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## CHARACTERISTICS AND RECRUITMENT STRATEGY OF GENERATION Z IN INDUSTRY TRADES: AN EXAMPLE OF THE WELDER PROFESSION<sup>3</sup>

Generations Y and Z may show different tendencies in the job market and prefer different management approaches. Generation Z can enter the language of economic actors as anxious or carefree. The emergence of new professions, more liberal and adapting to these young people, pushes them away from industrial professions. This study aims to propose a change in recruitment methods to professionals in the industrial sector, primarily in the welding profession, or, if necessary, to human resources departments. The analyzes carried out on the questionnaires filled out by 152 volunteer participants, most of whom are university and graduate students, were analyzed with the IBM SPSS Statistics 26 FixPack 1 program and studied at a 95% confidence level. In the analysis, the frequency and percentage values of the categorical variables were determined. The relationship between university, gender and age and categorical variables was analyzed by Chi-square test. Study results; the importance of digital resources in the job and internship search process, the priority of company reputation and working environment in job selection, the effect of personal passion on educational preferences and the low interest in the welding profession. In addition, factors such as the importance of the job and its guarantee are also decisive in the choice of profession. This study is thought that the study will represent an analytical support for companies and SMEs that enable them to take the necessary measures to counter today's harsh reality.

**Keywords:** strategies, resource, industries, production, Generation Z.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Becoming a professional or an expert in a sector of activity mainly involves the ability to choose one's career, to make the choice of one's professional orientation. The notion of professional orientation appeared in the 1900s, at the crossroads between school and professions and under the scientific auspices of psychology (Martin, 1940). Orientation, also called educational and professional orientation or professional, university and career orientation, consists of offering a person of school age and even adults (compulsory or post-compulsory, even permanent or continuous) the different streams in which they could fit in according to their interests, their previous school career, and their personality (OCDE, 2014). Career choice is a crucial and very important step in the life of any person (man or woman). This choice engages both the individual (student or not), his family, and in some cases his entourage (Hoibian, Millot, 2018). This is a decision that should not be taken lightly. At this stage of life, social pressure pushes us to ask ourselves several questions: what to choose? What do I want to do as a job? What are the most promising jobs? What are the opportunities in the sector or who is available to me? The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), in its Review of Career Guidance Policy, defines career guidance as “services and activities designed to help people, at all ages and at all stages of their lives, to make choices in education, training, and occupation and to manage their careers” (Jacques, 2017). In some cases, choosing what we want to do as a job can become a real headache for some of us. The choice of professional orientation, which should normally be a personal decision based on our deep aspirations and our skills acquired throughout our college and high school careers, is greatly impacted by several exogenous parameters such as the society in which we find ourselves, the family, guidance counselors, the media, the state, and the job market. When we leave high school, we are immediately confronted with the reality of the career choice that will determine the rest of our studies or our professional future. There are indeed several possible career choices, several types of training and many professions, many of which are very little known, often categorized, and suffer from a severe lack of personnel. These professions, as important as they are, often end up disappearing under the weight of new professions and their very persuasive communication strategies.

Indeed, in recent years we have witnessed the rise of several active sectors with attractive content and which are increasingly solicited by young people. These are the information and communication technology (ICT), construction, health, finance, jurisdiction, communication, journalism, computer engineering, film etc. sectors. In France, for example, the vocational training market has undergone many developments in recent years. The latest reform to date, the “Professional Future” Law of September 5, 2018 gives each person the freedom to choose their professional future. This is thanks to the introduction of the Personal Training Account (CPF) and by strengthening companies' investment in the skills of their employees (Travailemploi, 2019). According to the 2021 Training Barometer, the most popular courses for workers are training in the field of IT, in foreign languages, and more particularly in English, Management training (Lemaigre-Voreaux, 2021). However, some sectors such as manufacturing, particularly welding, are full of aging employees close to retirement (Khomri, 2019). The sector suffers from a glaring lack of young talent, qualified employees and may be in danger of disappearing. Too many young people still have a dusty image of this sector. According to a survey Harris Interactive for Coca Cola Enterprise on the occasion of Industry Week, 30% of 15–34-year-olds say they have a bad image of jobs in the industry (Lévy et al., 2021).

- The image of an old-fashioned sector,
- Male occupations,
- Employs low-skilled profiles,
- Do not hire,
- The industry pays poorly,
- Working in a factory is repetitive, painful and dirty.

These prejudices make these sectors the target of general indifference, especially among young people. That is why, faced with this situation and in the perspective of searching for solutions, the theme of this study focuses on “a strategy to attract and recruit young people into industrial jobs in a context where workers are aging”. Since the industrial sector is so broad, the choice made is mainly to focus on the specific form of the metallurgical sector, especially the welding profession, which is positioned as the heart of this discipline.

## 2. THE PROBLEM

In summary, the current socio-demographic situation and the increasing number of articles and reports on the phenomenon inspire the subject of this research. The theme of the study focuses on the factors of attraction and recruitment of human resources in industrial professions. More specifically, the problem refers to the difficulty of attracting quality candidates in sufficient numbers, in a context of aging current employees. The objective of this study is to find out the incentives, i.e. the pull factors that allow the recruitment of young adults to an employer, more specifically in the welding sector.

### 2.1. Research Hypotheses

Strategize for a solution where aging employees in certain sectors are retiring while potential young employees are not interested in these jobs, putting certain sectors at risk of not being able to continue production and manufacturing.

Hypothesis 1: Potential young employees are not interested in these jobs due to a negative or outdated perception of these sectors.

Hypothesis 2: Young potential employees are attracted to sectors that offer more innovative, technological career opportunities and are in line with current trends.

Hypothesis 3: Promoting the positive image and reputation of the sectors concerned, highlighting career opportunities, job stability and associated benefits, can attract more young talent.

#### 2.1.1. The objectives of the research

The objectives of this research are as follows:

- Understand the factors that influence the disinterest of potential young employees in certain jobs in these sectors.
- Identify the career and employment needs, expectations and motivations of potential young employees.
- Assess the challenges and barriers that aging employees face when considering retirement.
- Review best practices and successful initiatives in other sectors to attract and retain young talent.
- Present a theoretical framework specifying the origin, concepts, and evolution of the welding sector.

- Respond to research issues and understand the link between existing communication strategies and their influences on young people.
- Highlight the different strategies that arise from the promotion and marketing of services.
- Know the essential points that must be taken into consideration when implementing marketing communication strategies in order to create attraction around the sector.
- Give a clear and precise idea about welding and show its great role in the industrial and production sectors.

### 3. LITERATURE

#### 3.1. Understanding Young People (Generation Z) With A View to Attracting and Recruiting Them

Generation Z is the generation of people born between 1996 and 2012. As was the case with Generation Y, Generation Z goes by different names. The letter Z, in addition to following alphabetically the two previous generations (X, Y), would mean “zapping” and would come from the tendency of this generation to zap what it does not consider useful (Allain, 2014). Michael Wesh called individuals “emos” in relation to their will being guided by their emotions. They are also categorized with the pseudonyms “I-Generation”, in relation to their close connection with the internet, “WTF generation”, for Wikipedia, Twitter and Facebook, or “hashtag generation” for the popularized use of the day. On social networks during their youth (Élodie, Marie-Ève, 2018). In addition, it is under the name of “Generation C” (connect, communicate, create, operate) or “Generation CLIC” (creative, lucid, honest, collective) that we hear a lot about them (Allain, 2014). However, this 4 C rule may vary depending on the study. Some authors replace the term “connect” with “critical thinking” (Allain, 2014). So much so that others speak of Generation C for “connected, communicative, content-centric, 'computized', community-based and click-through all the time” (Roman et al., 2011).

#### 3.2. Profiles of Generation Z

The definition and meaning of the term “generation” differ depending on the context in which it is used. The demographer will consider a generation to be all the individuals born in the same year. The genealogist will use this word to classify people on the same floor of a family tree. In addition, the historian will use it to calculate the duration of the renewal of men in society.

In sociology, a generation is a group of individuals who have experienced the same historical, economic, and social events over the same period... This reflection of the society in which young people have grown up creates behaviors characteristic of the generation, based on a culture that will mark their whole life (Khodorowsky, 2015).

In order to identify the birth of the individuals making up Generation Z, it is interesting to return to the evolution of the generations beginning in the 21st century.

Sociologists distinguish society into five types of generations:

- The silent generation, population born between 1925 and 1942,
- Baby-boomers, population born between 1946 and 1964,
- Generation X, population born between 1965 and 1979,
- Generation Y, population born between 1980 and 1995,
- Generation Z, population born between 1995 and 2010,

- Generation Alpha, population after the year 2010.

The generation is not only specific to an age group, but also specific to a major economic, technological, and societal evolution.

The political, economic, social and cultural context confers on a generation trait that will determine its history: its lifestyle, its values, its cultural practices, etc. will remain markers that necessarily interest marketing and communication professionals (Khodorowsky, 2015).

### **3.3. The Silent Generation**

The silent generation is that of people born between 1901 and 1944, although some studies classify it more between 1925 and 1942 (Pierre, 2020). These people generally have a conservative spirit; they are attached to traditions, the transmission of values, and loyalty. They live according to a rigid pattern, which they know well and do not want to change (Pierre, 2020). The silent generation, also known as the traditionalists, is now retired or dead. It marked the economic world by its strong involvement in the world of work and generally by its lack of demands. Appreciations are long and changes in society were slow in their time (AgileMontreal, 2019).

### **3.4. Baby Boomers**

The generation of baby boomers is that of the children of the silent generation. Most of them were born during the “baby boom”, the birth rate peak that took place after the Second World War. It extends approximately from 1945 until the mid-1960s (the years vary according to the studies) (Khodorowsky, 2015). This peak is mainly due to post-war rejoicing. Most baby boomers grew up during the postwar period, between 1945 and 1975. They witnessed unparalleled economic growth and a sharp improvement in living standards. Growth is felt in all sectors, and fundamental advances are taking place. In medicine, we see the arrival of oral contraceptives or the vaccine against polio (Allain, 2014). In terms of their behavior and state of mind, they are optimistic and individualistic. They value recognition and immediate gratification and reject authority. Unlike their parents, the man and the woman now work a lot. They devote little time to their hobbies, emphasizing their careers, which they want to be beautiful and prolific. They are looking for a good salary as well as a good title above all, and for this reason, they see the change of job as a negative thing. They are people who prefer face-to-face interactions and are competitors (Allain, 2014). Having entered the job market with exceptional job opportunities, baby boomers are considered valuable collaborators for companies. Indeed, coming from the post-war period of 1945, they work with the expectation of remuneration commensurate with their efforts to meet the needs of their country in reconstruction (Alain, 2007). From an economic point of view, they experienced the postwar boom and the genesis of consumer society. Today, the majority are retired; “the grandpa-boom peaked in 2017”. Their strong values of belonging (both family and professional) will be instilled in the education of their children, who mostly belong to Generation X. Today, the retirement of baby boomers raises many questions. Around 2025, a majority of them should have ceased to exercise their work. A significant death curve should appear in the countries affected by the baby boom, as well as an increase in vacant jobs (Alain, 2007).

### **3.5. Generation X, Y or Millennial and Z**

Faced with a shortage of jobs in certain sectors, Generation X is in a period of social transition (from the end of colonialism to the Chernobyl accident), marked by strong

economic events (stock market and oil crashes in 1973), the appearance of AIDS in 1980, and the rise of the media. The term Generation X has been used in a couple earlier ways, but the primary use of the term now is used to define the generation following the Baby Boomers. Generation X or Gen X for short was also known as the Baby Busters, the Latchkey Generation, and Post-Boomers (Robert, 2021). Professionally, unlike Generation Y, which is very loyal to their employers, Generation X “has many requirements. They need to learn, grow, and experience.” The purposes are therefore very different since Generation X “ensure that work is a key to their development” (Rocci, 2019). Indeed, the “X” who are the parents of Generation Y and Generation Z, are concerned about the balance between personal life and professional life. While getting involved in taking up their duties, the search for this balance leads to more self-centered and stressed behavior.

Also called “millennials” or “digital adopters”, the individuals making up Generation Y were born between the end of the 70s and the mid-90s. Again, the dates may vary slightly depending on the studies. The name “Y” has several origins. The most obvious is the one that simply implies that it is the letter after X. A second theory would have the letter “Y” chosen for its phonetic translation, in English “why”, because Generation Y is defined as one of those who will most question certain fundamental principles. Finally, the last explanation would like the Y to be the pictorial representation of the intersection of the wires of the headphones coming out of the walkmans, mythical objects of this period. People of this generation are largely the children of baby boomers, which is why they are often given the label of “echo-boomer”. They also share many values with their predecessors, including self-esteem, interest, and enjoyment (Pierre, 2020). What will mark this generation is the acceleration, in all areas. Advances in computing are colossal: they include the evolution of computers, telephones, which became portable, televisions, and especially the internet. The world is becoming global; all countries are at your fingertips. Which opens a window on the world to anyone in just a few clicks. Young people are cradled in this technology from an early age and will have an intuitive mastery of these tools, and they will often be more alert than previous generations, quickly overtaken by progress. Given their openness to the world, they are in search of personal development and a good quality of life, which promotes the omnipresence of ever more invasive media. The main leitmotif of Generation Y is the adage of the win-win relationship. His relationship with employment is therefore different from previous generations since what changes with the young Generation Y is that, for him, the divide between professional place and private place does not exist; the work is therefore carried out wherever it sees fit (train, café, office, etc.); what matters is the result. Thus, the young person can work at his place of work; the converse being moreover true: there is no harm in having fun at his place of work, which ultimately is only one place... among others (André et al., 2012).

Generation Y youth have certain expectations of their workplace (Quialacote, 2010). Indeed, the latter must be:

- **Stimulating:** the work must present opportunities to learn, to allow a certain improvement in the field, and to overcome the limits of the known.
- **Flexible:** the flexibility of schedules due to the hectic pace of life is relatively important for Generation Y.
- **Financially generous:** due to the lack of succession in all sectors, they have a wide choice of employers offering competitive salaries in order to eventually meet the needs of a family to support.

- **Positive and entertaining:** a friendly working atmosphere, where a somewhat playful atmosphere reigns, is a good incentive for Generation Y to feel involved.
- **Focused on collaboration:** the work team represents, for Generation Y, an almost essential tool for the achievement of objectives. The cooperation of the superior is also of undeniable importance in order to support the work of the employee.
- **Goal-oriented:** Millennials have well-established career goals when investing in a business. To stir up their loyalty, the company must ensure that these expectations are met.
- **Respectful:** these workers give as much as they receive. Although they generally have little experience, they are willing to listen to advice if they are also listened to in return.
- **Technological:** in order to stimulate them, the use of the latest technology is an effective means. They like to update themselves on the latest technological tools that can improve the quality of their work.

Looking more closely at the expectations of Generation Y young people, regardless of their country of origin, the fact remains that they do overlap in a few aspects.

Generation Z, this new generation represents nearly a third of the active population in France or 26% (versus. 7% in 2019), is not just an accentuated Generation Y or “2.0” version (Hrmmaps, 2021). There is a real paradigm shift, generating a strong cultural evolution, even with Generation Y. The impacts are profound. To understand the members of this generation, it is first necessary to identify in general their origins, their skills and their personalities.

Young people born during this movement are also called “Gen Z” or “slashers” (Phyllis, 2023), they are defined by several attributes, such as “digital native”, the silent generation, or even the Z (Z in alphabetical order but also Z for Zapping) (Allain, 2014). So many nicknames whose origins come mainly from the context of their appearance. Indeed, like any generation defined by sociologists, the Zs have been marked by an economic, historical, and social context. This population first went through the financial crisis of 2008, the tsunami in 2004 or even the rise of radical Islamism, which caused attacks around the world such, as the attack of September 11, 2001. At the economic level, optimism is not at homes. Thus, often educated in a blended or single parent family (Generation X or Y), Generation Z is used to an uncertain world (Allain, 2014). This economic period is underlined by the appearance of numerous NICTs (smartphones, high-speed internet, tablets, etc.), which explains the term digital native. Finally, at the social level, it is the social networks that will affect their various behaviors. Nevertheless, this analysis remains cautious since this societal phenomenon cannot be generalized to each individual born during this generation. Sociologists do not all agree on the lengths of generation dates, nor on the denominations used related to their skills, personalities and aptitudes.

To understand the skills of Generation Z, it is necessary to direct your research through studies in psychology. Generation Z has grown up in a sphere of cell phones, resulting in a mastery of these tools in speed and automation. This is the observation that we can make when we observe the ease with which a young person can take hold of a new application or the latest mobile phone marketed compared to their elders. The creativity, multitasking, and enterprising behavior of young Z are all assets illustrating their desire to be actors in their own lives by showing inventiveness and imagination (Allain, 2014). Nevertheless, these young people report less developed reasoning and self-control than previous generations at the same age. Despite the daily use of digital tools, Generation Z has been

the subject of a study by the French government's digital university and the report concludes that the latter is skills are “very superficial and reflect a confusion between habit and skill. Teenagers use computer resources in a quantitative way, and lack the critical perspective to ask themselves the question of the truth of the information” (Elodie, 2016). Alongside their innate abilities, Generation Z exudes a personality very specific to their movement.

Without generalizing, the behaviors and personalities of these young people, hired as interns (for the moment) and shortly as juniors, will make it possible to identify their expectations in the professional environment. It is interesting to question their visions of the business world, their feelings about the ideal position, and their professional aspirations to contribute to the projects of their future employers (Kingman, 2017). Generation Z highlighted some priorities, which they are much more concerned about than the members of older generations, which mainly related to diversity and equality: Generation Z were far more concerned about prejudice towards people, gender equality and racism (Kingman, 2017). In 2025, the economic succession will pass into the hands of young people born between 1995 and 2000. There is no need to wait until 2025 to verify that with them, a new culture is taking shape” (Marie, Florence, 2015). In this forced march towards a new model, the risk is to create incomprehension and resentment, hence the need to understand the desires of this movement.

This generation expects a lot from its professional environment and from the job market (Gigon, 2021):

- **Give meaning to their work:** often responsible for social and environmental issues, this generation is very attentive to the actions of the company to which they are going to apply. According to a YouGov study; in 2021, 78% of people aged 18-24 would not accept a job that did not make sense to them.
- **Be autonomous:** in the age of entrepreneurship, these young people are not afraid to leave a company to try their luck with a project that is close to their heart or in a company that will give them more autonomy and flexibility at work, (it is not necessary to call your employee every 2 hours when he is teleworking).
- **Flexibility and adaptability:** this point joins the previous one. For the Zs, the routine 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., the “metro-work-sleep” is over. A day or two of teleworking per week, variable working hours to organize their days as they wish or even the 4-day week, if you want to be even more innovative!
- **Team spirit:** even if this generation wishes to be independent, it attaches great importance to the team. According to a Mazars and OpinionWay study, 56% of them consider the working atmosphere and exchanges with colleagues as determining factors in motivation. Hyperconnected but sociable, according to Mazars and OpinionWay, 79% of them expect the company to offer a physical workspace. Even though we are surely living the height of remote working, it is important for them to bond with their colleagues (Mazars, 2019).
- **Recognition:** There are two new forms of recognition that Generation Z is asking for.
  - Existential recognition: this involves recognizing the employee for who he is (his character, his personality, his history, etc.). The employee needs to be recognized as a unique person and as one collaborator among many others for the company.
  - Integrative recognition corresponds to the management of change. It stems from this generation's desire to change things.



It is important not to underestimate the young members of generation Z. They have a new way of working and can bring a lot to table with their skills. We must therefore make the necessary efforts to understand them and the changes they will introduce in the world of work.

By listening to the desires of this generation, the company would be revisited, transformed to meet their aspirations. The Zs surveyed (Sachot-Moirez, Urmès, 2015) described the perfect company:

- More trusting: from a control system to a trust system,
- The company will have to let go and trust the youth;
- More agile: the z company is more innovative, more open to failure;
- Simpler: these digital natives dream of a company in the image of the horizontality that digital allows, i.e. A flattened hierarchy, less complex, more flexible;
- More human-oriented internally and externally;
- More egalitarian: a less discriminating company for a generation that advocates fairness and meritocracy;
- More flexible: the Z want companies that are flexible, both in terms of hours, pace, place of work, and codes seen as too rigid;
- More meaningful: a company that impacts society, having that extra soul that makes young employees join the project... get up in the morning.

Thus, the days of the 'little boss' and hyper-hierarchical structures are over. The weight of the process risks suffocating them and scaring them away. This is why their career logic is not necessarily a will, but they favor self-entrepreneurship by wanting to be their own bosses. "We cannot know whether teenagers will take the plunge into starting a business, but what we do know is that they now say they want to become entrepreneurs. They will even seek to reconcile the status of employee with that of auto-entrepreneur to carry out several activities simultaneously" (Élodie, Marie-Ève, 2018). Finally, the young Z dreams of international. Like their elders who discovered the Erasmus Programs to continue their training abroad, Generation Z wants to start their career abroad. The digital evolution has made it possible to cross borders and take an interest in the cultures of other countries by integrating free access networks. Young Z perceives this opportunity to travel as a form of attraction in which his playing field is expanded. In conclusion, young people in Generation Z are constantly looking for challenges. They are not afraid of failure, and see it instead as a way to bounce back and improve. They expect their superiors to entrust them with stimulating assignments.

#### **4. METHODOLOGY**

The survey analyses were carried out with data from 152 volunteer participants who filled out the questionnaire. In the study, the sample was selected with appropriate sampling. It is a sampling of (voluntary) individuals who are easy to reach, available and willing to participate in the research (Christensen, Johnson and Turner, 2015; Yıldız, 2017). Researchers use whatever sample units are readily available. Thus, an academician can choose the students in his class, or a researcher can choose the first 200 people who accept the survey on the street. The researcher is unlikely to estimate the representativeness of the sample. Thus, in proper sampling, the parameters of the universe cannot be predicted (Nachimas and Nachimas, 1996; Yıldız, 2017). The data discussed in this study were collected through the Google Form with the survey application between January 2023 and April 2023. The analyzes carried out on the questionnaires filled out by 152 volunteer

participants, most of whom are university and graduate students, were analyzed with the SPSS 21.0 program and studied at a 95% confidence level. In the analysis, the frequency and percentage values of the categorical variables were determined. The relationship between university, gender and age and categorical variables was analyzed by Chi-square test. The data were analyzed with the IBM SPSS Statistics 26 FixPack 1 program. The survey consisted of two separate question sections that made it possible to highlight the analysis. These questions are about participants' values, job perceptions, etc. It is related to. The questions were grouped according to job attractiveness factors and mobility propensity factors. As for pull factors, these constitute the characteristics of the job that attract young people to an organization, or more precisely, the individual's motivations for choosing to work there. Factors related to mobility propensity influence age, gender, employment status, etc., determining whether one individual is more mobile than another, which in turn affects whether the latter leaves his job or not.

#### 4.1. Ethical Considerations

The questionnaire was presented to the respondents online with an explanatory header defining the purpose of the study so that they provided informed consent if they chose to participate in the study. Confidentiality was an aspect whose importance was not neglected. All questionnaires were coded to preserve the identity of respondents.

## 5. FINDINGS

### 5.1. Demographic variables

This step consists of presenting the details of our study sample. Numerical data and percentage of participation.

Table 1. Demographic Variables

		n	%
Gender	Woman	58	38,2
	Man	94	61,8
Age	15-20	25	16,4
	21-25	66	43,4
	26 years and plus	61	40,1
School level	College	3	2,0
	High School	6	3,9
	Bachelor	75	49,3
	Master	58	38,2
	Others	10	6,6

Source: Authors own work.

This table presents the descriptive statistics of demographic characteristics of university students. The data includes information about the distribution of students based on gender, age, and school level. The sample consists of a total of n=152 students. Gender distribution indicates that 38.2% of the students are female, while 61.8% are male. In terms of age, the majority falls within the 21–25 age range (43.4%), followed by 26 years and above (40.1%), and 15-20 (16.4%). Regarding school level, the distribution shows that 49.3% of students are pursuing a Bachelor's degree, 38.2% are at the Master's level, and

the remaining percentages are distributed across College, High School, and other categories.

## 5.2. Variables of School and Work Life

This step presents the interpretation of the data relating to the level of education and professional life variables.

Table 2. Variables of School and Work Life

		n	%
Have you ever done an internship or job search?	Yes	104	68,4
	No	48	31,6
How do you do your company research for a job or internship?	Internet (google, yahoo...)	68	44,7
	Social networks (LinkedIn, Facebook...)	66	43,4
	Advertisements (newspapers, TV, articles...)	9	5,9
	Others	9	5,9
If you are looking for a job or internship, what are your criteria for selecting a company before applying?	Company reputation	88	57,9
	Evolution prospects	50	32,9
	Salary	77	50,7
	Challenges	50	32,9
	The work environment (office, collaboration, atmosphere, ...)	86	56,6
Regarding your current training, why did you choose your current training and not another?	Others	2	1,3
	A passion	74	48,7
	The assurance of having a job	15	9,9
	Opportunities	41	27,0
	Salary	8	5,3
	Choice of parents, friends (external influence)	9	5,9
What is important to you at work or in a business?	Others	5	3,3
	Salary	33	21,7
	The work itself	73	48,0
	The work environment	19	12,5
	Challenges	26	17,1
Are you interested in another job?	Others	1	,7
	Yes	110	72,4
Do you know the trade of welders?	No	42	27,6
	Yes	74	48,7
Could you or would you accept to become a professional welder or welders?	No	78	51,3
	Yes	75	49,3
In your opinion, what information do you need before choosing to practice a trade?	No	77	50,7
	The importance of the job	78	51,3
	Job guarantees (opportunities)	31	20,4
	Salary	24	15,8
	The work environment	14	9,2
	Others	5	3,3

Source: Authors own work.

According to Table 2, it is possible to determine the tendencies and priorities of students and employees regarding job search, internship, job and education preferences.

68.4% of the participants searched for internship/job. This suggests that a large proportion of them have job search experience, which reflects respondents' interest and active efforts towards entry into the labour market. When looking for a job/internship, 44.7% of the participants do research on the internet (Google, Yahoo...) and 43.4% on social networks (LinkedIn, Facebook...). This highlights how important digital resources and social media are in the job search process.

The use of traditional media (newspapers, TV...) and other methods remains lower at 5.9%. 57.9% of the participants find the reputation of the company important and 56.6% find the working environment important. This shows the importance that the participants attach to the social and professional reputation of the workplace and working conditions when choosing a workplace.

Salary is an important criterion for 50.7% of respondents, revealing that financial expectations are an important factor in choosing a job. 48.7% of the participants chose their current education because of a passion. This suggests that individuals' personal interests and passions play an important role in their career choices. 27% made choices based on future opportunities, indicating that career prospects influence decisions.

While 48% of the respondents considered the job itself as the most important factor, 21.7% identified the salary as the most important factor. This shows that job content and working environment are more important than salary. 72.4% of the participants stated that they were interested in another job. This indicates that there may be dissatisfaction with their current job or that the number of people who want to make a change in their career is high.

While half of the participants (48.7%) know the profession of welder, 51.3% do not. This shows that there is a need to promote and raise awareness of the welding profession. While 49.3% of the participants can accept to be a welder, 50.7% do not favor this option. This suggests that the attractiveness of the profession needs to be increased.

Participants emphasized the importance of work (51.3%) and job guarantee (20.4%) as the most important information in choosing a profession. Factors such as salary and work environment were given less importance.

### **5.3. Relationship Between the Gender and the Variables**

In this step we used the chi-square test to understand the relationships between the different variables in order to verify our hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1: Potential young employees are not interested in these jobs due to a negative or outdated perception of these sectors.

Hypothesis 2: Young potential employees are attracted to sectors that offer more innovative, technological career opportunities and are in line with current trends.

Hypothesis 3: Promoting the positive image and reputation of the sectors concerned, highlighting career opportunities, job stability and associated benefits, can attract more young talent.

Table 3. Examining the Relationship Between the Gender and the Variables

		Gender				Chi-Square	P
		Woman		Man			
		n	%	n	%		
Have you ever done an internship or job search?	Yes	42	72,4	62	66,0	,425	,514
	No	16	27,6	32	34,0		
How do you do your company research for a job or internship?	Internet	23	39,7	45	47,9	3,088	,378
	Social networks	30	51,7	36	38,3		
	Advertisements	2	3,4	7	7,4		
	Others	3	5,2	6	6,4		
If you are looking for a job or internship, what are your criteria for selecting a company before applying?	Company reputation	32	55,2	56	59,6	,133	,715
	Evolution prospects	16	27,6	34	36,2		
	Salary	27	46,6	50	53,2		
	Challenges	18	31,0	32	34,0		
	The work environment	37	63,8	49	52,1		
	Others	1	1,7	1	1,1		
Regarding your current training, why did you choose your current training and not another?	A passion	21	36,2	53	56,4	10,432	,064
	The assurance of having a job	6	10,3	9	9,6		
	Opportunities	20	34,5	21	22,3		
	Salary	2	3,4	6	6,4		
	Choice of parents, friends	5	8,6	4	4,3		
	Others	4	6,9	1	1,1		
What is important to you at work or in a business?	Salary	7	12,3	26	27,7	5,580	,134
	The work itself	33	57,9	40	42,6		
	The work environment	7	12,3	12	12,8		
	Challenges	10	17,5	16	17,0		
Are you interested in another job?	Yes	41	70,7	69	73,4	,031	,860
	No	17	29,3	25	26,6		
Do you know the trade of welders?	Yes	27	46,6	47	50,0	,171	,679
	No	31	53,4	47	50,0		
Could you or would you accept to become a professional welder or welders?	Yes	27	46,6	48	51,1	,292	,589
	No	31	53,4	46	48,9		
In your opinion, what information do you need before choosing to practice a trade?	The importance of the job	29	50,0	49	52,1	1,502	,826
	Job guarantees	13	22,4	18	19,1		
	Salary	8	13,8	16	17,0		
	The work environment	5	8,6	9	9,6		
	Others	3	5,2	2	2,1		

\*p<0,05; chi-square test.

Source: Authors own work.

There is no significant relationship between gender and the variables (p > 0.05).

Table 4. Examining the Relationship Between the Age and the Variables

		Age						Chi-Square	P
		15-20		21-25		26 years and plus			
		n	%	n	%	n	%		
Have you ever done an internship or job search?	Yes	6	24,0	46	69,7	52	85,2	30,873	,000*
	No	19	76,0	20	30,3	9	14,8		
How do you do your company research for a job or internship?	Internet (google, yahoo...)	10	40,0	29	43,9	29	47,5	7,098	,312
	Social networks (LinkedIn, Facebook...)	12	48,0	31	47,0	23	37,7		
	Advertisements (newspapers, TV, articles...)	3	12,0	1	1,5	5	8,2		
	Others	0	0,0	5	7,6	4	6,6		
If you are looking for a job or internship, what are your criteria for selecting a company before applying?	Company reputation	14	56,0	43	65,2	31	50,8	2,715	,257
	Evolution prospects	7	28,0	18	27,3	25	41,0	3,024	,220
	Salary	14	56,0	36	54,5	27	44,3	1,683	,431
	Challenges	10	40,0	20	30,3	20	32,8	,773	,679
	The work environment (office, collaboration, atmosphere, ...)	11	44,0	41	62,1	34	55,7	2,453	,293
	Others	0	0,0	1	1,5	1	1,6	,403	,818
Regarding your current training, why did you choose your current training and not another?	A passion	14	56,0	35	53,0	25	41,0	11,748	,302
	The assurance of having a job	3	12,0	3	4,5	9	14,8		
	Opportunities	5	20,0	21	31,8	15	24,6		
	Salary	1	4,0	1	1,5	6	9,8		
	Choice of parents, friends (external influence)	2	8,0	3	4,5	4	6,6		
	Others	0	0,0	3	4,5	2	3,3		
What is important to you at work or in a business?	Salary	9	36,0	9	13,8	15	24,6	9,761	,135
	The work itself	7	28,0	35	53,8	31	50,8		
	The work environment	3	12,0	11	16,9	5	8,2		
	Challenges	6	24,0	10	15,4	10	16,4		
Are you interested in another job?	Yes	18	72,0	44	66,7	48	78,7	2,293	,318
	No	7	28,0	22	33,3	13	21,3		
Do you know the trade of welders?	Yes	9	36,0	28	42,4	37	60,7	6,145	,046*
	No	16	64,0	38	57,6	24	39,3		

Table 4 (cont.). Examining the Relationship Between the Age and the Variables

		Age						Chi-Square	P
		15–20		21–25		26 years and plus			
		n	%	n	%	n	%		
Could you or would you accept to become a professional welder or welders?	Yes	17	68,0	33	50,0	25	41,0	5,198	,074
	No	8	32,0	33	50,0	36	59,0		
In your opinion, what information do you need before choosing to practice a trade?	The importance of the job	13	52,0	35	53,0	30	49,2	5,266	,729
	Job guarantees (opportunities)	7	28,0	12	18,2	12	19,7		
	Salary	2	8,0	9	13,6	13	21,3		
	The work environment	3	12,0	7	10,6	4	6,6		
	Others	0	0,0	3	4,5	2	3,3		

\*p<0,05; chi-square test.

Source: Authors own work.

There is a significant relationship between age and the status of searching for a job or internship ( $p < 0.05$ ). Among those aged 15-20, 24.0% have searched, among those aged 21–25, 69.7% have searched, and among those aged 26 and above, 85.2% have searched for a job or internship. As age increases, the tendency to search for a job or internship also increases. There is a significant relationship between age and the response to the question “Do you know the trade of welders?” ( $p < 0.05$ ). Among those aged 15–20, 36.0% are knowledgeable, among those aged 21–25, 42.4% are knowledgeable, and among those aged 26 and above, 60.8% are knowledgeable about the trade. As age increases, the level of knowledge also increases. These analyses do not confirm our hypothesis 1 that states: Potential young employees are not interested in these jobs due to a negative or outdated perception of these sectors. In summary, the chi-square test allowed us to reject hypothesis 1, because although having a strong relationship between age variables and knowledge of the trade, the data were not sufficient to support this hypothesis. In addition, hypotheses 2 and 3 were confirmed by the test because they had a significant impact on the image of the business and opportunities.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Companies strive to motivate and retain their employees through engagement and productivity efforts. The arrival of Generation Z and the high turnover rate of the workforce confirm this goal, which professions such as welding are looking for. This generation also carries projects, meanings and values that are often paradoxical. Even if it's just a trend, it's clear that Z's aspirations coincide with digital transformation, the exponential growth of the collaborative economy, and thus the birth of uberization. (Denis, Grégoire, 2016), firms must rethink their internal organization to adapt their recruitment systems and forms of attraction to the evolution of digital technology. In conclusion, the various investigations carried out throughout this research tend to affirm that the serious game for recruiting is an axis to be privileged. A real asset for developing the employer brand, corporate

gamification meets both the expectations of Z juniors and those of the new economy. In addition, the establishment of a fun career evening allows firms to attract and recruit differently. Gamification thus greatly contributes to:

- ambassadors.
- transform constraint into opportunity,
- creating positive emotions,
- promote interaction with the context of the game;
- extend the user experience,
- revalorize the daunting tasks of the recruiter,

transform employees into Finally, let's not put off hiring Gen Z differently! Viable methods in terms of attractiveness and recruitment have not yet been determined.

### **6.1. Theoretical implications**

This study has several implications that should be put into practice by all organizations in general and those in the welding industry in particular. These implications are divided into recruitment and Generation Z-friendly attraction. For example, companies should use their traditional homepages and job portals to post jobs, as these are the platforms most used by Generation Z. They also use other sources such as radio, AMS and Willhaben to search for job opportunities. In addition, companies should also mark their presences on social networking sites, either by posting jobs themselves or by providing information about different things such as products, benefits, events, photos of colleagues, food, and offices. This is important because Generation Z is using these networks to look for jobs, they are becoming more and more active on these sites, and companies stay in their minds and attract them and will be able to recruit them unconsciously. Businesses should present a lot of information on their homepage and social networking sites. In addition, the homepage must be user-friendly and the information provided must be truthful, authentic and consistent. In addition, as mentioned above, welding companies should provide information about functional and symbolic benefits, but also make these benefits available to Generation Z candidates, as this represents an important pull factor in the workplace for them. Taking into account functional benefits, for example, companies should offer stable jobs, appropriate and generous salaries, and support employee development. Generation Z values companies that offer a canteen, flexible working hours, a home office, and a harmonious work environment. Professionals in the trade should offer fulfilling and interesting work, value employees and provide a good work atmosphere as a symbolic benefit. In addition, team building events, a good company reputation, a good registration period, and a short recruitment process are also important for Generation Z.

### **6.2. Suggestions for future research**

For future work, it would be beneficial to deepen the research by first broadening the sample of interviews and surveys to get a broader perspective and focus on the impact of virtual reality and artificial intelligence tools on the skills management of young talent, and this, on a Turkish scale. If we take this idea further, why not undertake a study on the impact of emerging technologies, such as automation and robotics, on the future of the welding profession and the skills required to succeed. Explore how future welders can adapt and thrive in an industry in perpetual technological evolution.



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