution. Differences between generations in terms of semantic differential issues were also expressed by a dissimilarity matrix, where dissimilarity was expressed by Euclidean distance with the prescription

$$\sqrt{\sum_i (x_i - y_i)^2}.$$

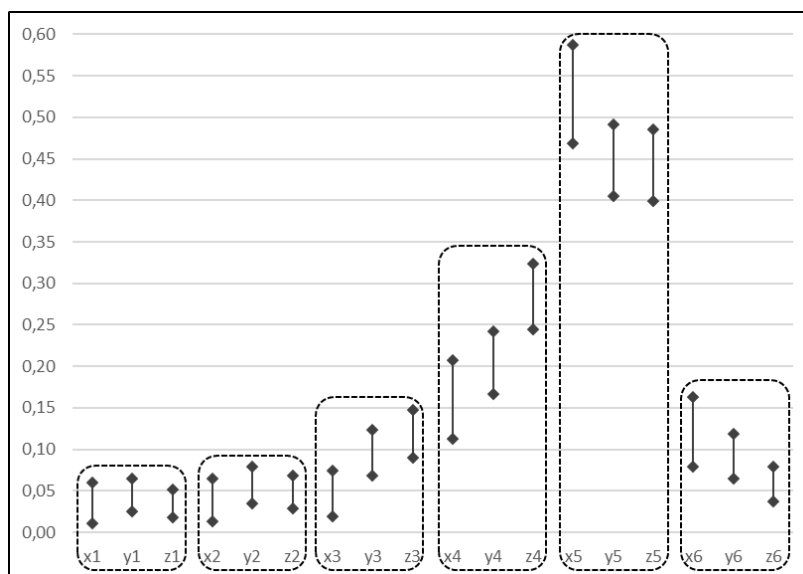
3. Conducting research and results

In the quantitative part of the research, we focused on data collection, processing and analysis. A semi-open question was used to determine the ideal place to live (see Table 1). The second research question was based on a semantic differential. These were five contrasting (bipolar) pairs, where the respondent decided which of the two, he or she preferred more on a ten-point scale (see Table 2). Both issues were discussed in detail in Section 2. Methodological approach.

3.1. The ideal place to live through the eyes of each generation

After a descriptive data analysis, a deeper statistical analysis was performed. For each response category, a 95% confidence interval was constructed for the proportion of responses from each generation. The results are shown in Figure 1. Where the intervals either did not overlap or only minimally, a statistically different proportion of responses from the generations could be expected. From both the values in Figure 1 and Notes *a* and *b*, it can be seen that, for example, for answer 3 (An apartment in a modern apartment building in a newer residential zone), the lower boundary of the confidence interval is 0.09 (9%) for Generation Z. In contrast, for Generation X the upper boundary is 0.075 (7.5%). Confidence intervals in this category of responses indicate statistically different proportions (percentages) of responses selected. These differences between generations X and Z were confirmed by a goodness of fit test of the two parameters of the binomial distributions ($p=0.0007$).

Further differences between the generations can be observed for answer 4 (Detached house in a satellite town with a small plot of land). Here, the upper limit of the confidence interval of both Generation X and Generation Y does not overlap with the lower limit of the confidence interval of Generation Z. The difference in the proportion (percentage) of chosen responses between all generations was confirmed by a goodness of fit test of the two parameters of the binomial distributions (between X and Z, $p=0.001$ and between Y and Z, $p=0.0018$). Thus, it was shown that a statistically significantly higher percentage of people in Generation Z chose this answer than in both Generation X and Generation Y. Another difference can be observed in response category 6 (Remote house). Again, there is a statistically significant difference in the proportion between Generation Z and Generation X and Y (between X and Z, $p=0.0012$ and between Y and Z, $p=0.0238$). This answer was chosen by a statistically significantly lower proportion of Generation Z than Generations X and Y.



Note a. to Fig.1

	Answers to the question from Table 1	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Confidence interval for the proportion						
X	Lower boundary	0.011	0.013	0.019	0.113	0.468	0.079
	Upper boundary	0.060	0.065	0.075	0.207	0.587	0.163
Y	Lower boundary	0.025	0.035	0.068	0.167	0.405	0.064
	Upper boundary	0.064	0.080	0.123	0.242	0.491	0.119
Z	Lower boundary	0.018	0.029	0.090	0.244	0.399	0.037
	Upper boundary	0.052	0.068	0.148	0.324	0.486	0.080

Note b. to Fig.1

Sig. between generations by a goodness of fit test	z3	z4	y5	z5	z6
x3	0.0007				
x4		0.001			
y4		0.0018			
x5			0.0092	0.0001	
x6					0.0012
y6					0.0238

Figure 1. Confidence intervals for differences between generations in their imagination of the ideal place to live

Source: own compilation

The most frequently chosen category for all generations was option 5 (Detached house in the countryside with a large plot of land). The test showed that a statistically higher percentage of Generation X chose this option than both Generations Y and Z ($p=0.0092$, $p=0.0001$).

For answer 2 (An apartment in a block of flats on a housing estate with good civic amenities), there are no differences in the shares of any of the generations. The same for answer 1 (An apartment in the center of a busy city full of shops, entertainment, and social events).

Subsequently, the open-ended question had the category "other" added. The highest number of responses (68) were closest to the answer "A detached house in the countryside with a large plot of land". Respondents most often supplemented this answer with something like this: "A house with a garden in a smaller settlement within commuting distance of a larger town", "A spacious enough home close to the city, jobs, shops, etc. but at the same time in the countryside, surrounded by greenery, not overcrowded." Or "A detached house with a reasonably sized plot of land, near the city but not in a satellite town." It is clear from the responses that most people desire a quiet and comfortable home in a larger village or smaller town. From the point of view of convenience, good transport links with a larger city and good civic amenities in the place of residence are important. The term "relaxed living" can be used to describe both proximity to the countryside and the land around the house, which is primarily used for relaxation.

The second largest category of open-ended responses could be described as the "Quiet part (or outskirts) of a large city" (18 respondents). In this case, however, the respondents' desire to be close to greenery and the countryside is also evident ("An apartment in the city and at the same time the possibility of escaping to the countryside", "A detached house in the county town (with a hospital) and a small plot of land - for pleasure and enjoying a coffee, not for growing potatoes)" or "A detached house on the outskirts of a large city with a larger plot of land and slightly away from neighbors". In this case, it is obvious that the land has another important function besides relaxation, and that is the protection of privacy.

The lowest number of other responses related to answer choice 6 "Remote house". Here, three were recorded as "Family house in semi-seclusion, with a 10 km commute to a place with access to civic amenities" or "Living in the woods with the possibility of going to an apartment in a busy city center for a few days".

In addition to the answers that could be assigned to the individual response options, there were also a few that assessed the issue of housing more generally, with a certain perspective of "It depends on the phase of life which one finds themselves in. When I was young, I was definitely in favor of an apartment in the center of a busy city, now I'm more in favor of a detached house (we're expecting a baby)" or "I can imagine everything as ideal - it depends on the phase of life and the individual's desire".

Based on the analysis, it is possible to note a significant shift of interest away from living in large busy cities and an increasing interest in living close to nature, in villages and smaller towns that can offer basic civic amenities and good transport links. Generation Z is no different from Generation X and Y in this respect. However, a portion of Generation Z also chose the response options "An apartment in a modern apartment building in a newer residential area" and "Detached house in a satellite town with a small plot of land" and chose these options statistically significantly more often than Generations X and Y.

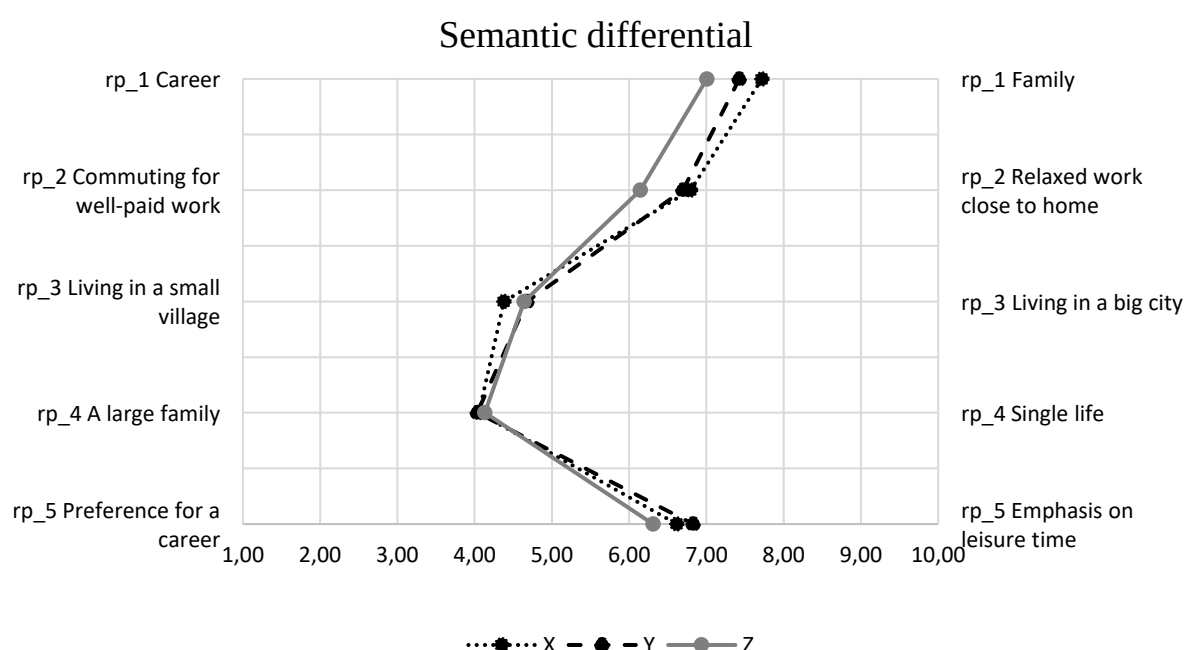
3.2. Core value preferences in terms of work-life balance

The following analysis focuses on the comparison of basic values related to the work-life-balance phenomenon, as well as family and career. A second hypothesis was formulated: H2. There are statistically significant differences between generations in their preferences in the area of basic values related to career, family, leisure time, mobility, and living arrangements.

Figure 2 shows that the largest intergenerational differences for respondents are between Generation Z and earlier generations for questions rp_1 (career versus family) and rp_2

(commuting to a well-paid job versus a relaxed job close to home). Conversely, the smallest differences between Generation Z and Generation X and Y are for rp_3 (living in a small village versus living in a large city) and rp_4 (large family versus single life). As far as the findings in rp_3 are concerned, they are entirely consistent with the findings in section 3.1 and repeatedly show that Generation Z does not differ from Generation X and Y in their preferences for the ideal place to live. Even within the semantic differential, all three generations show very close values.

Figure 2. Intergenerational comparison of basic values and preferences



Note to Fig. 2

generation	rp_1	rp_2	rp_3	rp_4	rp_5
X	7.717241	6.796552	4.37931	4.055172	6.617241
Y	7.425612	6.696798	4.677966	4.033898	6.826742
Z	7.005671	6.145558	4.640832	4.132325	6.310019

Source: own compilation

Subsequently, an analysis was performed to determine whether intergenerational differences are statistically significant. Because not all the semantic differential variables had a normal distribution, non-parametric tests were used.

Differences between generations were expressed using a dissimilarity matrix where distances were calculated using the Euclidean metric.

Table 3. Proximity Matrix

	Euclidean Distance		
	X	Y	Z
X	.000	.478	1.048
Y	.478	.000	.871
Z	1.048	.871	.000

Source: own compilation

Note: Highlighted are p-values that indicate a statistically significant difference between generations

Table 3 shows that in the area of values and preferences (rp_1 to rp_5), generations X and Z are the most dissimilar, while generations X and Y are the least dissimilar. To determine whether these observed differences between generations are also statistically significant for each semantic differential question, the conformity of medians was tested using a Kruskal-Wallis test and subsequent performance of post hoc tests.

Table 4. Intergenerational comparison of the values of career versus family (rp_1)

rp_1	Multiple Comparisons p values (2-tailed); rp2_1 (generation) Independent (grouping) variable: generation Kruskal-Wallis test: H (2, N= 1350) =22.70731 p =.0000		
	X	Y	Z
	R:748.86	R:691.37	R:619.35
X		0.130308	0.000016
Y	0.130308		0.007901
Z	0.000016	0.007901	

Source: own compilation

Note: Highlighted are p-values that indicate a statistically significant difference between generations

Table 4 shows that while Generation Z does differ from Generation X and Y in the career versus family dimension, the two do not differ in their views on the decision to prioritize career or family in their lives. The post hoc analysis arrives at very similar results when comparing preferences on the bipolar scale of "Commuting for well-paid work" versus "Relaxed work close to home" (Table 5).

Table 5. Intergenerational comparison of preferences for "Commuting for well-paid work" versus "Relaxed work close to home" (rp_2)

rp_2	Multiple Comparisons p values (2-tailed); rp2_2 (generation) Independent (grouping) variable: generation Kruskal-Wallis test: H (2, N= 1350) =19.40979 p =.0001		
	X	Y	Z
	R:724.21	R:705.86	R:618.32
X		1.000000	0.000604
Y	1.000000		0.000770
Z	0.000604	0.000770	

Source: own compilation

Note: Highlighted are p-values that indicate a statistically significant difference between generations

Again, it can be seen that Generation Z is statistically significantly different from both previous generations and shows the highest willingness to commute for well-paid work, while Generations X and Y (both again in agreement) prefer relaxed work in their place of residence.

Table 6. Intergenerational comparison of preferences for "Living in a small village" versus "Living in a big city" (rp_3)

rp_3	Multiple Comparisons p values (2-tailed); rp_3 (generation) Independent (grouping) variable: generation Kruskal-Wallis test: H (2, N= 1350) =2.782517 p =.2488		
	X	Y	Z
	R:642.28	R:687.59	R:618.58
X		0.334392	0.502950
Y	0.334392		1.000000
Z	0.502950	1.000000	

Source: *own compilation*

The results of the post hoc analysis presented in Table 6 confirm that there is an intergenerational agreement in this area. All three generations prefer living in a smaller village to the hustle and bustle of the big city. Thus, the findings reported in Section 3.1 are confirmed by another statistical method.

Interesting results were found in the following question where the contrasting (bipolar) scale was set as a choice between "large family" versus "single life" (Table 7).

Table 7. Intergenerational comparison of the values of "large family" versus "single life" (rp_4)

rp_4	Multiple Comparisons p values (2-tailed); rp_4 (generation) Independent (grouping) variable: generation Kruskal-Wallis test: H (2, N= 1350) =.3829930 p =.8257		
	X	Y	Z
	R:677.45	R:667.73	R:682.23
X		1.000000	1.000000
Y	1.000000		1.000000
Z	1.000000	1.000000	

Source: *own compilation*

Table 7 shows that there are no statistically significant differences between the generations in this respect. Given that the view is often expressed that young people tend to prefer a single life, this finding may come as a surprise. In terms of value structures, Generation Z also tends to prefer family over single life. However, it must be taken into account that people's values are not always in line with their behavior. This means that even people who in reality live a single life respect the family as a value. The fact that they live in conflict with their value hierarchy can then be a source of cognitive dissonance. Therefore, it is important to pay more attention to this detail and seek solutions to eliminate this dissonance.

Table 8. Intergenerational comparison of career versus leisure time values (rp_5)

rp_5	Multiple Comparisons p values (2-tailed); rp_5 (generation) Independent (grouping) variable: generation Kruskal-Wallis test: $H(2, N=1350) = 15.88051$ $p = .0004$		
	X	Y	Z
	R:682.13	R:720.69	R:626.50
X		0.526762	0.152491
Y	0.526762		0.000252
Z	0.152491	0.000252	

Source: *own compilation*

Work-Life Balance (WLB) is a very current issue that is being addressed by all generations. However, in people's subconscious, WLB is most often associated with Generation Z. Generation Z is just beginning to enter the labor market in a big way. There are not many scientific studies in this area yet. Rather, various commercial articles by HR personnel or agencies dealing with human resource management issues are available to read. According to this data, having enough leisure time is very important for Generation Z. There is also some connection with Inglehart's theory, which has been mentioned within theoretical anchoring (Inglehart, 2008). A career brings material values and in contrast, leisure time offers post-materialist values. So, according to this theory, Generation Z, which grew up in a time of economic prosperity and material abundance, should prefer leisure time. However, the statistical comparison shows that compared to Generation X and Y, Generation Z is statistically significantly more inclined towards a career rather than a preference for leisure time. This finding may be influenced by the fact that only students represented this generation in the research population. Their values and preferences are thus not yet adjusted by real experience. Although they normally work while studying, they do this because they want to. It is possible that when they get to a situation where they work because they have to (to provide for themselves and later their families), they will reconsider their preferences. The observed values of generations X and Y also suggest this. Generation Y leans most strongly towards the preference for leisure time (Table 8). These people now largely have families that require their care. And not just care for their children, but often care for their parents too. From this perspective, Generation Y is also referred to as the 'sandwich generation', with pressure and expectations of help and service from both sides. Therefore, of all the generations, they may feel the lack of time most keenly.

Conclusion

The main objective of this study was to determine the intergenerational differences in the values and preferences of each generation, especially in the areas of housing, family, career, and work-life balance. It has been found that all three generations agree in their imagination of the ideal place to live. Such a place is a quiet village or smaller town that has basic civic amenities (shops, school, kindergarten, doctor, ...) and good transport accessibility. People most often want to live close to nature in a detached house with a plot of land that has primarily a relaxing and recreational function. While three decades ago the countryside was experiencing a population exodus, with shops, restaurants, schools, etc. closing in smaller villages, there is now a noticeable change in preferences across generations. This can be a great opportunity for the countryside to bring life back to its villages and small towns.

Furthermore, the study dealt with the identification of basic values within each generation. The individual values were determined using semantic differentials, with the

differences then verified by statistical tests. In this respect, the study produced several interesting findings. That Generation Z would prefer a career and Generation X and Y would prefer a family was not surprising. Several other studies cited in this paper also report on the importance of careers for young people. However, if career (a potential material value) is placed in opposition to leisure time (a potential post-materialist value), a preference for leisure time should be evident in Generation Z in line with Inglehart's theory. Generation Z grew up in a period of economic prosperity, so theoretically they should prefer post-materialist values. Interestingly, on the bipolar scale of "career" versus "leisure time", Generation Z tended to lean more toward career. However, this finding may be influenced by the fact that Generation Z was represented by students in the sample. Although most of them work while studying, their view may be distorted due to limited practical experience. This may be one of the limitations of the study and therefore further research should be repeated with the time when the generation of today's students has been in the labor market for a longer period.

On the other hand, indeed, other researchers have also pointed to the limited applicability of Inglehart's theory. For example, Scheling and Richter (2021).

Another surprising finding was that on a bipolar scale of "family versus single life", Generation Z also tended to prefer family over "single" status. This finding may suggest a certain dissonance between an acknowledged value and the reality of life, i.e., a discrepancy between what I want, what I acknowledge, what I desire, and what the reality is. Although the widespread phenomenon of "single" life may seem to be a choice, it may be the result of a different problem. Therefore, future research should address this issue in more depth.

The strength, but also the limitation of this study is that it dealt with the values and preferences of university-educated people. And not for elitist reasons, but in the context of the long-monitored phenomenon of brain drain. The stabilization of educated people in the region is the first prerequisite for economic prosperity and therefore it is very important to become better acquainted with their value orientations.

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