



THE SILENT WEIGHT OF BENEFITS: GENERATIONAL AND GENDER DIMENSIONS OF WORKPLACE SATISFACTION

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Abstract

The study focuses on examining differences in respondents' attitudes toward satisfaction with employee benefits based on their generational affiliation and gender. The aim was to explore the relationship between generational affiliation, gender, and respondents' attitudes toward satisfaction with employee benefits provided by their employers. The research was conducted in the form of a quantitative questionnaire, involving 203 employed respondents belonging to Generations X, Y, and Z. The data were analyzed using statistical methods, with the Chi-square test and Cramer's V applied to verify the statistical significance of the differences. The results showed that generational affiliation has a statistically significant influence on attitudes toward benefits – Generation Y expressed the highest level of satisfaction, while Generation X was considerably more critical. In the case of gender, statistical significance was close to the conventional threshold; however, the identified differences (higher satisfaction among men compared to women) were evaluated as analytically relevant. The findings suggest that both generational and gender factors may influence the perception of benefits and should therefore be taken into account when designing effective and inclusive employee benefit policies. The study also offers recommendations for further research, which should reflect a broader sectoral context and combine quantitative and qualitative approaches.

Keywords: employee benefits, job satisfaction, generational differences, gender differences, employee motivation.

JEL classification: J28, J16, M52, J11

Introduction

The work environment is increasingly influenced by generational diversity, as Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z operate together within a single labor market. Four distinct generational groups work within organizations, which brings not only new challenges but also numerous opportunities for human resource management (HRM). Each generation has been shaped by different social, economic, and technological conditions, which have influenced their work attitudes, expectations from leadership, and preferred methods of communication (Lima & Rahman, 2025).

The individual groups also bring specific strengths to work teams – Baby Boomers possess extensive experience and knowledge of organizations, Generation X is characterized by an analytical and systematic approach to problem-solving, people from Generation Y are strong in collaboration and flexibility, and Generation Z contributes with digital innovativeness (Pawar, 2025). On the other hand, differences in communication styles, motivational benefits, expectations towards leadership, or attitudes toward technology may lead to conflicts. Therefore, it is essential for organizations to apply adaptable management strategies that can transform this generational diversity into a competitive advantage.

This unique generational diversity brings opportunities for innovation and better collaboration, but at the same time also challenging tasks for the practice of human resource management (Lima & Rahman, 2025). In this context, sustainable human resource management plays a key role, supporting the long-term work ability, health, and well-being of all employees regardless of age (Wu, O'Dare & Greene, 2025). It also plays an important role in eliminating ageism and in building an inclusive work environment that promotes intergenerational

cooperation and knowledge sharing. Effective management of generational differences is essential for maintaining high organizational performance and harmonious workplace relationships. Employee benefits also play a significant role, as they can be a source of intergenerational tension. Older workers generally value pension and health benefits more, while younger employees place greater emphasis on salary levels, which is related to their higher living costs (Stareček et al., 2021).

In addition to generational differences, another crucial factor influencing workplace satisfaction is gender diversity. Despite extensive research and legislative measures, gender inequality still persists, especially in countries with a lower level of equal opportunity (Basuil et al., 2025). Perceived gender inequality, meaning the belief that employees are rewarded or evaluated differently based on gender rather than actual performance, is of fundamental importance for HRM research and practice, as it significantly shapes employees' attitudes, motivation, and behavior. Considering the complex influence of generational and gender factors, examining satisfaction with employee benefits is essential for a better understanding of organizational dynamics and effective human resource management (Smerek, Bodiová, 2023). This study focuses on analyzing differences in respondents' attitudes toward satisfaction with benefits depending on generational affiliation and gender, while reflecting the importance of these dimensions for the creation of fair and inclusive HR policies. The research results show that benefits are not perceived uniformly – generational groups and genders have different preferences, which are reflected in their overall workplace satisfaction. These findings suggest the need for a differentiated approach to

setting benefits that would support engagement, fairness, and sustainability in the work environment.

Literature review

Current challenges in human resource management are marked by turbulent changes in the business environment, which require continuous examination of employee motivation and satisfaction across various demographic groups. Understanding generational and gender differences is important for effectively motivating employees and creating a satisfying and productive work environment.

Several authors emphasize that in order to maintain competitiveness and implement effective HR policies, it is essential to anticipate and understand the specific needs and expectations of different generations (Sharma & Pandit, 2021). Research confirms that members of different generations (X, Y, Z) differ in their perception of material and non-material motivational factors, as well as motivational barriers (Czerwińska-Lubczyk & Jankowiak, 2025). Stiglbauer et al. (2022) and Malik and Musah (2024) show that generational differences are most evident in the areas of career, development, stimulation, and rewards, while basic work values and needs remain similar across generations, which is important for creating effective reward and benefit strategies. Research by Andrade et al. (2024) confirms the existence of generational differences in job satisfaction, stating that overall job satisfaction and engagement decline from older to younger generations. Mahmoud and colleagues (2021) add that Generation Z is more sensitive to a lack of motivation and is most influenced by material rewards. Generation X values social recognition and appreciation, while Generation Y is more motivated by an internal sense of duty. Older Baby Boomer employees assign higher value to status and external rewards compared to younger generations X and Y (Kinger & Kumar, 2023). These generational differences also appear in the perception of the work atmosphere, where Reissová and colleagues (2019) identified statistically significant differences between Generation X and Y, indicating the need to respect these differences when designing motivational schemes. For younger generations, such as Generation Z and Y, opportunities for career advancement, professional development, and work-life balance are also key (Bajkai-Tóth et al., 2022). Lassleben and Hofmann (2023) add that Generation Z talents primarily expect a fun work environment, a positive team atmosphere, and supportive relationships with colleagues and supervisors.

In addition to generational specifics, it is equally important to take gender differences into account. This approach is important for understanding how the perception of benefits, motivators, and overall satisfaction differs between men and women (Kováčová & Drahotský, 2022). Artz (2021) examined the impact of job satisfaction on voluntary turnover and noted that although women's response to dissatisfaction was more sensitive in the past, this gender difference has diminished over time. Muskat and Reitsamer (2019) found that gender and type of organization moderate the relationship between quality of work life and job

satisfaction among Generation Y. For example, a high level of job security negatively affects men's satisfaction, while it does not change women's satisfaction. Lassleben and Hofmann (2023) further revealed that Generation Z's expectations toward employers differ significantly between genders, indicating persistent traditional gender assumptions in their work values. On the contrary, Frederick and Lazzara (2020) found more similarities than differences in satisfaction and well-being between men and women, where these factors were more influenced by leadership position than by gender. The complexity of fairness perception is underscored by research from Basuil and colleagues (2025), who examined gender differences in the perception of gender inequality in HRM practices, finding that women, paradoxically, perceived less inequality than men.

These individual preferences are embedded in a broader organizational context. Borisov and Vinogradov (2022) demonstrated that organizational social capital, including managerial support, trust, and fairness, has a significant impact on employee job satisfaction. The dynamics of this social capital can also be influenced by demographic factors. In response to these findings, strategic approaches such as employee empowerment are key to increasing motivation and productivity (Giedraitis, Romeryte-Sereikiene & Vaiksnoras, 2024), creating an environment of equal opportunities and support. In a similar vein, Valantiejiene and Girdauskiene (2025) emphasize that gamification represents a strategic tool for HRM, which can create a more engaging work environment by satisfying basic psychological needs such as autonomy and competence.

Methodology

The aim of this study is to explore the relationship between generational affiliation, gender, and respondents' attitudes toward satisfaction with employee benefits provided by their employers. Emphasis was placed on identifying potential differences in the level of subjectively perceived satisfaction among different generational groups and between genders, as well as on assessing whether benefits play a significant role in overall job satisfaction.

To fulfill the research objective, a quantitative questionnaire was chosen, which made it possible to statistically evaluate the differences and relationships between the observed variables. The main research instrument used was a questionnaire entitled "The Impact of Employee Benefits on Job Satisfaction and Employee Retention." The questionnaire was developed by the authors specifically for the purpose of collecting relevant data from employed respondents, and its content reflected three core areas: (1) subjective satisfaction with employee benefits, (2) the perceived impact of benefits on overall job satisfaction, (3) the influence of benefits on the decision to remain in the current job.

The items in the questionnaire were formulated as statement-based claims, which the respondents evaluated using a 5-point Likert scale. The scale values ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), allowing for the quantification of the participants' subjective attitudes.

The research sample consisted of 203 respondents who were employed in various sectors of the economy at the time of the study. The selection of respondents was carried out through random sampling, and the data were collected via an online questionnaire and also distributed by email. The respondents came from different age categories, making it possible to classify them into one of three generational groups: Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z. This categorization enabled the analysis of whether attitudes toward employee benefits differ depending on the generational context. The data were collected during April 2025, ensuring a consistent time frame for data collection within a single month.

The obtained data were subsequently processed using the statistical software SPSS and Microsoft Excel. Within the analysis, descriptive statistical methods were applied to summarize the basic characteristics of the dataset, along with methods that enabled testing relationships between variables. To test the hypotheses concerning statistically significant differences between the observed variables, the Chi-square test was used to assess the association between the variables in question (e.g., generational affiliation, gender, and attitudes toward benefits). To measure the strength of these associations, Cramer's V coefficient was subsequently applied, allowing for the interpretation of the intensity of the relationship between the observed variables.

Following research question was formulated:

“What differences in attitudes toward satisfaction with employee benefits exist between different generational groups and genders?”

Based on this question, two hypotheses were formulated and statistically tested:

H₁: There is a statistically significant difference in attitudes toward the subjective perception of the impact of employee benefits on job satisfaction between different generational groups.

H₂: There is a statistically significant difference in attitudes toward satisfaction with employee benefits provided by the employer between men and women.

The chosen methodological approach made it possible not only to identify statistically significant differences between the observed groups but also to analyze their intensity. The results represent an empirical contribution to a better understanding of how various socio-demographic factors influence the subjective perception of satisfaction with employee benefits, which may have practical implications in the field of human resource management and the development of organizational personnel strategies.

Findings

The presented chart shows the distribution of responses from three generational groups – Gen X, Gen Y, and Gen Z – expressing their attitudes toward the subjective perception of the impact of employee benefits on job satisfaction. The recorded percentage data reflect the levels of agreement, disagreement, and neutral attitudes within each generation.

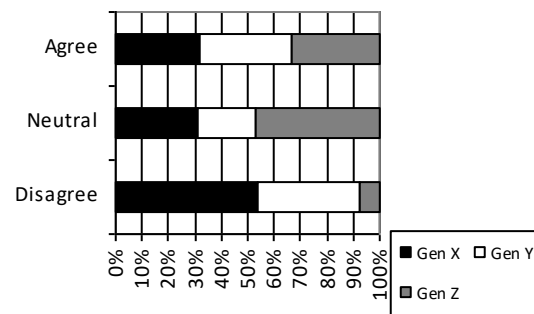


Fig. 1 The Impact of Employee Benefits on Job Satisfaction
(source: own elaboration)

The results indicate a high level of agreement across all observed generational groups that employee benefits have a positive impact on their job satisfaction. The highest share of agreement was recorded in Generation Y (80%), followed by Generation Z (77%) and Generation X (73%). This trend suggests that younger employees, represented by Generations Y and Z, perceive benefits as an important factor influencing their job satisfaction.

Interesting differences can also be observed in the neutral responses. Generation Z had the highest proportion of respondents who took a neutral stance on the question (21%), which may indicate a certain level of uncertainty or variability in how younger employees assess the direct impact of benefits on their satisfaction. In contrast, Generation Y showed the lowest proportion of neutral responses (10%), which may suggest a stronger opinion formation and a lower degree of ambivalence within this group.

Regarding disagreement with the statement that benefits contribute to job satisfaction, the highest proportion of disagreeing responses was recorded in Generation X (14%), while it was 10% in Generation Y and only 2% in the youngest group, Generation Z. These figures may reflect generational differences in expectations or value frameworks – while older. Employees (Gen X) may perceive benefits as less essential, younger workers may attach greater importance to these aspects in the context of overall job satisfaction.

Overall, it can be concluded that employee benefits are perceived as an important factor influencing employee satisfaction across generations, with generational differences manifesting primarily in the intensity of agreement, the level of ambivalence, and the proportion of disagreeing attitudes.

Table 1. The Impact of Employee Benefits on Job Satisfaction by Generation (χ^2 test), source: own elaboration

	<i>Value</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)</i>
Pearson Chi-Square	10,052a	4	0,04
Likelihood Ratio	10,637	4	0,031
Linear-by-Linear Association	1,186	1	0,276
N of Valid Cases	200		

In order to verify the statistical significance of differences in the attitudes of individual generations toward the subjective perception of the impact of employee benefits on job satisfaction, testing was conducted using the Chi-square test. The results of the

test showed that there is a statistically significant relationship between the examined variables ($\chi^2 = 10.052$; $df = 4$; $p = 0.04$), indicating that the distribution of respondents' attitudes differs significantly among the individual generational groups.

Table 2. The Impact of Employee Benefits on Job Satisfaction by Generation (Cramer's V), source: own elaboration

		<i>Value</i>	<i>Approximate Significance</i>
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	0,224	0,04
	Cramer's V	0,159	0,04
N of Valid Cases		200	

The strength of this relationship was assessed using Cramer's V, with the resulting value of $V = 0.159$ and $p = 0.04$ indicating a weak but statistically significant relationship between the respondent's generation and their attitude toward the perceived impact of benefits on job satisfaction. This value suggests that although there are differences in attitudes between generations, the intensity of this difference is not substantial.

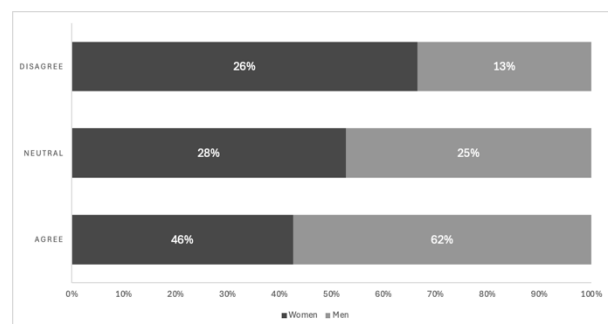
To verify the presence of statistically significant differences in attitudes among generations, the following hypotheses were defined:

H0: There is no statistically significant difference in attitudes toward the subjective perception of the impact of employee benefits on job satisfaction between different generational groups.

H1: There is a statistically significant difference in attitudes toward the subjective perception of the impact of employee benefits on job satisfaction between different generational groups.

Based on the results of the Chi-square test, which demonstrated a statistically significant difference in attitudes between generational groups ($p = 0.04$), and taking into account the value of Cramer's V ($V = 0.159$; $p = 0.04$), it can be concluded that the null hypothesis was rejected. On the contrary, the alternative hypothesis was confirmed, stating that there is a statistically significant difference between generations in attitudes toward the subjective perception of the impact of employee benefits on job satisfaction. Although the identified relationship shows only weak intensity, its existence indicates the relevance of the generational factor in evaluating the importance of benefits from the perspective of job satisfaction.

In figure 2, we can see the distribution of respondents' attitudes toward satisfaction with employee benefits provided by their employer, depending on gender. The percentage values reflect the proportions of men and women who expressed agreement, disagreement, or a neutral attitude.

**Fig. 2** Satisfaction with Provided Benefits (source: own elaboration)

The results clearly show that there are differences between men and women in the evaluation of satisfaction with employee benefits. The highest proportion of agreement was recorded among men (62%), which is significantly higher compared to women (46%). This difference suggests that men exhibit a higher level of satisfaction with the provided benefits than women.

At the same time, women expressed disagreement with satisfaction more often than men (26% among women compared to 13% among men), which indicates a higher level of dissatisfaction among female respondents. A relatively similar portion of respondents of both genders adopted a neutral stance – 28% of women and 25% of men – suggesting that a certain group, regardless

of gender, perceives employee benefits rather indifferently or with detachment.

These differences may reflect varying expectations, experiences, or levels of satisfaction with specific forms of benefits provided by the employer. The findings also highlight the need for a more differentiated approach to

benefit policies that would better reflect the preferences and needs of different groups of employees based on gender.

Table 3. The Impact of Employee Benefits on Job Satisfaction by Gender (χ^2 test), source: own elaboration

	<i>Value</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)</i>
Pearson Chi-Square	5,444a	2	0,066
Likelihood Ratio	5,705	2	0,058
Linear-by-Linear Association	5,411	1	0,02
N of Valid Cases	200		

Although the value of the Chi-square test ($\chi^2 = 5.444$; $df = 2$; $p = 0.066$) did not exceed the threshold of statistical significance set at 0.05, its proximity to this threshold, as well as the supportive result of the linear-by-linear association ($p = 0.02$), suggest that there may be a more meaningful relationship between the gender of respondents and their attitudes toward satisfaction with

employee benefits than the p-value alone would indicate. In this case, the test lies “on the edge” of statistical significance, and the observed trend holds analytical value.

Table 4: The Impact of Employee Benefits on Job Satisfaction by Gender (Cramer’s V), source: own elaboration

		<i>Value</i>	<i>Approximate Significance</i>
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	0,165	0,066
	Cramer's V	0,165	0,066
N of Valid Cases		200	

The same interpretation can be applied to the result of Cramer’s V ($V = 0.165$; $p = 0.066$), which indicates a weak but potentially relevant relationship between gender and attitudes toward benefits. Although the result technically does not meet the conventional criterion for statistical significance, considering the nature of the issue under investigation, the sample size, and the direction of the findings, this difference was decided to be interpreted as significant and worthy of further attention. Such an approach reflects not only the quantitative data but also the contextual interpretation, which is particularly justified in applied social science research.

To verify the presence of statistically significant differences in attitudes between men and women, the following hypotheses were defined:

H0: There is no statistically significant difference in attitudes toward satisfaction with employee benefits provided by the employer between men and women.

H1: There is a statistically significant difference in attitudes toward satisfaction with employee benefits provided by the employer between men and women.

Based on the results of the Chi-square test, the value of which approached the threshold of statistical significance ($p = 0.066$), and taking into account the result of the linear-by-linear association ($p = 0.02$), as

well as the value of Cramer’s V ($V = 0.165$; $p = 0.066$), it can be concluded that the null hypothesis was rejected. Although the p-value exceeded the traditional significance level of 0.05, it was decided to interpret these results as significant due to the direction of the data and the strength of the observed trend. Thus, the alternative hypothesis was confirmed, stating that there is a statistically significant difference in attitudes toward satisfaction with employee benefits between men and women. The identified relationship shows weak intensity but points to possible gender-based differences in the evaluation of employee benefits, which may require a differentiated approach in employer practice.

In order to examine differences in the evaluation of satisfaction with employee benefits from the perspective of respondents’ age and gender, the following research question was formulated: “*What differences in attitudes toward satisfaction with employee benefits exist between different generational groups and genders?*” The results of the analysis showed that, in the case of generational affiliation, the differences are statistically significant. When comparing the attitudes of men and women, similarly notable differences emerged – men reported higher satisfaction, while women more frequently expressed disagreement. These findings suggest that both generational and gender factors may represent significant variables influencing the subjective evaluation of employee benefits, which has potential implications for designing fairer and more targeted benefit policies within organizations.

Conclusions

The results of the conducted research pointed to the existence of differences in respondents' attitudes toward satisfaction with employee benefits, which are conditioned by generational affiliation and gender. The analysis demonstrated a statistically significant relationship between generational group and the subjective perception of the impact of benefits on job satisfaction. The highest level of agreement was expressed by Generation Y, indicating that younger employees perceive benefits as an important factor influencing their job satisfaction. In contrast, Generation X exhibited the highest proportion of disagreeing attitudes, which may reflect different work expectations or value preferences.

Regarding gender, although the results of the Chi-square test did not exceed the threshold of traditional statistical significance ($p < 0.05$), due to the proximity to this threshold and the supportive results of the linear-by-linear association, it was decided to interpret the findings as analytically significant. Men generally reported a higher level of satisfaction with benefits than women, who more frequently expressed disagreement. These differences may be related to diverse expectations from the employer, the actual availability of benefits, or their practical applicability depending on gender and life circumstances.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that both generational and gender factors play an important role in the subjective evaluation of employee benefits. In practice, organizations should therefore take these differences into account when designing personnel strategies and benefit programs. A multi-layered approach that considers the individual needs of employees may contribute to higher satisfaction, engagement, and ultimately to the sustainability of the workforce.

Although the study provided relevant insights, it represents only a partial view of the complex phenomenon of satisfaction with employee benefits. Further research could broaden the thematic focus by differentiating specific types of benefits and evaluating them across various employee groups. It would also be beneficial to supplement the quantitative investigation with qualitative methods, which would allow for a deeper understanding of employees' attitudes, expectations, and experiences related to benefits. Prospectively, it appears valuable to explore differences across various economic sectors, where benefit policies may differ significantly. Last but not least, longitudinal studies could prove beneficial in capturing the development of attitudes over time and their connection to current social and labor law changes.

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