



MECMUA

ULUSLARARASI SOSYAL BİLİMLER DERGİSİ

Mecmua Uluslararası Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi [International Journal Of Social Sciences]


Uluslararası Hakemli E-Dergi/ Referee International E-Journal

Yıl: 6, Sayı: 11, ISSN:2587-1811 Yayımlanma Tarihi: 30.03.2021

Z Kuşağı, Kurumsal Girişimcilik ve Liderlik Arasındaki İlişki Üzerine

On The Relationship Between Generation Z, Corporate Entrepreneurship and Leadership

Yrd. Doç. Dr. Burak ERKUT

 Bahçeşehir Kıbrıs Üniversitesi, İktisadi İdari ve Sosyal Bilimler Fakültesi, İşletme Bölümü, Lefkoşa / KKTC. burak.erkut@baucyprus.edu.tr

Makale Bilgisi / Article Information

Makale Türü: Araştırma Makalesi
DOI: mecmua. 877414
Yükleme Tarihi: 15.12.2020
Kabul Tarihi: 09.01.2021
Yayımlanma Tarihi: 30.03.2021
Sayı: 11
Sayfa: 399-416

Article Information: Research Article
DOI: mecmua. 877414
Received Date: 15.12.2020
Accepted Date: 09.01.2021
Date Published: 30.03.2021
Volume: 11
Sayfa: 399-416

Atf / Citation

ERKUT, B. (2021). Z Kuşağı, Kurumsal Girişimcilik ve Liderlik Arasındaki İlişki Üzerine. *MECMUA - Uluslararası Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* ISSN: 2587-1811 Yıl: 6, Sayı: 11, Sayfa: 399-416

ERKUT, B. (2021). On The Relationship Between Generation Z, Corporate Entrepreneurship and Leadership. *MECMUA - International Journal Of Social Sciences* ISSN: 2587-1811 Year: 6, Volume: 11, Page: 399-416



Yrd. Doç. Dr. Burak ERKUT

Z KUŞAĞI, KURUMSAL GİRİŞİMCİLİK VE LİDERLİK ARASINDAKİ İLİŞKİ ÜZERİNE

On The Relationship Between Generation Z, Corporate Entrepreneurship and Leadership

ÖZ

Bu çalışmanın amacı, kurumsal girişimcilik ile liderlik arasındaki ilişkinin Z kuşağı açısından incelenmesidir. Kurumsal girişimcilik ve liderlik literatüründeki yakın tarihli çalışmaların kavramsal bir analizinin yapıldığı çalışmada, Z kuşağı ile ilgili yakın tarihli ampirik veriler ve bulgular da derlenerek Z kuşağının iş yaşamından ve liderlikten beklentileri kavramsal bir açıdan ele alınmış ve liderlik kuramlarıyla ilişkilendirilmiştir. Z kuşağının iş yaşamı ve liderlik konularında kendisinden önce gelen kuşaklardan farklı bir bakış açısına sahip olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Bu bulgular ışığında Z kuşağının kurumsal girişimcilikteki rolü için farklı ve yeni bir liderlik anlayışına gereksinim duyabileceği vurgulanmıştır. Bu liderlik anlayışı, değerlere önem veren, Z kuşağının beklentilerini yönetebilen ve Z kuşağının değerlerini paylaşan bir liderlik anlayışı olmalıdır. Bu kavramsal çalışma, gelecek ampirik araştırmalara ışık tutacak bir başlangıç noktası olarak literatüre dört mantıksal öneri ile katkıda bulunmaktadır. Sözkonusu öneriler hem kurumsal girişimcilik kapsamında kolayca uygulanabilecek bir nitelik taşımakta, hem de araştırma ekseninde de test edilebilecek bir noktada bulunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kurumsal Girişimcilik, Liderlik, Z kuşağı.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to analyze the relationship between corporate entrepreneurship and leadership from the perspective of generation Z. In this study, a conceptual analysis of the recent literature on corporate entrepreneurship and leadership will be carried out, also by identifying recent empirical evidence on generation Z, especially by focusing on what generation Z expects from work life and leadership. It has been identified that generation Z differs from its predecessor generations. Based on this finding, there is a need for a new and different leadership approach when engaging generation Z in corporate entrepreneurship. This leadership should be value-oriented, it should manage the expectations and share the values of generation Z. This study serves as a starting point for future empirical work by organizing its findings in four logical propositions which can be easily implemented in a corporate entrepreneurship setup; they are also testable in a research framework.

Keywords: Corporate entrepreneurship, Leadership, Generation z.

Introduction

There is a plethora of research contributions on the field of corporate entrepreneurship. When considered that the term is used interchangeably with other terms such as “intrapreneurship” or “corporate venturing”, the number keeps on growing. The fact that firms need to work with restricted resources is not a new phenomenon, but the intensity of the competition, the high speed of technological change and the shortening of product life cycles seem to be phenomena defining our age and challenging firms to remain in the game (Erdem, 2017). A way to remain in the game goes through continuing to be innovative, entrepreneurial, and shaping new market segments thereafter. Nevertheless, corporate entrepreneurship, defined as “the carrying out of innovations by existing privately owned firms (small or large)” (Granstrand & Alänge, 1995: 136), is still far away from being a clearly defined concept with its antecedents, consequences and theoretical assumptions. As recently pointed out by Popowska (2020), both the domain and the definition of corporate entrepreneurship keep on changing, and this poses a challenge both to the researchers and the practitioners alike. Recent research points out to four different strategic advantages of corporate entrepreneurship for organizations (Şahin & Şeşen, 2021): Opportunity recognition, organizational transformation, increasing operational capacity, and challenging uncertainty and change. Focusing on these four strategic advantages, Şahin & Şeşen (2021) deliver empirical evidence in support of the process innovation-corporate entrepreneurship link, and point out to the role of corporate entrepreneurship in creating innovations in a turbulent environment.

The evolution of the corporate entrepreneurship concept cannot be thought independently from the economic evolution that is posing new fields of competitive battleground, new challenges, and new opportunities to shape markets (Erkut, 2021). Since successfully managing these challenges of the economic evolution goes through seizing new market opportunities, an important role is played by humans who seize new market opportunities to transform these into artifacts with a commercial value (Erkut, 2016). As recently pointed out by Singh Ghura (2017), some groups are particularly challenging when it comes to utilize their ideas for corporate entrepreneurship. One such group is generation Z. Generation Z, in Singh Ghura's (2017) framework, is the group of people born after 1990. Flippin (2017) defines generation Z as those born after 1995. In both frameworks, generation Z is referred to as the following generation to generations X and Y (latter referred to as millenials). Whereas Erdem & Karadal (2020) identify that for generations X and Y, corporate entrepreneurship seems to be a tool for organizational innovation, Singh Ghura (2017) finds out that for generation Z, engaging in corporate entrepreneurship requires more attention, effort and out-of-box ideas. This is because corporate leaders have a hard time to manage generation Z co-workers. The author focuses on Indian corporate leaders who have difficulties



to work with generation Z intrapreneurs and finds out that this generation of corporate entrepreneur's value passion, flexibility, autonomy and trust more than monetary incentives. Another recent approach by Verma & Mehta (2020) poses the question of how different leadership styles influence corporate entrepreneurship, and by conducting a critical review of the literature, the authors identify that the impact of different leadership styles on corporate entrepreneurship remains unanswered in the literature.

Based on this background, the current study poses the question of what kind of leadership paradigm generation Zers require for promoting corporate entrepreneurship. In particular, the current study aims to focus on different leadership styles, their assumptions, and how these styles may influence the antecedents and outcomes of corporate entrepreneurial activities. Even though recent research started to view generation Zers as future leaders (Gabriellova & Buchko, 2021), it did not yet consider their needs for leadership in a corporate entrepreneurship setup, indicating a research gap. This study aims to make an initial step towards closing this research gap, and the rest of the article is organized as follows: Part 1 deals with basic concepts of leadership, leadership styles and corporate entrepreneurship. Part 2 focuses on generation Z and corporate entrepreneurship by focusing on empirical evidence regarding generation Z's perspective of work and leadership. This part provides 4 logical propositions on the leadership paradigm of generation Z corporate entrepreneurs. A conclusion follows, with directions for future research, theoretical and practical implications, and possible limitations of this study.

1. Leadership and Corporate Entrepreneurship

Leadership is a phenomenon that has attracted the attention of business scholars, psychology scholars and practitioners alike since more than hundred years. It is not an unknown issue that leadership can be recognized in practice, but when it comes to defining it, things get more difficult (Antonakis & Day, 2017). This observation implies that depending on what kind of leadership is observed, a different definition emerges almost every time. To be more specific, some broad perspectives of leadership need to be defined. According to Antonakis & Day (2017), the most common features that define leadership include (1) the leader's personality, (2) the leader's behavior, (3) the leader's effect, (4) the interaction between the leader and the follower or the followers, and (5) the context in which leadership occurs. To briefly summarize, leadership is about an influence process and how this influence process is shaped by a leader, with his characteristics, features, behavior, perceptions and so on.

The fact that leadership is observed as a process (not a static, but rather a dynamic phenomenon) which involves the subjective perspective of a leader indicates that there is a high degree of subjectivity in its nature. This subjectivity is reflected in a



long discussion about different styles of leadership, going back to the seminal work of McGregor (2006). In his book, McGregor (2006) poses the question of how managers perceive human nature – whether they believe that human beings enjoy work or not. This is a central question that should guide managers regarding their assumptions about human nature and motivations, and how these assumptions influence their management style. McGregor (2006) introduces two theories: Theory X and Theory Y. Theory X is associated with direction and control of human beings at the workplace, whereas Theory Y is associated with combining organizational and personal goals at the workplace. Ouchi (1981) extends the debate by introducing a third theory called Theory Z, which mainly emphasizes the work-life balance and is derived from the collectivistic working practices of Japanese firms. The assumptions of these three theories are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Assumptions of Theories X and Y according to McGregor (2006) and Theory Z according to Ouchi (1981).

| Concept | Theory X | Theory Y | Theory Z |
|--------------------------|--|---|--|
| Worker-work relationship | The average human being dislikes work. | Work is as natural as play. | Work makes fun when connected with coworkers. |
| Managing workers | Workers need to be controlled, directed and punished in order to achieve organizational goals. | Self-direction and self-control can lead to achieving organizational goals. | Workers need to be supported by the firm; work-life balance in the foreground. |
| Workers' Preference | Control over responsibility. | Responsibility over control. | Responsibility matched by support. |

Source: Own illustration based on McGregor (2006) and Ouchi (1981).

Table 1 reflects that managing people at work is based on assumptions regarding the nature of work, regarding how to manage people and especially what management believes is the preference of people at work. This is a highly subjective issue that is open to debate, and indicates that when performing leadership, leaders bring their own styles into play (Khan et al., 2015). Khan et al. (2015) distinguish between autocratic/authoritarian, democratic, laissez-faire, bureaucratic and situational styles of leadership. According to the authors, an autocratic/authoritarian leader is distinguished by holding as much power as possible in his own hand, without consulting workers or giving them any

responsibility. A democratic leader, on the other hand, involves workers to take place in the decision-making processes in which the leader still maintains his position to say the last word. A laissez-faire leader gives the workers big freedoms but no clear direction. Workers need to decide on goals, and they are the ones who need to make decisions. Finally, a bureaucratic leader is the one who manages everything according to written rules and is described more of a police officer than of a leader. Since situational leadership depends on the situation, it can go back to any of the aforementioned styles. A leader can act democratic in one situation, authoritarian in another and so on. Table 2 shows an overview of authoritarian, democratic, laissez-faire, bureaucratic and situational leadership styles and how they are related to theories X, Y and Z.

Table 2. Leadership Styles and Their Relations to Theories X, Y and Z.

| Leadership Style | Worker-work relationship | Managing workers | Workers' preference | Overall Closeness to... |
|------------------|---|---|---|-------------------------|
| Authoritarian | Workers can avoid work when not controlled . | Workers need a leader who control them. | Workers need clear directions, control, punishment and rewards. | Theory X |
| Democratic | Workers can enjoy work as long as the suitable conditions are provided. | Workers do not need a top-down leader who controls them, but rather a leader who works with them. | Workers need responsibility, communication, a team feeling. | Theory Y |
| Laissez-faire | Workers can choose to enjoy or avoid work. | Workers do not need management, but freedom. | Workers do not need any guidance, control, or punishment. | None |
| Bureaucratic | Workers cannot avoid work because | Workers need to be managed | Workers signed a contract; their preference is the | Theory X |

| | | | | |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|---|---|-------------------------|
| | rules do not allow them to do so. | according to their contracts and the written rules. | realization of all obligations in the contract. | |
| Situational | Work can be enjoyable or not | As long as they behave well, no need to intervene | Depending on the situation, workers may need control or responsibility. | Either Theory X, Y or Z |

Source: Own illustration.

Table 2 highlights the closeness of the bureaucratic and authoritarian leadership styles to theory X, and the closeness of the democratic leadership style to theory Y. The situational leadership style can be close to any one of the theories X, Y or Z; and the laissez-faire leadership style is close to none of the aforementioned theories, because it is practically the case of non-leadership. Furthermore, what can be seen from Table 2 is that different assumptions about human nature, human behavior and worker-work relations lead to the formation, and application of different leadership styles. One should keep in mind that Table 2 reflects the ideal-typical cases of each of the leadership styles and a real-world application may not be restricted to easily distinguishable ideal-typical cases of leaders. Regardless of an ideal-typical or a mixed one, leadership styles have implications for entrepreneurship. To be more specific, there is a linkage between the two concepts at the level of individuals and teams (Cogliser & Brigham, 2004) for the context of corporate entrepreneurship.

In the literature, corporate entrepreneurship emerged as a tool for corporate renewal, gaining and retaining new competitive positions, shaping new markets and corporate survival (Erkut, 2021; Şahin & Şeşen, 2021). Corporate entrepreneurship, from the perspective of Covin & Miles (1999), involves (1) an established firm starting a new business, (2) workers of an established firm initiating new product development, or (3) a complete change in the organizational culture resulted from an entrepreneurial philosophy. In all three cases, leadership is an important determinant for success. Karol (2015) emphasizes this relationship, assigning a central role to entrepreneurial leaders in a corporate entrepreneurship setup. According to the author, the main role of the entrepreneurial leader is to align the plans, resources and projects of the firm with its corporate vision, to obtain resources required to realize plans and projects, to create an environment in which new ideas can emerge, and to establish trust. The author says that entrepreneurial leadership capacities are necessary for any established firm, because this is associated with their survival in the competition. An important

component of entrepreneurial leadership capacities is to be able to work in a highly competitive, uncertain environment, also by enabling relevant decisions to be taken on time.

Kuratko (2017) discusses the relationship between corporate entrepreneurship and leadership. According to the author, the current challenge for the leadership is “about promoting a new vision, fostering new possibilities, opening up new horizons, and inspiring others to unleash their entrepreneurial mindsets to create new venture concepts” (Kuratko, 2017, p. 295). An important issue the author mentions is that the entrepreneurial leader's perception is the starting point for corporate entrepreneurial activities: The entrepreneurial leader evaluates the firm's internal conditions, climate and resources for their entrepreneurial character. The result of this evaluation gives an idea of how supportive the firm's present state is for corporate entrepreneurial activities. In this sense, Kuratko (2017) follows the perspective of Erkut (2016) by indicating that perceptions should be at the starting point of the decision-making process in an economic model. The approach by Şekerdil & Güneş (2020) provides empirical evidence that leadership can provide grounds for the emergence of corporate entrepreneurship. Similarly, Farrukh, Meng, & Raza (2021) delivers empirical evidence on leader-follower exchange and how this exchange process, together with expectations, can lead to a positive impact on the employees' corporate entrepreneurial behavior.

The approach by Pan, Verbeke, & Yuan (2021) focuses on the link between transformational leadership and corporate entrepreneurial activities. The authors highlight that an organization's chief executive officer is typically considered as the leader who has a transformative role on the corporate entrepreneurial activities of the firm, but how this process is mediated is not clear. They identify that organizational ambidexterity, together with structural differentiation, top management team collectivism, and environmental dynamism is responsible for mediating this effect.

Kuratko (2017) identifies three challenges that should define the link between leadership and corporate entrepreneurship in today's world. These are (1) the decision regarding the type of innovation the firm is aiming to realize, (2) the decision regarding how operational control mechanisms can be used together with an entrepreneurial strategy, and (3) the necessary interaction with the employees on the entrepreneurial process, on how they can be useful for it, and what is the ultimate goal. Whereas Erkut (2021) as well as Şahin & Şeşen (2021) focus on the first challenge, namely, to reconcile product and process innovations with corporate entrepreneurship respectively, in the following, the second and third challenges would be highlighted for the specific group of generation Z workers.

2. Corporate Entrepreneurship and Generation Z

2.1. Generation Z's Perspectives

Corporate entrepreneurship has proved itself to be useful for firms, especially when they try to adopt themselves to the changing conditions of their external environment – market conditions and technology conditions in particular (Erdem, 2017). In order for a firm to catch the speed of technological evolution and market evolution, new ideas are needed which can be transformed into artifacts with a commercial value (Erkut, 2020). This process cannot be thought independently of those who can find the ideas, and those who can transform these ideas into artifacts. Hence, the human component plays a very central role in seizing new market opportunities, and shaping new markets (Erkut, 2016). A lot has been written on the human component, especially on how to create the conditions for employees' entrepreneurial behavior (Hornsby, Kuratko, & Zahra, 2002; Kuratko, Hornsby, & Covin, 2014), yet not much has been emphasized in the literature on the inter-generational work environment and its implications for corporate entrepreneurship (Palalar Alkan, 2020).

The issue that is challenging for understanding the human component in corporate entrepreneurship is the heterogeneity of generations involved in the workforce. As stated in the introductory part of this research, the time for generation Z has come to enter the workforce and shape the markets of tomorrow. As a result of this inevitable phenomenon, scholar community got interested in generation Z's leadership perceptions in the last decade. Starting with the personal characteristics of generation Z regarding work-related issues, a study that received attention was that of Flippin (2017). According to Flippin (2017), the top 6 personal values of generation Z are, according to the ranking of their importance, (1) happiness, (2) relationships, (3) health, (4) financial security, (5) career, and (6) faith. Ranked by their importance, the top 6 professional values of generation Z are (1) doing well in role, (2) making more money, (3) work-life balance, (4) promotion, (5) changing career, and (6) retirement.

The results of the survey conducted by Flippin (2017) reveal that generation Z requires very clear directions but also freedom to take initiative and opportunities to utilize their full potential – these are their requirements from their bosses. There are certain characteristics of generation Z, which makes this generation a different one from the previous generations. The study by Gentina (2020) identifies generation Zers as digital natives (in comparison, generations X and Y are digital immigrants), and by managing separate identities online and offline, a generation with multiple identities. These two features, in comparison with previous generations, identify that conditions and interactions with the digital sphere is different for generation Zers than the previous generations. Dolunay, Kasap, & Kambur (2021) indicate that generation Zers have a hard time trying to focus;



especially with the ease of digital technologies enabling high frequency interactions, they tend to reach conclusions in a very short time. Meyer-Ramien (2019) considers generation Zers as especially sensitive to internet and social media, also by having a different consumption perspective than previous generations. Schroth (2019) focuses on the expectations of generation Z and indicates, based on the results of a survey conducted with undergraduate students, that generation Z has a very idealistic image that “the work will be interesting and meaningful” (p. 7) and can be quickly disillusioned when they notice that the conditions do not meet their expectations. The author advises to focus on managing the expectations of generation Z workers.

Regarding their career choices and values, Titko, Svirina, Skvarciany, & Shina (2020) find out that generation Z values personal development at the start of their careers, but they believe that once they make progress in their careers (with a lag of 5 years), they will value professional development more than personal development. A recent contribution by Altan (2019) focuses on the intrapreneurial and innovative perspectives of generations X and Y, identifying more innovative perspectives in case of generation X in comparison to generation Y. Nevertheless, generation Z differs from generations X and Y significantly. Mahmoud, Fuxman, Mohr, Reisel, & Grigoriou (2020) conduct a comparative study on the workplace motivations of generations X, Y, and Z and identify that generation Z is more sensitive to amotivation (defined as the absence of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations) than generations Y and X. In addition, generation Z's workplace motivation is influenced by intrinsic motivation more than the workplace motivations of generations Y and X. The authors conclude that generation Z is not a mere reincarnation of generations Y and X. Regarding their entrepreneurial intentions, Mahmood, Lateef, & Paracha (2020) focus on a sample of Pakistani youth from generation Z, whereas Kaya, Erkut, & Thierbach (2019) focus on samples of East German and Cyprus Turkish youngsters from generation Z; both set of authors find out that generation Z has a strong entrepreneurial intention. Kaya, Erkut, & Thierbach (2019) indicate that generation Z is very sensitive to social problems. Mahmood, Lateef, & Paracha (2020) highlight that social pressures cannot be considered as a significant factor contributing to the entrepreneurial intentions of generation Z. Meyer-Ramien (2019) considers generation Z as the digital generation as a source of new ideas for corporate entrepreneurial activities and practices.

Recently, scholars started to give their attention to the leadership-generation Z nexus. Bako (2018) asks how leadership style choices differs across four generations (baby boomers, generation X, generation Y, generation Z) of academics in Turkey. The author conducts a statistical analysis based on a conducted survey with 256 participants and identifies that generation Z describes risk-taking, self-sacrificing and being convincing as leader properties, whereas generation X does

not find these properties as meaningful. She concludes that generation Z values these properties more than generation X because the former is more individualistic and career-oriented. Similarly, Palalar Alkan (2020) asks the question of who would be the leader for generation Z based on semi-structured interviews with 56 students from a leadership class. The results of the interviews reveal that the property of a leader that was most often named is ethical values, followed by being a visionary and being inspirational. The author concludes that generation Z has a different perspective on leadership than previous generations. Singh Ghura's (2017) study, which was mentioned earlier, deserves more attention at this point. The author's point of departure is the proposition that generation Z is best suited to become corporate entrepreneurs due to the unique properties this generation possesses. He conducts semi-structured interviews with leaders on the difficulties of working together with generation Z to find out that challenges are mainly associated with retention, anti-hierarchic attitudes, and providing good quality work. The author concludes that organizational structures need to be adopted for overcoming these challenges, since generation Z requires a different attitude than previous generations.

To the knowledge of the author, no study exists which questions what kind of leader generation Z corporate entrepreneurs require. Therefore, as a first step, recent empirical findings need to be summarized and compared with known leadership styles to generate an interpretative framework for action, testing and further research. This is a gap in the literature, because the studies mentioned above imply that a new approach is needed to work together with generation Z. In what follows, specific logical propositions about leadership, corporate entrepreneurship and generation Z are derived from the research findings, following the ideas found in Erkut (2021).

2.2. Towards the Leadership Paradigm in the Corporate Entrepreneurship – Generation Z Setup

The focus on generation Z and their role in corporate entrepreneurship with a support of leadership can be summarized in 4 logical propositions. The first proposition in this case is one that serves as the point of departure. Together with the following propositions, they open the space for testing and further research.

Proposition 1: Generation Zers differ from their predecessor generations in terms of motivations, aspirations and vision for corporate entrepreneurial activity.

As it has been empirically shown in previous literature, generation Z is different than its predecessors in many aspects (Bako, 2018; Mahmoud, Fuxman, Mohr, Reisel, & Grigoriou, 2020). Especially in the case of corporate entrepreneurship, organizations cannot continue with the same organizational structures, leadership styles, and entrepreneurial conditions that used to be present for previous generations for generation Z. Therefore, one needs to distinguish between



leadership support for corporate entrepreneurial activities of generations X and Y and that for the same activities of generation Z. Previous literature shows that established firms already started to engage generation Z corporate entrepreneurs in their firms; however, they do not know how to deal with this particular group (Singh Ghura, 2017). Therefore:

Proposition 2: Generation Zers require a different leadership approach for corporate entrepreneurship than previous generations.

Based on the first two propositions, it can be identified that a new leadership approach for corporate entrepreneurship is needed when corporate entrepreneurs are from generation Z, because this generation is different than previous generations. This is very general, and needs to be specified, especially, how this generation is different, and what kind of leadership style is closer to this generation. Table 3 focuses on the three components of the assumptions of McGregor (2006) and aims to assign results of recent empirical studies to these three components.

Table 3. Generation Z and Its Work-Related Perspectives.

| Worker-work relationship | Managing workers | Workers' preference |
|---|--|---|
| Personal development (Titko, Svirina, Skvarciany, & Shina) | No hierarchies (Singh Ghura, 2017) | Clear directions but also freedom and encouragement (Flippin, 2017) |
| Intrinsic motivation (Mahmoud, Fuxman, Mohr, Reisel, & Grigoriou, 2020) | Value-oriented and inspirational (Palalar Alkan, 2020) | Not sensitive to social pressure (Mahmoud, Lateef, & Paracha, 2020) |
| Solving social problems through work (Kaya, Erkut, & Thierbach, 2019) | Convincing (Bako, 2018) | Reluctant to amotivation (Mahmoud, Fuxman, Mohr, Reisel, & Grigoriou, 2020) |
| Interesting and meaningful (Schroth, 2019) | Valuing their ideas (Schroth, 2019) | Positive attitude (Schroth, 2019) |

Source: Own illustration.

Based on Table 3, it can be identified that generation Z's perspective on managing workers goes through values over hierarchies, and this generation idealizes work by giving it special meanings, especially when it comes to social problems and solving these. The preferences of generation Z reflect a combination of freedom to

seek new directions and new ideas, but also clear directions and positive attitude. Therefore:

Proposition 3: Generation Zers expect a balanced leadership based on managing expectations by clear directions and giving the freedom to generate new ideas.

According to Karol (2015), there are certain skills required for the entrepreneurial leader to proceed with enabling the conditions of corporate entrepreneurial activities. He summarizes these set of skills by means of (1) perspective taking and influence, and (2) remaining agile. Accordingly, perspective taking, and influence is about communication and people skills of the entrepreneurial leader. He or she needs to take the perspective of all stakeholders, including top management, workers, customers, suppliers and so on. By observing phenomena from different perspectives, problem-solving capabilities will be influenced in a positive way. Remaining agile, on the other hand is about convincing the top management for the need for change. This is important, as many truly innovative ideas could not pass the top management test and left big firms for the sake of being embodied in a start-up (Erkut, 2021). Both factors considered together requires a good balance between stakeholders of the corporate entrepreneurship process. Therefore:

Proposition 4: Generation Zers need an entrepreneurial leader who understands their perspective, values their opinion and encourages them.

Conclusion and Further Research

411

Corporate entrepreneurship can yield useful results for the firms utilizing it. A very central role in this process is the role played by corporate entrepreneurs, i.e. human beings, employees who find new ideas which can turn into new artifacts. Linkages are established between corporate entrepreneurs and corporate entrepreneurial success through leadership (Cogliser & Brigham, 2004). The current situation considering the workforce indicates that generation Z is entering the workforce, and is about to determine the course of events in corporate life. With a dynamic, value-oriented, humane look, generation Z can bring fresh air to big, bureaucratic corporations that are quickly losing their innovative character. Hence, this research shows how corporate entrepreneurship can be addressed towards generation Z employees, and how aspirations, intentions and perspectives of generation Z employees can be addressed by different leadership styles. The proposed perspective observes leadership as something wider than human resources management, or corporate governance. Leadership supporting generation Z employees would be a useful mechanism to provide grounds for corporate entrepreneurial activities, regardless of whether we consider these as “corporate venturing” or “intrapreneurship”. Supporting generation Z employees towards this target goes through understanding under which conditions they can be creative and pursue new ideas.



The research has the following theoretical and practical contributions. On the theoretical level, the current study poses a challenge to the corporate entrepreneurship-leadership nexus by emphasizing its contingent character with respect to the generation of employees. Generation Z is unique in its own way, and how top management can utilize this generation's aspirations, motivations, perspectives and new ideas by means of corporate entrepreneurship needs a reconsideration of leadership paradigms, which is done by this study. On the practical level, the study contributes to the implementation of corporate entrepreneurship practices by means of four testable propositions, which can assist corporate entrepreneurship programs and can provide grounds for developing a new leadership paradigm in this setup. This is a necessity for top management, since failing to identify the new leadership paradigm need of generation Z may need to conflict as well as low employee engagement (Mahmoud, Fuxman, Mohr, Reisel, & Grigoriou, 2020). As this research provided a conceptual proposition, more research is needed at all levels to understand the process of generation Z's corporate entrepreneurial activities involving (an active or a passive) leadership. Therefore, a possible limitation of this study is its conceptual nature, and the fact that it relies on empirical evidence around generation Z that is gathered from different contexts, with different questions. However, this also reflects the need for a more organized perspective on generation Z. Currently, generation Z drives attention of scholars, but empirical evidence about their aspirations, perspectives, and motivations is either very general, mixed or – when it comes to corporate entrepreneurship – very few. Evidently, different styles of leadership have different implications for corporate entrepreneurship – and placing generation Z employees in this picture indicates a more complex scenario. As recent empirical evidence shows, generation Z is not a mere “reincarnation” of generations X or Y (or both), but a different generation with different motivations and perspectives. This is not merely associated with their personal attitudes, but also professional attitudes which determines their behavior at work. Different motivations of generation Z means a paradigm shift for corporate leadership aiming corporate entrepreneurial success: Using the same old leadership styles with which generations X and Y were satisfied, and could be active in terms of corporate entrepreneurship, does not guarantee a success when it comes to generation Z. Future research can shed light on this complex scenario. Practitioners of corporate entrepreneurship would be advised to focus on the implications of their leadership styles on generation Z employees, as this group of employees is associated with a new perspective on career and life goals. A lot has been written in the past about the support environment towards achieving corporate entrepreneurial success. Therefore, the question that practitioners should answer is not about whether a supportive environment is necessary, but what kind of support environment is most useful and efficient when targeting generation Z employees. Indeed, it is subject to further research whether generation Z needs a leader, or not – but even the case of non-



leadership (“laissez-faire”) requires a specific leadership style to be implemented. Hence, by introducing generation Z employees into the picture, new avenues of research are opened that would influence the next decade of corporate entrepreneurship.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank two anonymous referees for their valuable comments on a preliminary version of this work.

References

- Altan, S. (2019). İnovasyon ve Girişimcilik Arasındaki İlişkide Kişiliğin Aracılık Etkisinin X ve Y Kuşağına Göre İncelenmesi. *Mecmua*, 4(7), 82-105. <https://dx.doi.org/10.32579/mecmua.531751>
- Antonakis, J., & Day, D. (2017). Leadership: past, present, future. In *The Nature of Leadership* (3rd ed., pp. 3-28). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Bako, M. (2018). Different Leadership Style Choices, Different Generations. *Prizren Social Science Journal*, 2(2), 127-143.
- Cogliser, C. C., & Brigham, K. H. (2004). The Intersection of Leadership and Entrepreneurship. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 15(6), 771-799. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2004.09.004>
- Covin, J. G., & Miles, M. P. (1999). Corporate Entrepreneurship and the Pursuit of Competitive Advantage. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 23(3), 47-63. <https://doi.org/10.1177/104225879902300304>
- Dolunay, A., Kasap, F., & Kambur, H. (2021). The Effect, Importance and Functions of Music in Cinema. *Genero e Interdisciplinaridade*, 2(1), 449-485.
- Erdem, A. T. (2017). Kurumsal Girişimcilik Üzerine Yapılan Çalışmaların İçerik Analizi Yöntemiyle İncelenmesi. *EUropean Journal of Managerial Research (EUJMR)*, 1, 1-8.
- Erdem, A. T., & Karadal, H. (2020). Kurumsallaşma, Kurumsal Girişimcilik ve Örgütsel Yenilikçilik İlişkilerinin X ve Y Kuşakları Açısından Analizi: Aile İşletmelerinde Bir Araştırma. *Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 20(2), 413-437. <https://doi.org/10.11616/basbed.vi.687348>
- Erkut, B. (2016). Product Innovation and Market Shaping: Bridging the Gap with

- Cognitive Evolutionary Economics. *Indraprastha Journal of Management*, 4(2), 3-24.
- Erkut, B. (2020). Hayek on Product Innovation and Market Shaping: Opening the Black Box. *Liberal Düşünce Dergisi*, 25(100), 168-196. <https://doi.org/10.36484/liberal.757980>
- Erkut, B. (2021). *Reconciling Corporate Entrepreneurship and Product Innovation: An Evolutionary Economic Overview*. Anemon Muş Alparslan Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi, forthcoming.
- Farrukh, M., Meng, F., & Raza, A. (2021). Believe they can succeed, and they will: intrapreneurial behavior and leadership. *European Journal of Innovation Management*, forthcoming. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EJIM-10-2020-0393>
- Flippin, S. C. (2017). *Generation Z in the Workplace: Helping the Newest Generation in the Workforce Build Successful Working Relationships and Career Path*. Own publication of the author.
- Gabrielova, K., & Buchko, A. A. (2021). Here comes Generation Z: Millennials as Managers. *Business Horizons*, forthcoming. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2021.02.013>
- Gentina, E. (2020). Generation Z in Asia: A Research Agenda, Gentina, E. and Parry, E. (Ed.) *The New Generation Z in Asia: Dynamics, Differences, Digitalisation (The Changing Context of Managing People)*, Emerald Publishing Limited, pp. 3-19. <https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-80043-220-820201002>
- Granstrand, O., & Alänge, S. (1995). The evolution of corporate entrepreneurship in Swedish industry – Was Schumpeter wrong? *Journal of Evolutionary Economics*, 5(2), 133-156. <https://doi.org/10.1007/bf01199854>
- Hornsby, J. S., Kuratko, D. F., & Zahra, S. A. (2002). Middle managers' perception of the internal environment for corporate entrepreneurship: assessing a measurement scale. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 17(3), 253-273. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0883-9026\(00\)00059-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0883-9026(00)00059-8)
- Karol, R. A. (2015). Leadership in the Context of Corporate Entrepreneurship. *Journal of Leadership Studies*, 8(4), 30–34. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jls.21350>
- Kaya, T., Erkut, B., Thierbach, N. (2019). “Entrepreneurial Intentions of Business and Economics Students in Germany and Cyprus: A Cross-Cultural Comparison”, *Sustainability*, 11(5), <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11051437>
- Khan, M. S., Khan, I., Qureshi, Q. A., Ismail, H. M., Rauf, H., Latif, A., & Tahir, M. (2015). The Styles of Leadership: A Critical Review. *Public Policy and*



Administration Research, 5(3), 87-92

- Kuratko, D. F., Hornsby, J. S., & Covin, J. G. (2014). Diagnosing a firm's internal environment for corporate entrepreneurship. *Business Horizons*, 57(1), 37-47. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2013.08.009>
- Kuratko, D. F. (2017). Corporate Entrepreneurship & Innovation: Today's Leadership Challenge. In G. Ahmetoglu, T. Chamorro-Premuzic, B. Klinger, & T. Karcisky (Eds.), *The Wiley Handbook of Entrepreneurship* (1st ed., pp. 295-311). Wiley-Blackwell.
- Mahmood, S., Lateef, A., & Paracha, A. T. (2020). Determining the Entrepreneurial Intentions of Youth/ Generation Z - A Study of Youth Intent Towards Entrepreneurship. *Global Management Journal for Academic & Corporate Studies*, 10(2), 137-152.
- Mahmoud, A. B., Fuxman, L., Mohr, I., Reisel, W. D., & Grigoriou, N. (2020). "We aren't your reincarnation!" workplace motivation across X, Y and Z generations. *International Journal of Manpower*, <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijm-09-2019-0448>
- McGregor, D. (2006). *The Human Side of Enterprise*, Annotated Edition (1st ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.
- Ouchi, W. (1981). *Theory Z: How American Business Can Meet The Japanese Challenge*. Basic Books.
- Meyer-Ramien A. (2019). Intrapreneurship, eine Strategie zur Markenrepositionierung am Beispiel des Yourfone-Launch im deutschen Mobilfunkmarkt. In: Kochhan C., Könecke T., Schunk H. (eds) *Marken und Start-ups*. Springer Gabler, Wiesbaden. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-24586-3_6
- Palalar Alkan, D. (2020). İşgücünün Değişen Yüzü Z Kuşağı ve Kuşağın Lider Algısı. *Business, Economics and Management Research Journal*, 3(2), 129-140.
- Pan, Y., Verbeke, A., & Yuan, W. (2021). CEO Transformational Leadership and Corporate Entrepreneurship in China. *Management and Organization Review*, <https://doi.org/10.1017/mor.2020.59>
- Popowska, M. (2020). Corporate Entrepreneurship: A Literature Review and Future Research Perspectives. *International Journal of Contemporary Management*, 19(1), 61-87. <https://doi.org/10.4467/24498939ijcm.20.003.12668>
- Schroth, H. (2019). Are You Ready for Gen Z in the Workplace? *California Management Review*, 61(3), 5-18.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0008125619841006>

- Şekerdil, R. & Güneş, E. (2020). The Effect of Leadership Styles and Organizational Culture on Internal Entrepreneurship Attitudes of Employees. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Management Inquiries*, 4(6), 64-82.
- Singh Ghura, A. (2017). A Qualitative Exploration of the Challenges Organizations Face while Working with Generation Z Intrapreneurs. *Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Emerging Economies*, 3(2), 105-114. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2393957517711306>
- Şahin, K., & Şeşen, H. (2021). Intrapreneurship and Process Innovation in the Banking Sector: The Mediating Role of Organizational Structure. *Revista Argentina de Clínica Psicológica*, XXX(1), 645-657. <https://doi.org/10.24205/03276716.2020.2060>
- Titko, J., Svirina, A., Skvarciany, V., & Shina, I. (2020). Values of Young Employees: Z-Generation Perception. *Business: Theory and Practice*, 21(1), 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.3846/btp.2020.11166>
- Verma, S., & Mehta, M. (2020). Effect of Leadership Styles on Corporate Entrepreneurship: A Critical Literature Review. *Organization Development Journal*, 38(2), 65-74.