

The Employees of Baby Boomers Generation, Generation X, Generation Y and Generation Z in Selected Czech Corporations as Conceivers of Development and Competitiveness in their Corporation

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Abstract

The corporations using the varied workforce can supply a greater variety of solutions to problems in service, sourcing, and allocation of their resources. The current labor market mentions four generations that are living and working today: the Baby boomers generation, the Generation X, the Generation Y and the Generation Z. The differences between generations can affect the way corporations recruit and develop teams, deal with change, motivate, stimulate and manage employees, and boost productivity, competitiveness and service effectiveness. A corporation's success and competitiveness depend on its ability to embrace diversity and realize the competitive advantages and benefits. The aim of this paper is to present the current generation of employees (the employees of Baby Boomers Generation, Generation X, Generation Y and Generation Z) in the labor market by secondary research and then to introduce the results of primary research that was implemented in selected corporations in the Czech Republic. The contribution presents a view of some of the results of quantitative and qualitative research conducted in selected corporations in the Czech Republic. These researches were conducted in 2015 on a sample of 3,364 respondents, and the results were analyzed. Two research hypotheses and one research question have been formulated. The verification or rejection of null research hypothesis was done through the statistical method of the Pearson's Chi-square test. It was found that perception of the choice of superior from a particular generation does depend on the age of employees in selected corporations. It was also determined that there are statistically significant dependences between the preference for heterogeneous or homogeneous cooperation and the age of employees in selected corporations.

Keywords: baby boomers, generation gap, generation X, generation Y, generation Z, human capital, traditionalists, workplace

JEL Classification: M10, M12, M14

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, a range of Human resources management concepts have been used, such as Human resources management ethics (e.g., Winstanley, Woodall & Heery, 1996; Greenwood, 2002), Human resources diversity management (e.g., Shen, Chanda, D'Netto & Monga, 2009), high involvement Human resources management (e.g., Guthrie, 2001), flexible employment (e.g., Guest, 2004), family-friendly Human resources management (e.g., Bagraim & Sader, 2007) and



work–life balance concept (e.g., Bardoel, De Cieri & Mayson, 2008). From their different perspectives, these concepts address employees' wishes, needs and interests. (Shen & Zhu, 2011)

Different generations represented in the workforce today provide additional challenges and complexity for managers everywhere. Twenty years ago, workers in their 60s would be considering retirement. However, with better health, longer life spans, and the need to offset financial losses from the economic crash of 2008, many workers are staying. Meanwhile, younger generations are pouring in. While managers and human resource leaders have spent decades focusing on gender or racial diversity, today's challenge comes from different needs, expectations and age span present and developing in the modern workplace. If not properly managed, it will influence productivity, create conflict and result in unnecessary employee turnover. (Smith, 2013)

While having diversity of ages in the workplace can be beneficial, corporations and employees alike have observed differences in the way in which these four generations function in the workplace. (Hansen & Leuty, 2012)

According to the Center for Generational Kinetics (© 2016) and Knight (2014), for the first time in a history, five generations will soon be working side by side. Here is an overview of the five generations by birth years:

- iGen, aka the Generation Z: born 1996 and after.
- Millennials, aka the Generation Y: born 1977 to 1995.
- The Generation X: born 1965 to 1976.
- The Baby Boomers generation: born 1946 to 1964.
- Traditionalists: born 1945 and before.

The following questions are addressed in this research article:

- What chronological schemes are used to distinguish among various generations (e.g., the Baby boomers generation, the Generation X, the Generation Y, and the Generation Z) in today's workplace?
- What is known about a cross-generation collaboration in today's workplace?

This paper is structured as follows: first, a theoretical background is introduced, and then, the methodology used is mentioned followed by findings about generations at work in selected corporations in the Czech Republic. Finally, a discussion and conclusions are presented.

2. LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Regarding this, Peterson (2015) says that the words diversity and inclusion have been around for a long time. Most organizations that desire a happy and productive workforce, financial viability and competitiveness, and organizational sustainability have realized the importance of diversity among the employees, and that an inclusive culture is the best way to leverage the advantages that diversity can bring.

For the first time in modern history, the workforce consists of four/five separate generations working side by side – and the differences among them are one of the greatest challenges man-



agers face today. Nevertheless, the differences that set them apart can also bring them together. (Wasserman, 2007)

According to Oh & Reeves (2011), the generational differences are widely discussed in the popular press, business-oriented books, conferences, workshops and so on. The terminology used to label the generations is not standardized because various people writing about generational differences have come up with a variety of different names to label the various generations. There is also significant disagreement among various authors about which span of years should be encompassed within one generation.

The table (Tab. 1) shows a comparison of five different labels given to various generations as well as the different chronological schemes used to assign people born in certain year to a generation as defined by the sources listed in column one.

However, it is important to acknowledge that there is a great deal of variance among the distinguishing characteristics within any generation stated, and thus it is unjustified to assume that if a person was born in 1985, he/she would have most of the characteristics of the Generation Y, or that someone born in 1960, and thus the Baby boomers generation, would be not as technologically sophisticated as a person born into the Generation X or the Generation Y. (Oh & Reeves, 2011)

Tab. 1 – The generational labels and dates reported in different sources. Source: Oh & Reeves (2011)

Howe & Strauss (2005)	Silent Generation 1925 – 1943	Boom Generation 1943 – 1960	13th Generation 1961 – 1981	Millennial Generation 1982 – 2000	Generation Z 2004 – 2025
Lancaster & Stillman (2010)	Traditionalists	Baby Boomers	Generation Xers	Millennial Generation	
				Echo Boomer	
				Generation Y	
				Baby Busters	
	Generation Next				
	1900 – 1945	1946 – 1964	1965 – 1980	1981 – 1999	
Martin & Tulgan (2002)	Silent Generation	Baby Boomers	Generation X	Millennials	
	1925 – 1942	1946 – 1960	1965 – 1977	1978 – 2000	
Oblinger & Oblinger (2005)	Matures	Baby Boomers	Gen-Xers	Gen-Y	Post-Millennials
				NetGen	
	< 1946	1947 – 1964	1965 – 1980	1981 – 1995	1995 – Present

Tapscott (2009)		Baby Boom Generation	Generation X	Digital Generation	
		1946 – 1964	1965 – 1975	1976 – 2000	
Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak (2000)	Veterans	Baby Boomers	Gen-Xers	Nexters	
	1922 – 1943	1943 – 1960	1960 – 1980	1980 – 1999	

Birth years are only one factor to consider in distinguishing among generations, and a relatively minor one at that. Instead, most experts argue that generations are shaped much more by history than by chronological dates.

However, corporations that address generational diversity and educate their employees can turn the dynamic to their advantage. In the same way that gender and racial diversity improved the modern workforce, so can generational diversity. The rules for solving a generation gap (Smith, 2013): be flexible with communication methods, understand the employees, educate the masses and encourage positive relationships.

According to Hammill (2005), the first thing to consider is the individual and his or her underlying values, or personal, lifestyle characteristics and workplace characteristics, which seem to correspond with each generation, as shown in the following table (Tab. 2).

Tab. 2 – Personal, lifestyle and workplace characteristics by generation. Source: Cook (2015); Hammill (2005); Wasserman (2007)

Views Toward	Veterans (1922 – 1945)	Baby Boomers (1946 – 1964)	Generation X (1965 – 1980)	Generation Y (1981 – 2000)
Core values	Respect of authority, discipline	Optimism, involvement	Skepticism, fun, informality	Realism, confidence, extreme fun, social
Family	Traditional	Disintegrating	Latch-key kids	Merged families
Education	A dream	A birthright	A way to get there	An incredible expense
Dealing with money	Put it away, pay cash	Buy now, pay later	Cautious, conservative, save	Earn to spend
Work ethic and values	Hard work, respect authority, sacrifice, duty before fun, adhere to rules	Workaholics, work efficiently, personal fulfillment, desire quality	Eliminate the task, self-reliance, want structure and direction, skeptical	What's next, multitasking, tenacity, entrepreneurial, tolerant, goal oriented
Work is ...	An obligation	An exciting adventure	A difficult challenge, a contract	A means to an end, fulfillment



Interactive style	Individual	Team player	Entrepreneur	Participative
Communication	Formal	In person	Direct, immediate	E-mail, Voice mail
Feedback and rewards	No news is good news, satisfaction in a job well done	Don't appreciate it, money, title recognition	Sorry to interrupt, but how am I doing?, freedom is the best reward	Whenever I want it, at the push of button, meaningful work
Ideal leaders	Authoritarian commanders	Commanding thinkers	Coordinating doers	Empowering collaborators
Work and family	Never the twain shall meet	No balance, work to live	Balance	Balance
Special Interests	Want to feel needed, they are patient and loyal and expect loyalty in return	Look for future security rewards	Are most likely to excel at multi-taking	Is amazingly optimistic. "We can do this". Sometimes this is detrimental to achieving success in the workplace.

The characteristics listed in the table are only a few of those that have been studied and reported by various authors. Not every person in a generation will share all of a various characteristics shown in this or the next table with others in the same generation. However, these examples are indicative of general patterns in the relationships between and among family members, friends and people in the workplace. Individuals born at one end of the date range or the other may see overlapping characteristics with the preceding or succeeding generation. (Hammill, 2005)

Generation Z – the members (the employees) of Generation Z (also known as Digital Natives, Silent, and New Silent) were born approximately between the years 2000 to the present. Unlike other generations, the members of Generation Z are not good listeners and they lack interpersonal skills. Communication with others generally consists of use of the World Wide Web. Due to the interest in new technology, the members of Generation Z can generally be found at locations that offer the advantage of being hooked up to the Web. The Generation Z member's interpersonal skills are different from the other generations as they are set apart and are the newest generation. Interpersonal skills are awkward for this generation. They lack interpersonal skills that are needed to communicate and relate to individuals. Generation Z is also known as the "silent" generation due to technology ruling the world thus giving them the name of the "silent, the iGeneration, generation quiet, and the next generation". They take the Internet for granted and consider web sites such as Orkut, Google, and Facebook as their community. Within this community of cyber space, a person can have many acquaintances without personally meeting anyone. By being considered the quiet generation, the members of this generation do not have personal meetings with their friends that may lead to relationships. (Cook, 2015; Gouws & Tarp, 2016; Harber, 2011; Singh, 2014)

2.1 The Czech Republic and perception of different generations

According to Schwartz, Hole & Zhong (2010), the generational differences in any society are shaped by political, socioeconomic and cultural events. The table (Tab. 3) illustrates a global generation overview.

Tab. 3 – Global generation overview. Source: Ballantyne & Packer (2013); Schwartz, Hole & Zhong (2010)

		1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
China		Post-50s generation (1950-1959)		Post-60s gen- eration (1960- 1969)	Post-70s gen- eration (1970- 1979)	Post-80s gen- eration (1980- 1989)	Post-90s gen- eration (1990- 1999)
India		Traditional generation(1948- 1968)			Non-Tra- ditional gen- eration (1969- 1980)	Gen Y(1981-onward)	
South Korea		“475” generation (1950-1959)			“386” gen- eration (1960- 1969)	Gen X and Gen Y(1970-onward)	
Japan	1st Baby Boomer (1946- 1950)	Danso gen- eration (1951- 1960)	Shinjin- rui gen- eration (1961- 1970)	2nd Baby Boomer (1971- 1975)	Post Bubble (1976- 1987)	Shin- jinrui Junior (1986- 1995)	Yutori (1987- 2002)
Russia	Baby Boomers (1943-1964)			Gen X(1965-1983)		Gen Y (Gen “Pu”)(1983-2000)	
Bulgaria	Post War generation (1945-1965)			Communist genera- tion (1965-1980)		Democracy genera- tion (1980-onward)	
Czech Republic	Baby Boomers (1946-1964)			Generation X - “Husak’s Children generation” (1965-1982)		Generation Y (1983-2000)	
South Africa	Baby Boomers (1943-1970)				Gen X (1970-1989)		Gen Y (1990- 2000+)



Brazil	Baby Boomers (1946-1964)	Gen X (1965-1980)	Gen Y (1981-2001)
USA	Baby Boomers (1946-1964)	Gen X (1965-1980)	Gen Y (1981-2001)

Regarding this, Schwartz, Hole & Zhong (2010) remark that the similar trends emerged in Central and Eastern Europe after the collapse of communism and the Soviet empire; but even here, generational nuances are as numerous as the histories that shaped these various countries. For example, the Boomers in the Czech Republic and Bulgaria are, like Russia's, the product of post war communism and embrace more collectivist working styles. However, the impact of the Prague Spring of 1968 and the Velvet Revolution of 1989 directly shaped the attitudes of the Czech Republic's Gen X (also known as "Husak's Children"). This generation is profoundly focused on compensation and career development opportunities. Meanwhile, Gen Y in the Czech Republic and their Bulgarian contemporaries, the Democracy Generation, are more inclined to seek work-life balance than their immediate predecessors. For Bulgaria's Democracy Generation, openness to opportunities created by globalization is a clear trait, and opportunities to work abroad are regarded as a standard part of career experience.

2.2 Cross-Generation Collaboration

Creating opportunities for multiple and varying small team collaborations is a key for a cross-generation collaboration. The 4C below provide an easy guide to successful collaborations (Wasserman, 2007): communication, connection, conflict engagement and career development.

3. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The article presents a view of some of the results of quantitative and qualitative research conducted in selected corporations in the Czech Republic. The researches were carried out last year, in the year 2015. The main objective was to fulfill the following tasks:

- The realization of secondary research. This research was identified through a search of scholarly literature available especially through electronic databases. For example, the articles at Web of Science database were taken into consideration.
- The implementation of primary research. The quantitative research was performed through an anonymous questionnaire survey. The questionnaires were distributed in paper form, in five versions. The questionnaire results served for the testing of the research hypotheses/assumptions. The choice of this research tool allowed for inclusion of a wide sample of respondents. The first version of a questionnaire survey was for HR professionals, managers, specialists or leaders of the selected Czech corporations. The second, third, fourth, fifth version of a questionnaire survey was for employees of selected Czech corporations (the employees of the Baby boomers generation, the Generation X, the Generation Y and the Generation Z). The questionnaires contained twenty questions in total: closed format questions (closed-ended bipolar questions, closed-ended dichotomous questions, closed-ended importance questions, closed-ended Likert questions, closed-ended leading questions,

closed-ended rating scale questions) and open format questions. The qualitative research was performed through the semi-structured interviews. The results of interviews served for answering a research question. The employees of selected Czech corporations that are active and responsible for the area of human resources (HR professionals, managers, specialists or leaders) and employees of selected Czech corporations were confronted with the research hypotheses and with a research question.

In regards to processing introduced article, commonly available scientific methods were used, e.g. analysis, synthesis, comparing and others. The basic research dataset was drawn from the list of 100 most admired companies in the Czech Republic compiled by Czech Top 100, which was then merged with the list of the largest Czech companies by sales volume and the database of Business for Society, the sponsor of the TOP Responsible Company award. The selection set (the sample survey) included 182 companies which had elected to participate in the research. The corporations' structure is presented in the table below (Tab. 4). The research group of the questionnaire survey (an anonymous questionnaire) included in total 182 employees of selected Czech corporations working in and responsible for the area of human resource management and 3,182 employees. If the conditions allowed, twenty employees (five employees of each age generation) were addressed from every corporation. The employees were chosen by proportional subset selection, with the same percentage share of employees chosen to represent each generation, which is a type of probability-based random selection. The respondents' age structure is presented in a table (Tab. 5).

Tab. 4 – The corporations' structure. Source: Authors, own source

Corporation category	Staff headcount	Turnover or Balance sheet total	The absolute frequency	The relative frequency
Large	≥ 250	≥ € 50 million or ≥ € 43 million	62	34.06 %
Medium-sized	< 250	≤ € 50 million or ≤ € 43 million	88	48.35 %
Small	< 50	≤ € 10 million or ≤ € 10 million	24	13.19 %
Micro	< 10	≤ € 2 million or ≤ € 2 million	8	4.40 %
Total	X	X	182.00	100.00 %

The table (Tab. 4) presents the corporations' structure. Within the performed quantitative research (the questionnaire survey), 182 selected Czech corporations were addressed. According to a list of industries, the structure of selected Czech corporations was following: buildings sector, educational services, engineering, finance and insurance sector, food sector, healthcare sector, chemical sector, ICT sector, telecommunications, tourism sector, trade, transportation, and other area.



Tab. 5 – The respondents' age structure. Source: Authors, own source

The generation	The years	Sex		The absolute frequency	The relative frequency
		Female	Male		
The Boomers	1946 – 1960	426	482	908	28.54 %
Generation X	1961 – 1980	441	461	902	28.35 %
Generation Y	1981 – 1994	410	481	891	28.00 %
Generation Z	1995 – 2001	183	298	481	15.11 %
Total	X	1,460	1,722	3,182	100.00 %

The respondents' age structure, in the presented researches in this paper was determined by comparing several authors, such as Horváthová, Bláha & Čopíková (2016); Fry (2015); Gardiner, Grace & King (2015); Chum (2013); McNeese-Smith & Crook (2003); Stuenkel, de la Cuesta & Cohen (2005); West (2014); Zemke, Raines & Filipczak (2000).

Based on the theoretical framework outlined in previous chapters and the hypothetical model illustrated, the following two research hypotheses (H1, H2) and one research question (RQ1) have been formulated:

H1: There are statistically significant dependences between the choice of superior from a particular generation and the age of employees in selected corporations in the Czech Republic.

H2: There are statistically significant dependences between the preference for heterogeneous or homogeneous cooperation and the age of employees in selected corporations in the Czech Republic.

RQ1: What should individuals (employees) of different generations learn in order to cooperate well and effectively?

The research involved instruments such as the tools of descriptive statistics (averages and percentages). The hypotheses were tested (verified) individually for each criterion using the statistical method of the Pearson's Chi-square test of independence on the research hypotheses. The evaluation was carried out with the help of the SPSS Statistics program. The SPSS Statistics program was an important tool for the data analysis due to its possibilities in data processing using pivot tables, the methods of comparison and deduction in the data analysis.

The categorical data were obtained during the analysis of the questionnaire survey (the quantitative research). The pivot tables were subsequently used as an easy way to display relations between these data. Subject to the character of the data, suitable tests of independence were carried out. (Hendl, 2006)

Regarding this, Řezanková (2011, 1997) says that for the purpose of the pivot table of the $r \times c$ type (r is the number of rows, c is the number of columns), the following test statistic was used most often:

$$\chi^2 = \sum_i \sum_j \frac{(n_{ij} - e_{ij})^2}{e_{ij}}, \quad (1)$$

Alternatively:

$$G^2 = \sum_i \sum_j n_{ij} \ln \frac{n_{ij}}{e_{ij}}, \quad (2)$$

e_{ij} is the expected and n_{ij} is the observed frequency. Either the test statistic χ^2 of Pearson's Chi-square was used to test independence or G^2 for the likelihood-ratio test. These two statistics are asymptotically $\chi^2_{(r-1) \times (c-1)}$ distributed. The null hypothesis of the test assumes independence. In order to apply the Pearson's Chi-square test, a maximum of 20 % of the expected frequencies must be less than five. (Agresti, 2013; Řezanková, 2011, 1997)

According to Anděl (2011), where the Pearson's Chi-square test could not be applied, Fisher's exact test was used or the simulated p-value of the χ^2 statistic was calculated. The p-value for each hypothesis was calculated by means of the SPSS Statistics program. Statistically significant dependences and differences between the selected factors were compared (verified) through Pearson statistics at significance level of 5 %. If the calculated p-value was less than 5 %, the null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was adopted.

The research group of semi-structured interviews included 48 employees of selected Czech corporations working in and responsible for the area of human resources management. The managers were chosen using a combination of several types of intentional selection; in particular, judgment-based selection supplemented with chain and quota selection. By means of the semi-structured interviews, more general categories were defined that covered statements of the addressed employees and consequently it was identified what claims were repeated in their responses. At the end, summary and interpretation of the identified facts was performed. The structure of the employees of selected Czech corporations that are active and responsible for the area of human resources (HR professionals, managers, specialists or leaders) is presented in the table below (Tab. 6).

Tab. 6 – The structure of HR professionals, managers, specialists or leaders. Source: Authors, own source

Corporation category	The absolute frequency	The relative frequency
Large	10	20.84 %
Medium-sized	22	45.83 %
Small	12	25.00 %
Micro	4	8.33 %
Total	48.00	100.00 %

The table (Tab. 6) presents the structure of HR professionals, managers, specialists or leaders. The qualitative research included 48 employees of selected Czech corporations that are active and responsible for the area of human resources.



4. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to fulfil the aim of this article, two research hypotheses (H1, H2) and one research question (RQ1) were set in relation to the diversity in the workplaces – to the generations in the cross-generational workplaces. The results of the statistical processing of the data collated from the research are presented in this section. To clarify this, the tables are used.

The research hypothesis 1: There are statistically significant dependences between the choice of superior from a particular generation and the age of employees in selected corporations in the Czech Republic.

The question from the questionnaire that examined this dependence was: If you had the opportunity to choose your superior according to biological age, would it be a person from the generation of Baby boomers, Generation X, Generation Y or Generation Z?

A comparative analysis was performed for the value of preferences of individual answers of employees from different groups of generations in selected corporations in the Czech Republic. The Pearson's Chi-square test was used to test the null hypothesis.

H0: There is no correlation between the choice of superior from a particular generation and the age of employees in selected corporations in the Czech Republic.

HA: There is correlation between the choice of superior from a particular generation and the age of employees in selected corporations in the Czech Republic.

In other words, there is no statistically significant difference between the choice of superior from a particular generation and the age of employees in selected corporations in the Czech Republic.

The table (Tab. 7) shows data that characterize the research hypothesis.

Tab. 7 – The verification of the research hypothesis by means of the Pearson's Chi-square test. Source: Authors, own processing at SPSS Statistics program (2016)

H1: There are statistically significant dependences between the choice of superior from a particular generation and the age of employees in selected corporations in the Czech Republic			
The statistical method	Chi-square	df	p-value
Pearson's Chi-square test	2253.793	9	0.000***

The results of verification of the research hypothesis show that the p-value of Pearson's Chi-square test of independence is 0.000. The null hypothesis (H0) of independence was therefore rejected at a level of independence of 5 %. The H1 hypothesis – the perception of the choice of superior from a particular generation does depend on the age of employees in selected corporations in the Czech Republic – was therefore confirmed.

According to the addressed employees in selected corporations in the Czech Republic, “a right (immediate) superior” – he or she:

- Is an excellent mentor/coach, is interested in employees' success and well-being, helps employees with career development, is an encourager, is empathetic, shares authority, takes responsibility, is a good communicator, has sense of humor and is courageous, has a clear vision and strategy for the team, has key skills, so can help advise the team.

According to research findings of Ernst & Young (© 2013), management is evolving quickly. In the past years, both during and coming out of the recession, there has been a significant shift in the Generation Y and Generation X moving into management roles: total of 87 % of Gen Y managers surveyed moved into a management role during this period vs. 38 % of Gen X and 19 % of boomers managers. To compare this, the generational mix of those who moved into management the prior five years, from 2003 to 2008, was 12 % Gen Y, 30 % Gen X and 23 % Baby boomers.

For example, 8 most important qualities of a workplace leader – according to the Gen Y (Hays, © 2013): able to motivate others (47 %), supportive (47 %), fair (44 %), knowledgeable/expert (42 %), a person of integrity (30 %), decisive (22 %), confident (22 %), and direct (7 %). The Generation Y's ideal boss is: a coach/mentor (51 %), a leader (40 %), an advisor (34 %), a confidant/discuss private and work matters (30 %), a friend (16 %), and a director/allocator of work (10 %).

The research hypothesis 2: There are statistically significant dependences between the preference for heterogeneous or homogeneous cooperation and the age of employees in selected corporations in the Czech Republic.

The question from the questionnaire that examined this dependence was: If you had a chance to choose your colleagues according to biological age, would they be people from the generation of Baby boomers, Generation X, Generation Y or Generation Z?

A comparative analysis was performed for the value of preferences of individual answers of employees from different groups of generations in selected corporations in the Czech Republic. The Pearson's Chi-square test was used to test the null hypothesis.

H0: There is no correlation between the preference for heterogeneous or homogeneous cooperation and the age of employees in selected corporations in the Czech Republic.

HA: There is correlation between the preference for heterogeneous or homogeneous cooperation and the age of employees in selected corporations in the Czech Republic.

In other words, there is no statistically significant difference between the preference for heterogeneous or homogeneous cooperation and the age of employees in selected corporations in the Czech Republic.

The table (Tab. 8) contains data that characterize the research hypothesis (H2).



Tab. 8 – The verification of the research hypothesis (H2) by means of the Pearson’s Chi-square test. Source: Authors, own processing at SPSS Statistics program (2016)

H2: There are statistically significant dependences between the preference for heterogeneous or homogeneous cooperation and the age of employees in selected corporations in the Czech Republic.			
The statistical method	Chi-square	df	p-value
Pearson’s Chi-square test	240.362	3	0.000***

When considering a dependence of the preference for heterogeneous or homogeneous cooperation according to the age of employees in selected corporations in the Czech Republic, the p-value of Pearson’s Chi-square test of independence is lower than the defined level of significance. The results of a verification of the research hypothesis show that the null hypothesis (H0) of independence was therefore rejected at a level of independence of 5 %. The H2 hypothesis was therefore not rejected. The H2 hypothesis – the perception of the preference for heterogeneous or homogeneous cooperation does depend on the age of employees in selected corporations in the Czech Republic – was therefore confirmed.

In the research of 28 teams, heterogeneous teams solved complex tasks better than homogeneous teams. The cross-generational teams exhibited a higher level of creativity and a broader thought process. The analysis of the data from studies showed that team performance is positively influenced by high diversity for teams with high complexity tasks. As outlined above, this may be explained by a greater creativity or a wider range of thinking processes. The study also demonstrated that a high degree of team role diversity is detrimental for team performance in teams with less complex, more process driven tasks. From previous pieces of research, it is suspected that the increased conflict potential and the reduced team cohesion are the main causes for a reduced team output. The statistical analysis demonstrated that the trends of relationships of performance and team composition are different with a sufficient statistical significance, and the hypotheses, that diversity is beneficial in teams with high complex tasks and detrimental in teams with less complex tasks, were supported by the data. (Higgs, Plewnia & Ploch, 2005)

For example, from Gen Y perspective, most millennials are happy working alongside other generations. Total of 76 % of those questioned said they enjoy working with older senior management and only 4 % disagreed. Total of 74 % said they were as comfortable working with other generations as with their own. (PricewaterhouseCoopers, © 2011)

According to Hermanmiller.com (© 2016), when HR professionals (HR managers, specialists or leaders) take members of different generations, blend them together, and ask them to work side by side, the HR professionals have both an opportunity and a challenge: the opportunity to engage a mix of people who bring their unique experience and skills to a corporation and the challenge of dealing with the generational differences that distinguish them.

It is important to define expectations and hold all generations accountable. The clarity of mission is essential for building and retaining great talent. Take some time to consider how you can learn from each other and play well in the multi-generational sandbox. (Dowd-Higgins, 2013)

Regarding this, Jelínková & Jiřincová (2015) remark that Diversity management and diverse generations in the workplace are considered the factors which carry the potential to influence the quality of employees in corporations.

The research question 1: What should individuals (employees) of different generations learn in order to cooperate well and effectively?

Majority of the addressed HR professionals (HR managers, specialists or leaders) said that abilities and skills for effective, quality and as good as possible teamwork, cooperation are as follows:

- Interpersonal skills – assertiveness, empathy, emotional intelligence, honesty, patience, recognition, respect, reliability, tolerance.
- Communication and presentation skills.
- Teamwork.
- Willingness to share own acquired experience.
- Problem solving.
- Work ethic.

According to research findings of Ernst & Young (© 2013), the employees of the Baby boomers generation scored high in being a productive part of corporations (69 %), hardworking (73 %, the highest), a team player (56 %), and nurturing and essential for others' development (55 %). While members of the Baby boomers generation were strong performers in most areas, they were not viewed as the best generation in areas such as being adaptable (10 %) and collaborative (20 %). The Boomers managers received the lowest scores of all three generations in being best at diversity (12 %), flexibility (21 %) and inclusive leadership (16 %) skills. The employees of the Generation X were cited as best among the generations in seven out of 11 attributes, including being a revenue generator (58 %) as well as possessing traits of adaptability (49 %), problem-solving (57 %) and collaboration (53 %). In evaluating the Gen X managers, seven out of 10 respondents said they are best equipped to manage teams effectively overall (70 %), compared to boomers (25 %) and Gen Y (5 %). The employees of the Generation Y scored high marks for being enthusiastic (68 % agree), but had lower scores for being perceived as a team player (45 %), hardworking (39 %) and a productive part of my corporation (58 %). The Gen Y managers (69 %) just surpassed the Gen X (68 %) managers in displaying diversity managerial skills, or the ability to build culturally competent teams and not to discriminate because of race, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical abilities, etc.

According to survey of Hermanmiller.com (© 2016), the Baby boomers generation will be working longer; they believe they can do anything they set their sights on, and they are used to working hard and long hours to accomplish it. Sixty-eight percent of them feel that younger people lack the strong work ethic that they have cultivated. Thirty-two percent of the Generation X feel the same way.

Regarding this, Chan (2015) says in her study that as any HR professional can attest, people come into the workplace with different expectations, attitudes, behaviour and motivations, shaped



mainly through formative life experiences; some of those experiences are generationally shared, many are highly individual, and all influence the workplace.

Agustin (2013) publishes in his empirical study that many of the younger generation (the Generation Z and the Generation Y) move fast in order to make an impact on the corporation, most of the middle generation (the Generation X) struggle with the corporation's mission, and the older generation (The Baby boomers generation, the Traditionalist) do not like changes. As for managers and HR professionals, the key to building a successful multi-generational workplace is to understand the differences between each generation.

Around the world, corporations are experiencing a dramatic change in the makeup of their employees and their corporate culture. The Gen Y and the Gen Z are entering the workforce in huge numbers and will make up 50 % of the global workforce by 2020. Their career aspirations, attitudes to work and flexibility, and aptitude for adopting new technologies may just define the workplace of the future. (PricewaterhouseCoopers, © 2016)

According to Bencsik, Horváth-Csikós & Juhász (2016) and their researches, the employees under 30 perform better mainly in the field of IT and in activities which require creativity or innovation. At the same time, the respondents valued that other generations did not like monotony, individual activities, marketing and they also performed poorer than their older colleagues in the field of administration. It is natural to ask the question whether the age-consistency caused any problems at work within a corporation. Total of 34.4 % of the respondents answered yes, 14.8 % could not answer. However, almost half of the sample answered that it did not cause any conflicts. Based on the Chi-square test, it was examined whether there was significant correspondence in the answers based on the age. The results of the test did not show such correspondence (Pearson's Chi-square: 6.494, df: 8, sign. 0.592 $p > 0.05$).

5. CONCLUSIONS

This article was focused on the employees of Baby boomers generation, Generation X, Generation Y and Generation Z in selected Czech corporations as conceivers of development and competitiveness in their corporation. The aim of this paper was to present the current generation of employees (the employees of Baby Boomers Generation, Generation X, Generation Y and Generation Z) in the labor market by secondary research and then to introduce the results of primary research that was implemented in selected corporations in the Czech Republic.

The 21st century has ushered in a new, generation-bending era in the workplace. The Baby boomers generation is in project teams with the employees from the Generation Y and Generation Z and reporting to Generation X while the traditionalists, though fewer in numbers, retain positions of power and influence. (Hermanmiller.com, © 2016)

Many converging trends have created today's up-to-five-generation workforce. These trends include (The Center for Generational Kinetics, © 2016):

- People living longer having more active lives, so they are able to work longer.
- The traditionalists and the Baby boomers generation not being in a financial position to retire.

- The traditionalists and the Baby boomers generation want to work until an older age.
- The Baby boomers generation financially supporting their “adult” children (the generation Y and generation Z) into their late 20s and even 30s.
- Generations potentially becoming shorter in duration as the rate of change increases in areas such as communication, tech use, etc.
- This all leads to more generations in a single workforce.

This article was based on primary and secondary research. The secondary research was identified through studying the scholarly literature available especially through electronic databases. For example, the articles at Web of Science database were taken into consideration. These electronic databases helped to get new dimension and proven a research topic. The quantitative research (primary research) was performed through an anonymous questionnaire survey with various questions. The precision of the estimates was limited due to a small sample size. This is a research limitation. An important finding is that the perception of the choice of superior from a particular generation does depend on the age of employees in selected corporations in the Czech Republic. It was also determined that there are statistically significant dependences between the preference for heterogeneous or homogeneous cooperation and the age of employees in selected corporations in the Czech Republic. The researches also demonstrated abilities and skills for effective, good-quality teamwork, cooperation: interpersonal skills, communication and presentation skills, teamwork, willingness to give own acquired experience, problem solving and work ethic.

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