Factors to Consider in Choosing Jobs for The Millennial and Generation Z in East Java.

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Abstract

This research was conducted on the millennial and Z generations who were looking for work or already working in East Java. Research respondents were people who fall into the millennial and Z generation categories. They were those born after 1980 and were looking for work or have worked for less than a year or more in various fields spread across East Java. The aim of this research was to describe the variables considered in choosing a job and working in various fields. It was also to analyze the performance expectations to be achieved while working. The population was the total number of people who were looking for work and/or have worked for less than one year or more. Data collection was carried out by distributing a list of questions. The data analysis technique used descriptive tabulation analysis techniques, and factor analysis. The results of the research show that there are seven factors to consider in choosing a job in the millennial and Z generations, namely (1) Commitment and Future Motivation, (2) technological development and entrepreneurial career, (3) socialization and environment, (4) income and creativity, integrity, (5) personality, (6) experience and outlook on life, (7) convenience communication and personal values. These factors can be taken into consideration in employing the Melineal and Z generations and for them can be used as a basis for choosing jobs that can increase job and career satisfaction as well as build businesses independently or become entrepreneurs.

**Keywords:** Job Factors, Motivational Factors, Career, Entrepreneurship.

A. INTRODUCTION

Millennials and Generation Z are two generations that are demographically close and share similar behavioral and psychological characteristics. Millennials, who are generally defined as individuals

born between 1980 and 1995, grew up and developed alongside the rapid advancement of digital technology. From a young age, millennials have been familiar with the use of smartphones and social media, making them skilled in digital communication. Although this generation is often stereotyped as passive or overly reliant on technology, in reality, they demonstrate a high level of curiosity, confidence, and a strong interest in reading. On the other hand, this generation is also known to be vulnerable to mental health issues, particularly depression and anxiety. These characteristics form an important foundation for understanding the work preferences and career aspirations of millennials, which, according to various studies, are influenced by factors such as work motivation (N.-T. Nguyen, 2020), gender perspectives (Hardiani et al., 2019), and satisfaction with the work environment (Ruangkanjanases & Chen, 2019).

Meanwhile, Generation Z, individuals born around 1997 to the early 2000s, are known as the pure digital generation who have never experienced a world without the internet or mobile technology devices. According to a BBC report, this generation is characterized as ambitious, skilled in the use of digital technology, confident, critical of authority, and familiar with the use of informal language in digital communication. Generation Z tends to spend more time alone and has a high level of curiosity. Like millennials, Generation Z is also associated with a higher vulnerability to mental health issues such as depression and anxiety. Research conducted by Barhate & Dirani (2021) revealed that Generation Z has clear career aspirations, influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors.

Various empirical findings indicate that both Millennials and Generation Z have unique approaches to choosing a job. Millennials consider various factors when making career decisions. Research by Nguyen Ngoc et al. (2022) emphasizes that Generation Z considers organizational attributes as the primary aspect in choosing a job. Meanwhile, a study conducted on millennial journalists in Malaysia shows that career development opportunities, salary size, work-life balance, and organizational fairness are important factors in job decision-making (Haidir et al., 2023). These findings are important for organizations or companies to use as a reference in developing effective strategies to attract and retain young talent from both generations, especially considering that millennials have become a significant part of the global workforce.
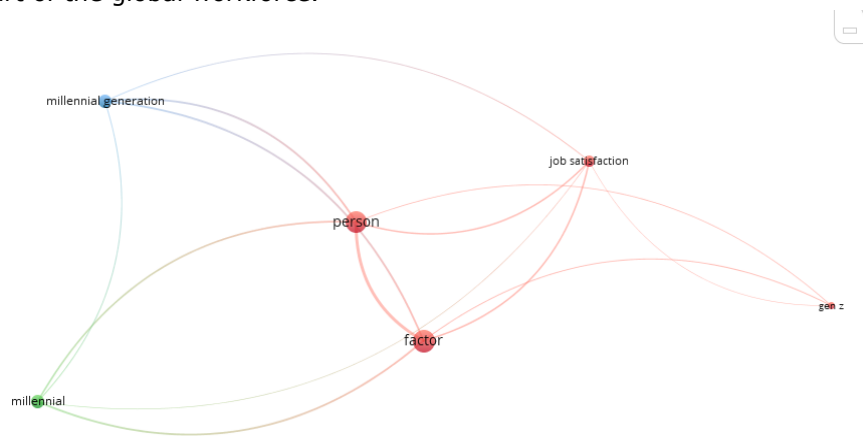
Figure 1. VosViewer results

Although issues related to millennials and Generation Z are increasingly relevant in the context of employment, the results of a bibliometric study using the VosViewer application (Figure 1) show that the number of studies specifically addressing the work preferences of these two generations is still relatively limited. This indicates the need for further research that thoroughly examines the factors influencing job selection among millennials and Generation Z. Although the issues of Millennials and Generation Z are increasingly relevant in the context of employment, the results of a bibliometric analysis using the VosViewer application (Figure 1) show that the number of studies specifically addressing the work preferences of these two generations remains relatively limited. This indicates the

need for further research that thoroughly examines the factors influencing job selection among Millennials and Generation Z.

The results of VosViewer's analysis of 100 journals researching Millennials and Generation Z show that both generations are closely associated with the concepts of individuality, job satisfaction, and various factors influencing them. Job satisfaction itself is closely related to the type of work a person does. Therefore, it is important to first understand what kind of work millennials and Generation Z prefer. By knowing their preferences, we can identify the factors they consider when choosing a job to pursue. This is very important because the value of work can vary between individuals, for example between parents and children (M. X. James et al., 2021; Olazo, 2023), or between communities in different social and geographical contexts (Booth et al., 2020; M. X. James et al., 2021).

Based on this background, this study aims to identify the personal characteristics of Millennials and Generation Z in East Java and the factors they consider when choosing a job. Through this study, it is hoped that relevant and up-to-date information on the work preferences of these two generations will be obtained. The results of this study are also expected to be used to map the dominant factors influencing the career decisions of Millennials and Generation Z.

A. LITERATURE REVIEW

Expectancy Theory, introduced by Tesar (2020), is a motivational theory that explains how individuals decide to behave based on the expectation that their actions will produce the desired results. This theory argues that a person's motivation is the result of three main factors: expectancy, which is the belief that effort will result in good performance; instrumentality, which is the belief that performance will be followed by rewards; and valence, which is the extent to which individuals value the rewards obtained. The combination of these three factors can be formulated in the equation: Motivation = Expectancy × Instrumentality × Valence

If any one of these factors has a value of zero, then overall motivation will also be zero (Aripin & Matriadi, 2024; Balashirin, 2023; Sasada et al., 2023). This theory is highly relevant in the context of today's younger generations, who have high expectations regarding their careers, compensation, and work environment. Research indicates that Millennials and Generation Z are more likely to be motivated if they understand the relationship between effort and outcomes, and if organizations can provide rewards that align with their values and preferences (Krishna & Agrawal, 2024).

Personal Characteristics

Personal characteristics are psychological and behavioural traits inherent in individuals that play a significant role in shaping work preferences and career behaviour, (Batool et al., 2023; De Jong et al., 2019; Khodjakulova, 2025; Sangwan, 2023). Key aspects of these characteristics include personality (extroversion, optimism), thinking style (analytical vs. intuitive), personal values (integrity, empathy), adaptability, and communication style. These characteristics not only influence individuals' decisions in choosing a job but also their expectations of the work environment (V. A. T. Nguyen et al., 2020). Millennials and Generation Z tend to exhibit personalities that are more open to new experiences, prioritize social values, and have a more direct communication style (Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021). They are also more flexible and responsive to changes in the work environment, particularly those related to digital technology.

Job Selection Factors

Various studies have identified the factors that young people consider when choosing a job. Bulut & Maraba (2021) found that Generation Z places great emphasis on organizational reputation, company values, and opportunities for self-development. Brown (2023) showed that Millennials prioritize factors such as work-life balance, compensation, and organizational fairness. Other factors include work flexibility (Ray & Pana-Cryan, 2021), supportive organizational culture (Odai et al., 2021), opportunities for learning and growth (Marion, 2020), and corporate social responsibility (Idowu et al., 2023). Younger generations are also increasingly showing interest in organizations that are committed to sustainability, business ethics, and employee empowerment.

Career Development Factors

Millennials and Generation Z expect careers that are not only stable but also meaningful and continuously evolving. They seek opportunities for learning, job rotation, early leadership roles, and quality feedback from supervisors (Rachmad, 2025). Work values also play a significant role; this generation tends to choose jobs aligned with their personal identity and aspirations (de Boer et al., 2021). Organizations that provide training, mentoring programs, and vertical and horizontal career mobility are more likely to gain loyalty from young employees. Other research also shows that flexibility, work-life balance, and psychological support from the work environment are important components in supporting the career development of young people.

B. METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

This study uses an exploratory-descriptive quantitative approach that aims to identify and analyze the factors considered by millennials and Generation Z in choosing a job, as well as their relationship to career development. This study not only describes the observed phenomena but also conducts confirmatory factor analysis to test the theoretical constructs developed based on literature reviews.
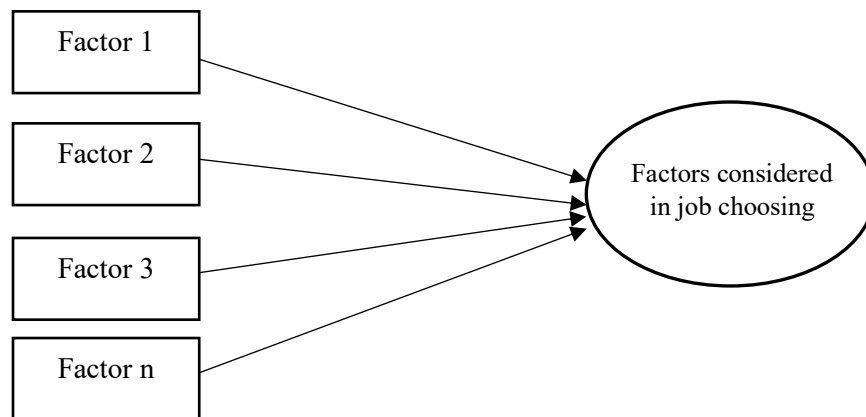
Figure 2. Conceptual Model of the Study; Source: Authors 2025

The population in this study includes millennials and Generation Z in the province of East Java, Indonesia. Based on the 2020 population census data, the Governor of East Java stated that the millennial and Generation Z populations each comprise 24.32% and 24.80% of the total population of 40.67 million (Suarasurabaya.net, 2021). Thus, the estimated target population reaches more than 20 million people. The sample was drawn using purposive sampling, which involves the deliberate selection of samples based on specific characteristics relevant to the research objectives. The inclusion criteria include individuals belonging to the Millennial Generation: born between 1981 and 1996 (aged 28–43 years in 2024) and Generation Z: born after 1996 (aged <27 years in 2024). The sample used in this study consisted of 120 respondents, and the questionnaire data were distributed online and offline to respondents who met the criteria, resulting in 111 questionnaires suitable for analysis (response rate of 92.5%).

The data used in this study were collected through a questionnaire instrument. The questions were formulated as closed-ended statements using a Likert scale. Respondents were asked to evaluate each item based on the extent to which it aligned with their experiences and perceptions of work, motivation, and career development. Personal Characteristics: Referring to an individual's psychological and social traits, such as thinking style, personality, personal values, and adaptability. Job Selection Factors: Including salary, flexibility, promotion opportunities, organizational culture, work-life balance,

and company reputation. Career Development: Measured through perceptions of learning opportunities, career mobility, participation in innovative projects, and reward systems. And Expectancy Theory Describes how expectancy, instrumentality, and valence influence the relationship between job factors and career development.

Data analysis uses descriptive analysis to describe respondent characteristics and the distribution of responses to each variable indicator. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is also used to test the construct validity of each latent variable and determine the contribution of indicators to each construct. Data analysis uses statistical software using SPSS. Data reliability is tested using Cronbach's Alpha, while construct validity is tested using factor loadings, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and Composite Reliability (CR). The statistical analysis methods in this study are rigorously designed to ensure the validity and reliability of the data and theoretical model. The use of the CFA and SEM approaches based on PLS provides flexibility in testing exploratory models, especially with a relatively moderate sample size. The results of this analysis are expected to contribute theoretically to the development of literature on work preferences and motivation among young people, as well as policy recommendations for employers.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The characteristics of respondents related to job selection factors are their job title and the year the company was established where they work. Out of 111 respondents from the millennial and Z generations who reported having a permanent job, 32 people stated they were business owners (13.5%), marketing staff (6.3%), social media managers (0.9%), cashiers (8.1%), students with jobs (33.3%), the remaining 42% had non-permanent jobs (such as newspaper vendors, helping their parents with work, working as store clerks, office boys, and still searching for suitable employment).

Table 1. Job Occupations

Job/Position	Total	Percent (%)
Business Owner	15	13.5
Marketing	7	6.3
Social Media	1	0.9
Cashier/Admin	9	8.1
Student Entrepreneur	37	33.3
Others	42	37.8
Total	111	100.0

Source: Data Processed 2025

The table above shows that of the 111 respondents, they stated that their place of business was established before 2000 and after 2000, as shown in the following table.

Table 2. Year of Business Establishment

Years	Total	Percent (%)
Before the 2000s	18	16.2

After the 2000s	22	19.8
No answer	71	64.0
Total	111	100.0

Source: Data Processed 2025

The table above shows that 18 people (16.2%) established their businesses before 2000, while 22 people (19.8%) established their businesses after 2000. Businesses established after the year 2000 are those that serve as preferred workplaces for Millennials and Generation Z. However, 71 people (64%) did not respond because they were unaware, and most of them engage in irregular work or part-time jobs, working only when needed.

Factor Analysis Results

The factor analysis results regarding the reasons for choosing a job among millennials and Generation Z yielded 10 factors from the 50 factors observed. These ten factors have Eigenvalues greater than 1.00, as shown in the following table.

Table 2. Total Variance Explained

Factor	Initial Eigenvalues			Rotation Sum of Squares Loading
	Total	**% of Variance**	**Cummulative %**	
1	19.461	38.922	38.922	16.918
2	3.533	7.065	45.988	13.224
3	3.065	6.131	52.118	3.167
4	1.998	3.996	56.114	13.679
5	1.648	3.296	59.411	3.039
6	1.454	2.909	62.319	7.972
7	1.331	2.662	64.981	5.406
8	1.272	2.545	67.526	4.577
9	1.199	2.398	69.924	5.609
10	1.054	2.108	72.031	1.689

Source: Data Processed 2025

Based on the results of the factor analysis, it can be stated that the factors considered by millennials and Generation Z in choosing their current and future careers are the 10 factors with Eigenvalues greater than 1. These ten factors have the following components and factor loadings.

Table 4. Factors to consider when choosing a job

Factor	Component	Loading Factor
	(X26) Commitment to oneself	0,586
	(X27) Communication skills	0,665
	(X28) Adaptability	0,739
	(X29) Motivation for personal goals	0,863
	(X32) Opportunities to continuously learn and improve	0,854
1.	Skills	0,793
	(X33) Desire for more flexible working hours	0.843
	(X36) Desire to achieve well-being	0.799
	(X37) Desire for a bright future	0.802
	(X46) Desire for income	0.438
	(X47) Desire for collaboration in developing a business	0.410
	(X49) Desire for job satisfaction	0.864
	(X38) Desire to develop cutting-edge technology	0.714
	(X42) Desire to achieve recognition	0.515
2.	(X43) Desire for education and job training	0.900
	(X44) Desire for career opportunities aligned with hobbies	0.425
	(X45) Desire for independence in work	0.400
	(X48) Desire for entrepreneurial skills	0.599
	(X50) Desire for career sustainability	0.466
	(X1) Socializing,	0.666
3.	(X2) Being the center of attention and energetic	0.606
	(X5) Adapting to new environments	0.756
	(X6) Being the focus and taking initiative in a group	0.786
	(X7) Comfort in speaking with many people	0.886
	(X19) Income and positive impact on society	0.736
4.	(X21) Energy from social interaction and mingling with many people	0.883
	(X22) The positive side of situations and having good hopes for the future	0.485
	(X23) To develop creativity	0.746

Factor	Component	Loading Factor
5.	(X24) Integrity (honesty and morality)	0.502
	(X25) Empathy toward others	0.567
	(X12) Long social interactions	0.670
	(X13) Listening more than speaking	0.716
	(X17) Crowds or noise	0.798
6.	(X18) Expressing oneself rather than speaking directly	0.503
	(X15) Having a few close friends rather than many acquaintances	0.751
	(X8) Seeking new experiences and adventures	0.815
7.	(X9) A positive outlook on life	0.894
	(X14) Being cautious in making decisions and taking actions	0.413
	(X4) Using body language and facial expressions in communication	0.552
8.	(X10) Convincing others to follow their ideas	0.813
9.	(X20) Personal values such as justice, sustainability, and creativity	0.832
10.	(X16) Rich imagination and enjoys reflecting	0.813

Source: Data Processed 2025

The ten factors considered when choosing a job among Millennials and Generation Z actually have varying numbers of components within each factor. The first factor has 13 components, the second factor has 7 components, the third factor has 5 components, the fourth factor has 6 components, the fifth factor has 5 components, the sixth factor has 3 components, and the seventh factor has 3 components. Meanwhile, the eighth, ninth, and tenth factors each have one component and are therefore not included as factors. Out of the 50 factors asked in the research instrument, only 46 factors were extracted into 10 factors with an Eigenvalue greater than 1, and each component in each factor had a factor loading greater than 0.4. Thus, components with a factor loading less than 0.4 were not included as components in the Eigenvalue greater than 1. Of the ten factors considered, only those with a minimum of three factor components can be referred to as factors (named according to their content). Thus, of the ten factors considered in selecting a job, only seven factors can be named. The seven factors can be named as follows.

Table 5. Factors considered in choosing a job

Extraction factor	Component	Factor name
1.	(X26) Commitment to oneself	Future commitment and motivation
	(X27) Communication skills	
	(X28) Adaptability	
	(X29) Motivation for personal goals	
	(X32) Opportunities to continuously learn and improve skills	
	(X33) Desire for more flexible working hours	
	(X36) Desire to achieve well-being	
	(X37) Desire for a bright future	
	(X46) Desire for income	
	(X47) Desire for collaboration in developing a business	
	(X49) Desire for job satisfaction	
	(X34) Desire to achieve success	
	(X35) Desire to receive the salary I expect	
2.	(X38) Desire to develop cutting-edge technology	Desire to develop technology and pursue an entrepreneurial career
	(X42) Desire to achieve recognition	
	(X43) Desire to have education and job training	
	(X44) Desire to have career opportunities aligned with hobbies	
	(X45) Desire to have independence in work	
	(X48) Desire to have entrepreneurial skills	
	(X50) Desire to have career sustainability	
3.	(X1) Socializing,	Socialization and environment
	(X2) Being the center of attention and energetic	
	(X5) Adapting to a new environment	
	(X6) Being the focus and taking initiative in a group	
	(X7) Comfort in speaking with many people	
4.	(X19) Income and positive impact on society	

Extraction factor	Component	Factor name
	(X21) Energy from social interaction/mingling with many people	Income, creativity
	(X22) The positive side of situations and having good hopes for the future	And integrity
	(X23) To develop creativity	
	(X24) Integrity (honesty and morality)	
	(X25) Empathy toward others	
5.	(X12) Extended social interaction	Personality
	(X13) Listening more than speaking	
	(X17) Crowds or noise	
	(X18) Expressing oneself rather than speaking directly	
	(X15) Few close friends rather than many acquaintances	
6.	(X8) Seeking new experiences and adventures	Experience and outlook on life
	(X9) Positive outlook on life	
	(X14) Careful in making decisions and taking action	
7.	(X4) Using body language and facial expressions in communication	Ease of communication and personal value
	(X10) Convincing others to follow their ideas	
	(X20) Personal values such as justice, sustainability, and creativity	

Source: Data Processed 2025

The ten factors extracted can be named according to the contents of each factor, but there are only seven factors. In other words, there are only seven factors considered in working with millennials and Generation Z, with the following factor names.

Table 6. Factors Considered in Choosing a Job

	Factor name
1	Commitment and motivation for the future
2	Desire to develop technology and pursue an entrepreneurial career

3	Socialization and environment
4	Income and creativity, integrity
5	Personality
6	Experience and outlook on life
7	Ease of communication and personal values

Source: Data Processed 2025

When choosing a job, people belonging to the millennial and Z generations consider seven factors. The first factor is the commitment and motivation they want for the future. This means they choose a job based on their commitment to themselves and their aspirations for the future, such as wanting flexible working hours, desiring well-being and a promising income, and seeking collaboration and job satisfaction. This aligns with Expectancy Theory, which states that individuals have expectations and aspirations that can be achieved through motivation, which serves as self-confidence in their ability to attain them. In addition to the first factor strongly supporting the expectation theory, it also supports the findings of research in Thailand on job satisfaction in pleasant workplaces, which can change management's perspective on work in the future (Setiawati et al., 2025).

The second factor considered in choosing a job among Millennials and Generation Z is the development of technology and entrepreneurial careers. This aligns with the age of Millennials and Generation Z, who grew up and developed during the information technology era (Nurhayati, 2023). As a result, they are already accustomed to using information technology and strive to develop it according to their interests and talents in various fields. This means they have a desire to develop technology as part of their work. This desire aligns with their ability and skills in using technology, enabling them to work independently. Additionally, the desire or interest in entrepreneurship is a factor considered in their work, which supports the findings of a study conducted in Malaysia indicating that the entrepreneurial intent of students (Millennials and Generation Z) is relatively high (Nurhayati et al., 2025). Entrepreneurship and developing technology, which are also part of their hobbies, are factors considered in their work, which is very good considering that this generation is already familiar with technology. Furthermore, the desire to receive recognition and have career continuity is also part of the consideration in choosing a job.

The third factor is socialization and environment. This means that when choosing a job, those in the millennial and Z generations highly consider the circumstances of interacting with others and their environment. This also includes their preference for adapting to new environments and taking initiative within the groups where they socialize. Additionally, it includes their preference for comfort in communicating with many people and being the focus or attention of others. These results differ from research stating that the work environment determines the retention of millennial employees in the Philippines (Medallon, 2020).

The fourth factor is income, creativity, and integrity. When choosing a job, those in the millennial and Z generations also consider the income they will earn and its impact on society. Additionally, their ability to develop creativity, honesty, and morality is also taken into account. This includes their preference for interaction in developing creativity and empathy toward others. These reasons align with Victor Vroom's Expectancy Theory, which states that belief in achieving rewards is influenced by creative skills. An important part of the expectancy theory is the instrumental role in achieving a certain income, namely the available support, which in the research results is creativity and integrity.

The fifth factor considered by millennials and Generation Z in choosing a job is their personality, which is reflected in their attitudes and behaviour. This means that millennials and Generation Z consider themselves when choosing a job. They are aware of themselves and how they should behave at work. This includes their preference for listening over talking, their preference for social settings, their

preference for self-expression over excessive talking, and their preference for having a limited number of friends who work synergistically.

The sixth factor considered in choosing a job by Millennials and Generation Z is experience and outlook on life. This means they choose jobs based on the experiences they have had or the new experiences they will gain. Additionally, they have a positive outlook on life and are cautious in making decisions and taking actions. This naturally leads them, as part of the Millennial and Generation Z generations, to have plans for their work and, of course, as a result of the decisions they have made.

The seventh factor is ease of communication and personal values as factors considered in choosing a job. Working inevitably involves communication, both among employees and with management. Additionally, the ability to convince others to follow their ideas, and personal values such as fairness, sustainability in work, and creativity. The results of this seventh factor support research stating the factors that determine the quality of work life for millennial academic staff in Malaysia (Mohammadi & Karupiah, 2020).

D. CONCLUSIONS

This study aims to identify and analyse the factors considered by millennials and Generation Z in choosing a job, as well as how these factors relate to career development. Based on the results of exploratory factor analysis of 111 respondents in East Java, it was found that there are seven main factors that young people consider when choosing a job: (1) commitment and future motivation, (2) desire to develop technology and pursue an entrepreneurial career, (3) socialization and environment, (4) income, creativity, and integrity, (5) personality, (6) experience and outlook on life, and (7) ease of communication and personal values. The results of this study confirm that the work preferences of millennials and Generation Z are not only based on economic factors such as compensation, but also on intrinsic factors related to identity, personal values, and expectations for the future. These findings reinforce the relevance of Expectancy Theory in explaining the motivation of young people in the context of career decision-making.

This study contributes theoretically to the development of literature on generational behaviour in the workplace, particularly by integrating expectancy theory into the context of Millennials and Generation Z. The findings indicate that the work motivation of young people is multi-dimensional, encompassing personal, social, and aspirational aspects. By identifying seven key factors influencing work preferences, this study expands the application of Expectancy Theory (Vroom, 1964) from an organizational context to the sociocultural realm of generations. Additionally, this research has significant practical implications for organizations, policymakers, and educational institutions. Organizations need to design recruitment and retention strategies for young workers by considering the intrinsic factors that drive the engagement of Millennials and Generation Z. Work programs that offer flexibility, entrepreneurial opportunities, technology use, and interpersonal skill training will be more effective in attracting and retaining young generations. Furthermore, HR managers and organizational leaders can use the results of this study to develop incentive systems and career development programs based on the personal values and aspirations of young people. This can enhance job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and long-term productivity. Additionally, higher education institutions can use these findings to design career-oriented curricula that are more relevant to the values and expectations of Millennial and Gen Z students, including entrepreneurship orientation and soft skills training.

Although it provides significant theoretical and practical contributions, this research has several limitations. First, the sample size used is relatively small and limited to the East Java region, so generalizing the results to the entire country or across countries should be done with caution. Second, the descriptive and exploratory research design does not allow for a comprehensive testing of causal relationships. Third, the self-report measurement approach may be influenced by social bias or respondents' subjective perceptions. Additionally, the analytical model used is linear, while in reality, work preferences may be influenced by more complex interactions between variables, including contextual influences such as organizational culture or labour market dynamics.

Future research is expected to expand the scope of the study, both geographically and in terms of population, including cross-regional, cross-industry, and cross-cultural comparisons. Second, a

longitudinal approach can be used to observe changes in the work preferences of Millennials and Generation Z over time, especially in the face of technological disruption and global labour market challenges. Additionally, analytical models can be further developed using structural equation modelling (SEM) with more complex mediating and moderating variables, such as the influence of organizational culture, the Big Five personality traits, or leadership styles. Finally, further research is also recommended to explore the integration between work preferences and entrepreneurial behaviour, particularly in the context of Generation Z, which shows a high tendency toward innovation and independent work.

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