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**The importance of motivation in HRM: A study  
of the connection between work motivation and  
productivity in an international working  
environment**

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**ABSTRACT:**

The importance of work motivation and productivity in working life is highly essential. Further, work motivation is acting as a base for achieving high results, commitment, and satisfaction at the workplace. Previous research proves that work motivation affects many different fields of working life such as productivity, satisfaction, and success. This research wants to examine the current situation in nowadays working life with young adults working in an international environment.

The study focuses on the importance of motivation in human resource management (HRM) and it is a study of the connection between work motivation and productivity in an international working environment amongst young adults. Thus, the literature review introduces the essential theories related to the topic which are human resource management, work motivation, work productivity and engagement, work satisfaction, and organizational behavior. The main theory used in this thesis is Maslow's hierarchy of needs. The research aims to get a deeper understanding of work motivation and what are the main causes affecting it amongst the target group. Further, it also aims to understand the effect of motivation on productivity. The qualitative research was conducted through in-depth face-to-face theme interviews with six different young adults. Interviews were transcribed and categorized into themes in order to analyze and understand the results.

The results proved that work motivation affects work productivity in many different ways. Motivation affects the work and individual's performance. It was found out from the research that the key factors for motivation are colleagues and the team at the workplace. Moreover, receiving feedback from the work and work environment makes an impact on work motivation as well. The results showed there are different factors affecting productivity at the workplace which are motivation, health and energy, shift rotation, colleagues, and work environment. In productivity health and energy and shift scheduling is in a bigger role than colleagues and environment. It can be found from the research that there are also cultural dimensions in these topics among the answers. As a result, from the research, it can be stated that motivation is also one of the key factors in performance and engagement in the workplace. Performance and engagement are also affected by colleagues, team, salary, position, stress, work environment, well-being, and time management. Again, colleagues and team are the key factors. It can be said from the research that motivation is a key factor in working life and affecting a lot on productivity, engagement, and performance at work. Motivation and well-being are the most important factors for success in the company and personnel.

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**KEYWORDS:** work productivity, productivity, human resource management, work satisfaction

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**TIIVISTELMÄ:**

Työmotivaation ja tuottavuuden merkitys työelämässä on äärimmäisen tärkeässä roolissa. Työmotivaatio toimii korkeiden tulosten, menestymisen ja työtyytyväisyyden perustana ja melkein pä edellytyksenä. Aiemmat tutkimukset osoittavat, että työmotivaatio vaikuttaa moniin eri työelämän osa-alueisiin, kuten tuottavuuteen, työtyytyväisyyteen ja menestykseen. Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoituksena on tarkastella nykyistä työelämän tilannetta kansainvälisessä ympäristössä työskentelevien nuorten aikuisten näkökulmasta.

Tutkimus keskittyy motivaation tärkeyteen henkilöstöhallinnossa ja tutkii työmotivaation ja tuottavuuden välistä yhteyttä kansainvälisessä työympäristössä nuorten aikuisten keskuudessa. Kirjallisuuskatsauksessa esitellään aiheeseen liittyviä olennaisia teorioita, jotka ovat henkilöstöjohtaminen, työmotivaatio, työn tuottavuus ja sitoutuminen, työtyytyväisyys ja organisaatiokäyttäytyminen. Tässä pro gradu – tutkielmassa käytetty pääteoria on Maslowin tarvehierakia. Tutkimuksen tavoitteena on syventää ymmärrystä työmotivaatiosta ja siitä, mitkä ovat tärkeimmät siihen vaikuttavat syyt kohderyhmän keskuudessa. Lisäksi, tavoitteena on ymmärtää motivaation vaikutus tuottavuuteen. Laadullinen tutkimus toteutettiin kasvatusten tehtävillä teema-haastatteluilla kuudelle eri nuorelle aikuiselle. Haastattelut litteroitiin ja kategorisoitiin teemoiksi tulosten analysoimiseksi ja ymmärtämiseksi.

Tulokset osoittivat, että työmotivaatio vaikuttaa työn tuottavuuteen monin eri tavoin. Motivaatio vaikuttaa työhön ja yksilön suoritukseen. Tutkimuksesta selvisi, että keskeisiä motivaatiotekijöitä ovat kollegat ja työtiimi. Lisäksi, palautteen saaminen työstä ja työympäristö vaikuttavat myös olennaisesti työmotivaatioon. Tulokset osoittivat, että työpaikan tuottavuuteen vaikuttavat erilaiset tekijät, joita ovat motivaatio, terveys ja energia, vuorotyö, työkaverit ja työympäristö. Tuottavuudessa terveys ja energia sekä vuorotyön vaikutus olivat isommassa roolissa kuin työkaverit ja työympäristö. Tutkimuksesta käy ilmi, että näissä aiheissa on myös kulttuurisia eroavaisuuksia. Tuloksena tutkimuksesta voidaan todeta, että motivaatio on myös yksi keskeisistä suorituskyvyn ja sitoutumisen tekijöistä työpaikalla. Suoritukseen ja sitoutumiseen vaikuttavat myös kollegat, tiimi, palkka, asema, stressi, työympäristö, hyvinvointi ja ajanhallinta. Jälleen, kollegat ja tiimi ovat avainvaikuttajia. Tutkimuksesta voidaan sanoa, että motivaatio on keskeinen tekijä työelämässä ja vaikuttaa paljon tuottavuuteen, sitoutumiseen ja työsuoritukseen. Motivaatio ja hyvinvointi ovat yrityksen ja henkilöstön menestymisen tärkeimpiä tekijöitä.

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**AVAINSANAT:** työmotivaatio, tehokkuus, henkilöstöhallinto, työtyytyväisyys

## Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	7
1.1	Background of the study	9
1.2	Research question	10
1.3	Research purpose and objectives	10
1.4	Delimitations of the study	11
1.5	Definition of key concepts	11
2	LITERATURE REVIEW	14
2.1	Human resource management	14
2.2	Work motivation	16
2.3	Maslow's hierarchy of needs	20
2.4	Work productivity and engagement	23
2.5	Work Satisfaction	25
2.6	Organizational behavior	28
2.7	Summary of the literature review	30
3	METHODOLOGY	33
3.1	Research method	33
3.2	Research approach and strategy	34
3.3	Data collection	35
3.4	Data analysis	37
4	FINDINGS	39
4.1	Interview results	39
4.2	Discussion	47
4.3	Summary of the findings	52
5	CONCLUSION	55
5.1	Limitations	57
5.2	Practical implications	58
5.3	Future research suggestions	59

References	60
Appendices	66
Appendix 1. Theme interview questions	66

**Figures**

<b>Figure 1.</b> Maslow's hierarchy of needs.	20
<b>Figure 2.</b> Theme interview.	35

**Tables**

<b>Table 1.</b> Maslow's hierarchy of needs summary.	21
<b>Table 2.</b> Participants to the research.	37

# 1 INTRODUCTION

This thesis is about human resource management, work motivation and productivity. As human resources and well-being and motivation in the workplace is highly important in order to achieve effective results, good environment and happy workers the author investigates the connection between work motivation and productivity in an international working environment amongst young adults, also known as Generation Z. Working life in general consist of different factors that affects highly to work motivation and to productivity. Motivated workers are the ones who bring usually most value to the company since they are actually engaged to work, they are doing (Kanfer et al., 2017, p. 338). Therefore, it is highly important to investigate what are the factors behind the motivation and how motivation can be seen in results and in work satisfaction.

This research about work motivation and its affection to productivity is highly essential research topic because work motivation is a crucial factor to the success of organizations. It also affects to the well-being of individuals. (Kanfer et al., 2017, p. 338) It is researched that people belonging to the same generations have similarities in features affecting to the work motivation. Different generations might have different behavior, attitude and motivation. Employers might have difficulties to understand today's generations and what are their needs and it is argued that it is the cornerstone of personnel management is to understand the differences between different generations in order to reduce low engagement, conflicts and poor management in the company. (Mahmoud et al., 2021, p. 194)

Employers should embrace the Generation Z in the work life and understand their power. While the past generations and their work behavior has been researched a lot, there is not enough research done on the factors affecting work behavior of Gen Z employees. (Aggarwal et al., 2022, p. 1) Therefore, it is highly important to take a deeper look into younger generation as it is the future group of working life. This generation is not yet highly reseached and investigated since Gen Z has been entering the working life in the

next few years. Therefore, this research will bring a new perspective from Generation Z to work motivation and how it is reflected in work productivity.

International working environment is also taken into consideration since author herself is working as a manager in an international retail company. Thus, the goal is to find out how does the work motivation amongst young adults affect to the results of the productivity at the workplaces. Moreover, author investigates also does the international environment have some impact to this chosen issue.

This thesis starts with the theoretical part including human resources management, work motivation, work satisfaction and organizational behavior as a concept. In addition, the main theory in this thesis is Maslow's need hierarchy which focuses on the motivation. Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory is chosen to this research since it is one of the most well-known theories when considering work motivation, productivity and organizational behavior which are the key topics of this thesis (Smith et al., 2012, p. 62). The author believes that this theory supports the topic strongly and helps to analyze the results since it is a theory focusing on the psychology of human motivation. Moreover, self-determination theory is introduced in this thesis since it is an essential part of work motivation and work satisfaction. Self-determination theory is chosen to support this research since it is key theory for work motivation as well but giving different kind of perspective than Maslow's hierarchy of needs. It is one of the major theories of human motivation and is based on psychological needs, motivation, and well-being. (Gagne 2014, p.2-3)

The empirical part is conducted with in-depth interviews. Interview target will be young adults working in international companies and questions about their work motivation and its affect to productivity. The results will be precise and accurate with face-to-face interviews amongst these candidates. This thesis is based on qualitative research and focuses on primary data.

When the data is collected and analyzed there can be made conclusions about this topic and motivation's affection to productivity in an international working environment.

### **1.1 Background of the study**

Human resources management includes responsibility for the personnel needs and actions. In addition, the main goal is to retain and attract qualified employees to the company. At the same time, it is important to make sure that the legal requirements of the organization's operations are correct and that the employees would stay in the organization. (Bogardus & Bogardus 2004, p. 2)

Balancing working life with the physical, mental, and divine aspects is highly important as they all collaborate and influence each other. If a person is constantly feeling overwhelmed it will most likely also reflect on the overall well-being. (Mordue, p.13-14) The balance between work and private life is quite new and therefore also affects motivation and performance at work. Organizations are focusing nowadays on work satisfaction and collecting data about their personnel but might not necessarily react to these results. Human resource-analytics are forgotten even though digitalization ensures more and more precise data about personnel and processes. If leaders can lead better, motivation and engagement can be also achieved. (Saramies & Törnroos 2021, p. 22)

Industrial-organizational psychologists have studied motivation and satisfaction in working life for about five decades, but the progress in emphasizing has been slow. It has turned out that work motivation and satisfaction are relatively independent features. Some theories have focused only on limited aspects such as justice or management motives. Moreover, the phenomena themselves are complex, and therefore extensive research has been done an obligation to understand them regardless of attempts to connect them. (Kleinbeck et al., 1990, p. 3-4)

## 1.2 Research question

The research question is in this thesis are:

- **How does work motivation affect to the productivity amongst young adults (Gen Z) in international working environment?**
- **Are there any factors that are affecting the most to the motivation?**
- **Can high motivation be seen in work results and productivity?**

## 1.3 Research purpose and objectives

The research purpose of this thesis is to investigate human resource management in the light of work motivation and its affection on productivity. The study is limited to the young adults working in the international working environment, also called Gen Z. Gen Z refers to the young generation born in 1995-2010, in the digital era (Linuwih & Handayani 2020, 1151). The purpose is to find out how much motivation really affects and how can we see it in productivity in the workplace nowadays. It is interesting to find out overall the motivation to work among young adults and are there some differences between different people since we are investigating international working environment which means that there are people from different countries and cultures. This thesis also examines how high motivation can be actually seen in work results or vice versa low motivation.

As said in the previous chapter, Industrial-organizational psychologists have studied motivation and satisfaction in the working life for about five decades, but the progress in understanding these phenomena has been slow. (Kleinbeck et al., 1990, p. 3-4) The balance between work and private life is quite new concept and it has not been studied yet that much (Mordue, p.13-14). Therefore, the author wants to find out today's working life situation focusing to Gen Z, young adults.

Nowadays there are many ways to collect human resource-analytics to get more insights about work well-being and motivation, but the problem is that there might be no action plans for these results and usually leaders are a key factor in this thing. (Saramies & Törnroos 2021, p. 22) Thus, the researcher wants to analyze the work motivation and productivity among young adults and among young leaders in international companies, to get insight from both sides. The researcher contributes then analyze these results and find conclusions and reasons behind work motivation.

The objectives of this thesis are to find out the connection and how it could be improved. In addition, the objective is to understand the human resources processes and management and its affection on work motivation in an international working environment. The outcome of this thesis is to understand this connection between work motivation and productivity amongst young adults and the differences in the international environment in order to improve it and find the reasons behind it.

#### **1.4 Delimitations of the study**

Delimitations in this thesis are first of all the topic area is concentrating on human resources and mostly on human resource management and processes. The topic is limited to concentrate on certain parts of human resources which are work motivation and productivity. The target group is limited to young adults (Gen Z) who are working in international companies which have different nationalities.

#### **1.5 Definition of key concepts**

##### **Human resource management**

Human resource management is the structure and function of an organization which task is to retain, manage and maintain the individuals working in the organization. Human resource management is dealing with the recruitment, selection, employment, and exit of employees. Human resource management deals with searching for applicants,

interviewing, and hiring. It also deals with workplace well-being, motivation, and safety. There is a constant need to develop and build effective working relationships between the organization and the employees. (Bogardus & Bogardus 2004, p. 2)

### **Work motivation**

Work motivation is the ability of the organization and employees to keep themselves and the organization happy, satisfied, and motivated. A motivated workforce is important for success, and in order to succeed, organizations need motivated personnel. (Mathe et al., 2011, p.1-3) Motivation affects to the behavior of the individual and to its direction and continuity. Motivation is the extent to which an individual wants to engage in some behavior or activity and carry it out. (Viitala 2003, p. 150)

### **Work productivity**

Work productivity is a measurement how much one employee can produce or get results compared to the effort. It is a measurement how high are the work results compared to the labor and resources used in order to achieve those. (Hastari et al., 2021, p.426)

### **Work satisfaction**

Work satisfaction is a feeling where employee feels positive about the work and its features. Employee who is satisfied with their work is motivated and happy at the workplace. Work satisfaction can be caused from many different factors but usually people who are satisfied are getting enough independence, responsibilities, training, recognition including good management and salary. (Robbins & Judge, p. 66-68)

**Organizational Behavior**

Organizational behavior is a concept where behavior and interaction are investigated. It is about understanding people's different behavior in organizations and the reasons behind them. It helps companies to achieve a higher understanding and this way also a better work environment. (Pettinger 2000, p.1)

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Human resource management

Human resource management is the structure of an organization which main achievement is to retain, manage and maintain the employees. It deals with recruitment, selection, employment and exit of employees. Human resource management is also involved in recruitment processes including searching for applicants, interviewing and hiring. In addition, it also deals with workplace well-being, motivation, and safety. (Bogardus & Bogardus 2004, p.2) In the business management research field and in the literature human resource management is divided into three different main areas which are leadership, industrial relations, and human resource management. (Viitala 2003, p.12) Human resource management is described as a manner of planned human resource distributions and enterprises intended to organization for fulfilling its main targets. Human resource management consist of individuals, behaviors, decisions, and situations. (Wright & McMahan 2011, p.93)

Human resource characteristics has been developed from last decades. Intellectual capital, brain power or knowledge amongst people have become the most significant competitive factor of companies. Traditional personnel management has expanded in content, and it has become a central part of the strategic management of companies. What is interesting about the development is that, along with the intensifying competition, the business world has shown some signs of humanization. Discussions related to people have clearly increased in companies. (Viitala 2003, p. 3)

Personnel is an extremely important resource in every company. It depends on them how economically and profitably the company's operations can run (Viitala 2003, p.10). Personnel motivation must be considered since it is a powerful factor that drives the right way and affects personnel behavior (Leroy 2021, p. 240). Personnel as a resource is fragile and huge changes and variability can cause annoyance in the company. Employees' tasks and related skills can be easily transferred to new people, but nowadays this

is less and less the case. Thus, even a small group of employees moving away from their duties at the same time can mean serious problems, which also lead to a lack of customers' trust and financial losses. (Viitala 2003, p.10) This is why motivation is researched and it is stated that motivation at work encourages employees to give results and satisfaction to the work (Pancasila et al., 2020, p.387-388).

There is human resource personnel analytics created to understand better all human resource processes. Personnel analytics is synonymous with human resource metrics and is a highly developed method for analyzing and combining personnel data with other data sources. Personnel analytics is an analytics and decision-making process. Personnel analytics is also an evidence-based approach that enables better decisions about the company's personnel. It is an evidence- and information-based way of approaching decision-making and promoting management with human resource knowledge. (Saramies & Törnroos 2021, p. 30-32)

When analyzing human resources, work ability, and motivation one of the key elements are the development and training in the company. When employees are confident and feel that they are trained and are able to develop they will probably also be more motivated to the work. To achieve expertise and motivated employees there must be relevant and trained skills and knowledge for each employee. (Bowling et al., 2008, p- 137-138.) Another key factor related to this topic is performance at the workplace and performance management. Performance management means the performance at the workplace related to tasks, roles, support, motivation, and appraisal. It includes also improving performance, goals, and targets. There are also certain control mechanisms that will be evaluated from feedback and appraisals. (Bowling et al., 2008, p. 269-271) Human resource management practices and policies can as well have an impact on employee creativity. Communication is a highly essential factor to make teamwork and the improvement of harmony reduces conflicts in the workplace. (Chen et al., 2021, p.3812)

When searching for international talents for the company, human resource management policies could have a huge effect. The best results are gained when the candidates are strongly motivated with right attitude. Human resource management policies are as important as other fields. Human resource management in talent acquisition is defined as a collection of policies including commitment, flexibility, integration, and quality of working life. Training is one of the key factors if the company wants their employees to perform effectively and drive results. It is important to understand each employee's weaknesses and strengths. It is also researched that reward and compensation attract a lot of talents to the company and motivate them. (Child et al. 2001, p. 166-167) Training of employees is deeply connected to their performance and therefore also to productivity. Training is a key factor to performance at work. (Dessler 2013, p. 247)

When thinking about the international point of view, globalization has affected employees' motivation to go and work abroad and to be more international (Akkan et al., 2022, p. 118). International experiences are gained and wanted more and more and there are also increased opportunities for global mobility (Suutari et al., 2018, p. 38). People want to move abroad to grow and learn new skills. It will bring them higher value and they will learn about intercultural working environment. (Akkan et al., 2022, p. 118) Global mobility has evolved in recent years and many workers are either moving themselves for a shorter or longer period or locating abroad (Andresen et al., 2020, p. 699). It has been argued that the nature of careers has changed and organizations more and more value international working experience. These provide valuable learning that could have a positive impact on an employee's career. (Suutari et al., 2018, p. 37) International work can lead to higher demands on individuals' abilities and thus also affect motivation and work productivity (Jokinen et al., 2008, p. 983).

## **2.2 Work motivation**

Work motivation is the ability of the organization and employees to keep themselves and the organization happy and motivated. Usually, this involves enough possibilities to grow and express themselves, but clear policies. Motivated personnel are important and

people who care and are interested in their organization play a key role to its success. Motivation is a broad concept including different aspects and fields (Mathe et al., 2011, p.1-3) The definition of motivation is an entity of an individual's specific skills and motives in accordance with his or her goals. Motivation is all about achieving the individual goals to get a feeling of success and satisfaction. (Hastari et al., 2021, p. 428)

It is important to understand what promotes employee motivation because it contributes to organizational performance. People who care and are interested in their organization are the key to its ability to succeed. (Mathe et al., 2011, p.4) Motivation is the fuel for work activity and it directs to performance. Even in the same person, motivation varies in different situations and at different times. For some, the central source of motivation is their own internal need for performance, and external rewards are not very important and vice versa. (Viitala 2003, p. 150)

A significant part of the live of an individual is spent at work. Employee motivation strategies have long been of interest to organizational managers and researchers, as motivation has been duly recognized as an important factor in productivity. Factors related to the satisfaction of employee's basic psychological needs can be noticed within employees working environment, which have been taken into account as well. From the perspective of self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), although productivity is a critical dependent variable in such analyses, it is argued that employees' psychological health and well-being are also very important workplace outcomes. Self-determination theory is one of the major theories of human motivation. It studies intrinsic motivation which means that a human is an active person who goes towards his or her own goals. It is based on psychological needs, motivation, and well-being. (Gagne 2014, p.1-3) Empirical findings from self-determination theory show that the conditions which cherish, and support employee well-being are more beneficial to productivity, commitment, creativity, and other characteristics of highly effective employees (Gagne 2014, p. 13). According to the self-determination theory by Deci & Ryan 2000, employees also feel and perform better when they are motivated autonomously. Their work will feel interesting

and they feel valued and respected. (Jungert et al., 2018) Self-determination theory is chosen to this research since it will help to understand the human motivation and well-being. It aims to understand the intrinsic motivation and behavior while taking into account the psychology. It helps to understand this research since the work motivation and productivity are the key concepts dealt in the thesis and Self-determination theory specially focuses on explaining the human motivation and its characteristics.

Motivation is a process of satisfaction, which means that employees want to achieve certain needs at work. When employee manages to fulfill the goals constantly in a balanced manner, then job satisfaction will increase. (Pancasila et al., 2020, p, 340.) Previous studies have shown as well that when people experience the satisfaction of their basic psychological needs, they are more autonomously motivated, which means that they behave with a full sense of authority, desire, and alternative, which positively affects work motivation. Satisfying basic psychological needs promotes both types of autonomous motivation. Thus, the satisfaction of basic needs affects mental health and well-being, which in turn affects performance at work in a positive way. (Gagne 2014, p. 16) Self-determination theory is also related to internal and external motivation and psychological needs. Intrinsic motivation and psychological need are driven by pleasure and interest, the extrinsic motivation is more about engagement in a certain manner. (Jungert et al., 2018, p.6) Cultural differences and the international environment might affect motivation. Results from work motivation can for example vary a lot depending on social, work, cultural, or national values. Countries are varying a lot from each other since there are different work norms, codes, and behaviors. (Shkoler, 2020, p. 1-2) In addition, cultural dimensions by Hofstede are the most prominent examples. (Hofstede & Mintu, 1992, p. 361)

Well-being at work includes respecting, listening, and appreciating the individual. This happens through corporate culture. In addition to the personnel, managers, and supervisors play an important role in building a corporate culture that supports well-being at work. In order to create the conditions for a corporate culture that supports the well-

being of employees at work, the organization must understand its people and their needs. Taking care of the staff's well-being at work and investing in the employee experience by involving and increasing employee understanding is very profitable from a business perspective. Enthusiastic, motivated, well-being and committed employees also create the best possible customer experience for customers. Therefore, organizations must create the best possible personnel experience for their employees. (Saramies & Törnroos 2021, p. 40-41) It has been researched that fluid intelligence and less personal resource could lead to lower expectations, especially among older employees (Inceoglu et al., 2012, p. 300-302). Thus, it is highly essential to consider the well-being at work already in early stages.

There have been attempts to explain the influencing factors of work motivation using scientific methods for decades. Many of the studies state that motivation arises from the combined effect of three groups of factors. According to Porter and Miles (1974) these are 1. the employee's personality, 2. the job and 3. the work environment. Personality refers to interests, hobbies, attitudes and various needs, such as the need to belong and the need for appreciation. The job involves the content, meaningfulness and variability of the work, responsibility, independence and feedback, achievements, development and advancement. The work environment includes economic and physical environmental factors such as salary, social benefits, working conditions, work organization and social factors such as management style, team cohesion, rewards and atmosphere. (Viitala 2003, p. 151) It is researched that when an employee feels that their work has a meaning and value, they will also feel more engaged to it (Anon 2015, p.29).

On the other hand, low motivation at work can be caused for example from leadership, corporate culture and employee motivation. Dissatisfaction is a result of low motivation. It is researched that employee's with lower positions are more likely to be dissatisfied because of the lack of variation, freedom, challenges, and responsibilities. (Pancasila et al., 2020, p.389) Regarding job performance, Borman and Motowidlo's (1993) proposal is to separate job performance into two different behavioral clusters. Job performance

includes both in-role behavior and extra-role behavior. The first behaviors assess task performance, and the second behaviors assess contextual performance. Task competence should be related to predictors of knowledge and attitude, such as cognitive ability tests, while contextual performance should be related to predictors of motivation, e.g., personality factors. (Robertson 2010, p. 4-6)

### 2.3 Maslow's hierarchy of needs

One of the most famous and well-known motivation theories is by Abraham Maslow in 1943 which is called the hierarchy of needs. It is a highly essential theory when considering work productivity, motivation, and organizational behavior. (Smith et al., 2012, p. 62-63) This theory is chosen as main theory to this research because it is one of the most well-known theories in motivation, productivity and well-being including many different features. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a comprehensive theory that enables the analysis of large entities. This theory helps to understand the research because it has different needs and characteristics which helps to categorize the different parts of motivation.

**Figure 1.** Maslow's hierarchy of needs. (Adapted from Smith et al., 2012, p. 62-63)

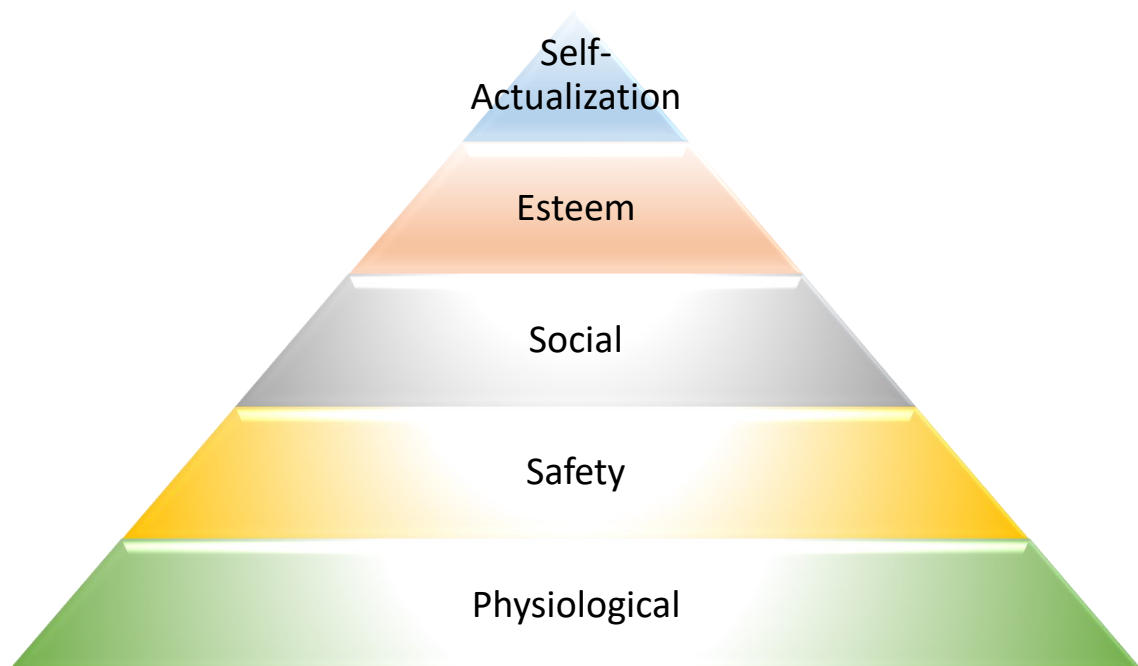


Figure 1 represents Maslow's hierarchy of needs according to Abraham Maslow 1943. Maslow's universal theory consists of the idea that all individuals have a set of needs they need to satisfy. These needs are physiological, safety, social, esteem and self-actualization. The figure below explains in more detail what are these needs and what they consist of. (Smith et al., 2012, p. 62)

**Table 1.** Maslow's hierarchy of needs summary. (Adapted from Smith et al., 2012, p. 62-63)

Need	Meaning	Fulfilling the need
<b>Physiological</b>	Hunger Warmth Thirst Shelter	Drinks machines Kitchen or restaurant facilities Heating and air conditioning Comfortable working environment Salary
<b>Safety</b>	Security Safety Protection Stability	Health & Safety Security Contracts of employment Communication Performance and planning
<b>Social</b>	Involvement with others Teamwork Social atmosphere	Creating structures based on teams Staff associations and social clubs Open-plan offices Company sports teams

<b>Esteem</b>	Feeling wanted and valued Self-respect and the respect of others Status	Recognition schemes Regular feedback Job roles and titles Promotion Salary
<b>Self-actualization</b>	Growth and development Achieving potential Freedom to create and innovate at work Autonomy	Job roles that allow opportunities for challenge, creativity and continuous learning Decision-making, freedom and control over activities

Table 1 represents the different needs, their meaning and fulfilment according to Maslow which are listed and explained below (Smith et al., 2012, p. 62).

**Physiological** need is the first need from the bottom of the hierarchy including all physical aspects of life such as warmth and hunger. From organizational aspect this can be improved for example with air conditioning, drink machines or other material goods.

**Safety** is the second need that consist of the safety and health things such as security and stability. Organizations can fulfill these needs with taking care of health and safety, security and with other communication related to this field.

**Social** is the third need which is about teamwork, involvement, and social atmosphere. This need is fulfilled in the working place by concentrating on structures based on teams, socializing, and having all time together.

**Esteem** is the fourth need in this hierarchy which is about feeling respected and valued by themselves and by others and about status. Feedback, recognition, roles, titles, and promotion are good examples that are affecting this need.

**Self-actualization** is the fifth and last need. It is about development and growth as well as about achievement, freedom, and autonomy. This is ensured by giving opportunities to growth and having challenges and continuous learning in the workplace. (Smith et al., 2012, p. 62-63)

## **2.4 Work productivity and engagement**

Work productivity is a measure of performance in the working place. Work productivity is the ratio between the results gained and the amount of work used. The employee who has a high motivation to work usually is carrying more results. (Hastari et al., 2021, p. 426)

Organizations and individuals must constantly desire development. This process is called organizational learning. The organization must educate learning individuals in order to keep them satisfied with their work and motivated to continue in the same company. Thus, turnover intentions are getting higher even if employees are motivated to work. It is essential to study in the workplace how motivation affects the attitudes and behavior of in order to keep people in the company. (Shkoler & Kimura 2020, p.1) Employees must be motivated and see a high path to grow and have personal goals to achieve high productivity (Smith et al., 2012, p. 60). Usage of different resources can help to achieve development and growth of productivity at work. These resources are attitude, motivation, abilities and management of the company. These factors are analyzed to affect to work productivity the most. Other relevant factors are work conditions, rewards, and cooperation between workers. (Mawaddah & Paskarini 2021, p.404)

Work engagement is defined as mindfulness at work which means that individual who is engaged in their work is positive, satisfied, and has a work-related state of mind. This usually includes dedication to work and efficiency as well as adapting to changes. Committed and motivated employees are involved in their work with passion and power and are more engaged in their work. There is a proven positive effect between individual

work engagement and employee turnover since the employees who are engaged in their work are also motivated and the chance to change the workplace is lower. (Shkoler & Kimura 2020, p.2) Employee engagement is the level of satisfaction an employee feels for the work. It is an entity of commitment, attitude, and satisfaction. When employees are highly satisfied with their job, they will also have motivation and passion for it. (Robbins & Judge, p. 67) Employee engagement is important because the level of employee engagement will be profitable for the company. Employees who are engaged will stay in the company longer and bring higher value. (Dessler 2013, p. 326)

Work engagement is a fulfilling and motivating state of work-related well-being. In contrast, we can think of exhaustion in the workplace. Committed employees have a high energy level and are motivationally involved in their work and it can be seen from their performance. Therefore, the characteristic of an engaged employee is high consistency, motivation, and recognition of work. In addition, commitment to work can be defined as a motivating concept in which employees feel driven towards a goal and want to develop and succeed. (Bakker & Leiter 2020, p.2-3) It is researched that using an employee's own strengths at work has a positive impact on work productivity and this way to work satisfaction. Employee strengths influence their behavior and gain a feeling of trust and success. When they have positive feelings, engagement can be seen clearly in the behavior. (Lavy & Littman-Ovadia 2017, p.99)

The engaged employees are committed and have clear target towards which they progress. Committed employees focus their energy but also leave time for recovery. They participate intensively in the work and attract the attention of others in a positive way. Commitment to work has long-term effects on employee performance. The energy and focus the employee gives, brings their full potential to be recognized. (Bakker & Leiter 2020, p.3-4) The key factors in engagement and motivation are a goal-oriented mind and self-regulation. Self-regulation as a term means coping with environments and achieving goals. (Seo et al., 2004, p.426)

In general, company challenges are reported to be caused by stress, and the biggest stress reasons are the deadlines, time challenges, bureaucracy, hierarchies, high workloads, poor management, and insufficient resources. Workplace stress and lack of employee satisfaction can lead to several health issues on employees. (Mordue, p. 4-5)

Performance appraisal is an effective tool for analyzing work motivation, engagement and satisfaction. Performance appraisal is a meeting where a manager and employee meet on a periodic basis and review all the work-related parts and issues together. This is an important part where the employees are heard. It is important for managers also to analyze and understand the performance appraisals and improve the business. One of the psychological principles of learning is to engage performance and therefore have more employees that feel that they are appreciated and achieving results. Another important factor is providing feedback to employees. It is researched that giving feedback actually helps to work motivation and motivates them to perform better when they know where they stand. (Blackwell 2000, p. 126-128) Employers and companies are becoming more aware that they have to invest in proper management and training for all employees in order to achieve high results. Workforce must be trained and skilled with clear goals and expectations. (Machado & Davim 2018, p. 173)

## **2.5 Work Satisfaction**

Engagement and motivation lead to job satisfaction at the workplace. Thus, it is researched that there are certain key factors that lead more often to job satisfaction. These are proper training, good managers, independence, feedback, variety, positive interaction and support, and other relevant factors. Another factor is the employee's personality and positive self-esteem which leads also to better results at work. When employees believe in themselves it is easier also to do well at work. In addition, one factor is salary. If employees feel that they are paid well for the work done, it is more likely for them to be satisfied with their work and turnover could be lower. The outcome of job satisfaction can be seen in the organization. Usually, job performance raises as well as organizational citizenship behavior. Customers are usually more satisfied as well when the service is

good, and employees are motivated to work. (Robbins & Judge, p. 70-71) Employees want to work and feel satisfied about their work and fulfill their needs. Employees must know what the expectations from them are and what skills they need to develop. This way employee performance will raise, and employees will be more satisfied. (Pancasila et al., 2020, p.389)

On the other hand, the impact of job dissatisfaction can be seen clearly in the organization as well. There is a theory called – the exit – voice – loyalty – neglect framework – for job dissatisfaction. This theoretical model helps to understand the different aspects of job dissatisfaction. This theory supports and helps the research in case of negative answers on work motivation and satisfaction. It helps to categorize the responses gained from the interviews in case of negative feelings.

**Exit** response means an employee who is dissatisfied and behaves in a manner that he or she is already resigning or looking for new opportunities.

**Voice** response is somebody who is actively trying to improve work conditions and saying out loud problems the workplace has.

**Loyalty** response is somebody who is waiting for issues to improve and trusting that someday things will get better in the organization.

**Neglect** response means that the employee has already accepted the bad situation and allowed it to get worse. This includes a bad attitude towards the work that can be seen as low effort and laziness. (Robbins & Judge, p. 72)

Work satisfaction and work motivation are highly related to each other. When the employee is motivated to work and ambitious the satisfaction to own work will grow. Individuals' achievements, goals, and ambitions need to be taken into account at the workplace. Recognition of skills will lead to even higher results and a decrease in the

employee turnover of the company. As mentioned earlier in this thesis the key theory is motivation is Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs. It describes clearly that the higher the needs are the better people do. This can be implemented also to workplace and satisfaction very well. Maslow explained the theory by stating that people tend to be more satisfied with their needs systematically and tend to be satisfied first with the basic needs in order to achieve satisfaction with the higher needs. (Pettinger 2000, p. 54-57)

It is important to note and remember in working life that every employee is an individual with his or her own motivation, life situation, and personality. In order to be able to manage employees and gain work satisfaction, one must understand what is important to them. Employee understanding is a quite new concept, and it means understanding which things are important to everyone, what motivates, engages, and brings well-being at work. With this information, it is possible to create an environment where employees feel good, to which they commit and where results are generated. (Saramies & Törnroos 2021, p. 34-38) Work satisfaction will be gained when employee is committed and feel appreciated. It has an impact both for employees and companies. (Pancasila et al., 2020, p.400) Whereas work motivation is an entity of external and internal factors that are related to work behavior, job satisfaction is more of an organizational commitment. Job satisfaction, organizational commitment and work motivation are all related to performance at workplace. (Lohela-Karlsson et al., 2022, p.934)

From international perspective, job satisfaction factors vary in different nationalities and countries. Also, age group is another important factor. Country differences can be seen in job satisfaction since the leading style, culture, norms, rules and expectations vary in different countries. (Westover & Taylor 2010, p. 821-823) Studies have shown that in different countries employee satisfaction varies according to whether the workplace is international or not. Job satisfaction has been found to vary significantly between employees of state-owned enterprises and foreign-invested companies. (Ho et al., 2022, p. 1018)

Employee experience is also a new human resource term. Employee experience consists of the employee's experiences, perceptions, and expectations related to his or her work environment. It is influenced, among other things, by the company or organizational culture, management, work community, working conditions, and the company's values, i.e., practically everything that happens around the employee. In order to be able to influence this, one has to understand the personnel. Small benefits and once-per-year happenings are not enough, but a genuine understanding of how the organization looks through the eyes of the employee and what works and what does not. There is even a term for this leadership style nowadays, which is a servant leader. This kind of leader listens to the personnel and looks at the world from the perspective of the personnel's well-being, potential, and growth. (Saramies & Törnroos 2021, p. 38-40)

## **2.6 Organizational behavior**

Organizational behavior is a concept where behavior and interaction with people are studied. Moreover, it is about understanding people's different behavior in organizations. The organization may have one person or several that consist of relationships between different parties such as clients, suppliers, employees, and more. Organizational behavior can be divided into different levels including individuals, groups, and organizations. Thus, organizational behavior is also considered as a purpose for why organizations are created, the behavior of people, the creation of individuals and groups with different characteristics, and as an entity of work relationships. (Pettinger 2000, p.1) Moreover, organizational behavior examines behavior in human performance, management, employment turnover, and job satisfaction. It includes different aspects of working life such as motivation, leader behavior, change processes, work design, attitude, structure, and conflict management. (Robbins & Judge, p. 30)

Organizational behavior improves understanding of oneself and behavior as well as understanding of others and organizations. It also gives individuals the opportunity to be better leaders and related to that they could improve the efficiency of the organization. Organizational behavior can also mean improving understanding between individuals

and questioning the way things are now seen and done and trying to improve and make change in a constant manner. (Smith et al., 2012, p. 3) In addition, leaders play a key role in organizational behavior. Leaders are individuals who are supposed to lead by example and inspire employees in order to achieve common goals. Leadership style and expectations vary from one country to another a lot. Research has proven that the most effective leaders are the ones who recognize situations and act accordingly with skills that are needed in different situations. (Hassi 2019, p. 787) Employees' international activities are shaped by their position in the global economy. International aspects affect organizational behavior and how different nationalities act in working life. (Antentas 2022, p. 431-432)

The key idea in organizations is that people will achieve high results together as a group when they have a common goal, they are aiming for rather than just individual working alone. Therefore, it is highly fundamental and adequate to achieve the common needs and goals. (Pettinger 2000, p.7) Each individual in the organization has his or her own skills, attitudes, background and attributes and therefore it is highly important to notice these factors and how they may affect in the organizational behavior. Thus, organizational behavior is sometimes hard and there can be various changes. Individuals have different type of reactions to different situations and this can cause difficult situations. In a working environment with a lot of personnel, group work is a usual and essential part of organizational behavior. This gives huge opportunities to gather different ideas and skills into one and divide the workload equally. (Smith et al., 2012, p. 5-6)

Human resources analytics is a concept used to achieve more effective management. With it, it is possible to answer topics that are important from a business perspective, such as why employees leave, why some perform better than others, or how work shifts could be planned more efficiently and by listening to the personnel. Consequently, personnel analytics improves and helps the organization reach its goals, saves time and money, automates processes, produces reliability and good forecasts, gives a more reliable picture of the organization's internal processes, and increases the fact-baseness of

decisions and management. (Saramies & Törnroos 2021, p. 50-53) Organizational decision-makers which are managers or other leaders can impact human resource management and analytics. Human resource management decisions could be done by the management team, and it will have an impact on the analytics and policies which will lead to more effective management. (Steffensen et al., 2019, p.2389)

Personnel analytics is a direct link to how the organization reaches its goals. It also helps to make better hiring decisions. When the right people have been recruited to the right positions in the organization, the company achieves its strategic goals. Personnel analytics also help to improve the company's employer image and help to calculate the most reliable forecasts of the company's external and internal events. By increasing the understanding of employees and work, decision-making can be made fairer and work processes more reliable and thus also more productive. (Saramies & Törnroos 2021, p. 50-53)

Sometimes work life and working can be challenging and motivation may disappear or decrease. Employees are constantly asked to do more and often with fewer resources. These kinds of problems will appear in the company on many different levels. Engaging and motivating personnel is extremely important for business. The commitment of personnel increases when they feel valued and are free to present their own thoughts and ideas. (Ulrich 2007, p. 162-163) Usually, employee performance is achieved with correct human resource practices. A company's internal human resource practices should be at a level that motivates employees' behavior and abilities as well as gives them opportunities to behave in a way that they feel comfortable. Human resource practices and correct behavior is a key element as well to productivity at work and it makes the work more precise. (Jiang et al., 2012, p.75-76)

## **2.7 Summary of the literature review**

This thesis aims to provide insight into the importance of motivation in human resource management. The aim is to study the connection between work motivation and

productivity in an international working environment among young adults, the Gen Z generation. The literature review consists of human resource management, work motivation, and its main theories, work productivity and engagement, work satisfaction, and organizational behavior. In addition, the international aspect is taken into consideration in many paragraphs.

Human resource management is the first part of the literature review. Work motivation and work productivity which are the key elements analyzed in this thesis go under the category of human resource management. Human resource management is the structure of an organization whose aim is to manage, train and maintain skills and employees. It involves employment, recruitment, and selection of employees as well as interviewing and hiring. Human resource management also involves motivation and health and safety. (Bogardus & Bogardus 2004, p.2) Therefore, it is an essential part of the literature review. In addition, also training, communication, talent management, and personnel analytics were introduced to understand the entity of human resource management more effectively.

Work motivation as a concept is about individuals' motivation towards work. It is an entity of specific skills, goals, success and satisfaction. (Hastari et al, 2021, p. 428) Motivation is what drives individuals to succeed in their work and also grow work productivity (Viitala 2003, p. 150). It is a process of fulfillment and achievements that will affect to job satisfaction in a positive manner (Pancasila et al., 2020, p.387).

Maslow's hierarchy of needs by Abraham Maslow and self-determination by Deci & Ryan are the main theories introduced in the literature review. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is one of the most popular and well-known theories of work motivation including different stages of needs that are needed to satisfy. (Smith et al., 2012, p. 62) Self-determination theory is also one of the major theories of human motivation that studies intrinsic motivation which is about individuals going towards their own personal goals. (Gagne 2014, p.2-3)

Work productivity and engagement are key factors that are mentioned in the literature review. Work productivity means the measurement of performance and achievement at work. On the other hand, work engagement is a state of mind where an individual feels engaged in the work and sees their work in a positive manner. This includes usually dedication and high motivation as well and therefore these topics are all linked together. (Sckoler & Kimura 2020, p. 38)

Work satisfaction is a crucial part of the literature review. When the individual feels engaged and productive, they will also feel work satisfaction. Work satisfaction is when an individual feels happy about their work and she or he feels successful and appreciated. (Robbins & Judge, p. 70-71) Both work satisfaction and work motivation are linked to each other because when an individual is motivated, he or she will also gain more satisfaction with the work. This is also linked to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the higher the needs the higher is also satisfaction. (Pettinger 2000, p. 55-57)

Organizational behavior is also presented in the literature review. It is more about the behavior and interaction at the workplace which affects also work motivation and productivity. Organizational behavior is about understanding own behavior as well as understanding the behavior of others. (Smith et al, 2012, p. 62)

This thesis will promote research on work motivation and its affection to work productivity amongst young adults working in the international environment. This research will bring new value because Gen Z is a young population, yet not researched as much as older ones. In addition, the connection between work motivation and productivity is researched amongst these young adults which will reveal up-to-date data about today's work motivation, work culture, and assumptions. The author will interview both employees and managers in order to compare if there are different results between them. All of the candidates will work in international environments which means that they have different cultures in their workplace or they themselves are from different country.

### **3 METHODOLOGY**

Methodology part of the thesis explains detailed information about the methods and materials used to conduct the research. The research method, approach and strategy, data collection, data analysis and reliability and validity will be discussed.

#### **3.1 Research method**

The main goal of this research is to investigate the connection between work motivation and productivity in an international working environment. As a result of this research, the goal is to understand more nowadays work motivation and productivity amongst young adults working in international environment. This research is limited from human resources to work motivation and productivity and the research target is limited to young adults also known as Gen Z, who are working in international environment.

A research can be conducted either with qualitative or quantitative methods. Qualitative research is about understanding the phenomenon that is researched whereas quantitative research focuses more on generalizing and it is based on already existing theories. (Kananen 2015, p. 65-72) In this research, qualitative methods are used. Qualitative research examines the world of meaning, which is interpersonal and social. Meanings are expressed as relationships and the entities they form. (Vilkkä 2021, p. 118) Qualitative research is about finding deeper meaning to researched topic rather than focusing on numerical data collecting. (Hirsjärvi et al., 2010, 160-164) Thus, qualitative research focuses on outcome and meaning of the study. Qualitative analysis includes structured or open-ended interviews as well as external observations or observations by participation. (Laksham et al., 2000, p.371) Moreover, qualitative research is conducted by documenting observations, theme interviews and texts. In order to analyze these, the data must be commensurate. Commensurate means that the interviews, observations, or other materials are transferred into text, which makes it possible to analyze the data. In addition, transcription of data must be done from the interviews or other observations. (Kananen 2015, p. 83)

### **3.2 Research approach and strategy**

Research method used in this thesis is qualitative method since the aim is to find deeper meaning and understanding about the work motivation and its affection to productivity among young adults. The research will be conducted as theme interviews for six young adults working in international environment. In qualitative research common data collecting methods used are structured or open-ended interviews. The advantage of these are that it actually reveals real situations and feelings. Questions are open-ended and gives opportunity to the participants to express their thoughts and feelings. (Laksham et al., 2000, p.374)

Interviews in this research will be open-ended interviews and more precisely theme interviews including open-ended questions that are seeking answer for what, why and how. Theme interview consist of themes that divides the topics of the interview in order to keep it organized and clear. Themes are acting as a standard for the interview and keeping it as an entity. Themes and questions are not introduced beforehand in this research. A transcription will be done from each theme interview in order to analyze the data collected later on. Transcription will be condensed and analyzed by themes. (Kananen 2015, p. 147-170) Theme interview is selected to this research because it is the most common method for qualitative research and makes the research clearer and more organized.

**Figure 2.** Theme interview. (Adapted from Kananen 2015, p. 149)

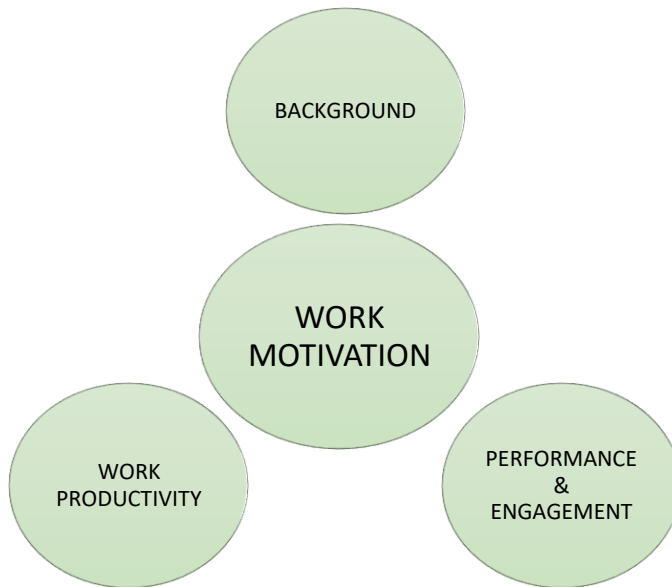


Figure 2 emphasizes the themes that are used in the interviews. These four themes are background, work motivation, work productivity and performance and engagement. These themes will help to organize the interview by themes and to keep the interview precise and accurate.

### **3.3 Data collection**

The interview method chosen to this research is theme interview which includes open-ended questions about the four different themes which are background, work motivation, work productivity and performance and engagement. The aim is to find an in-depth understanding of the topic by asking questions from the participants according to the themes. Theme interview consist of open-ended questions in order to find deeper meanings. Questions chose to this research demand explanations and more in-depth understanding and this is why it is a precise choice for this research. (Kananen 2015, p. 147-170) Questions had variation in the interviews and there can be done additional

adjustments in the interview in order to reach the themes of the interview and find answers to research questions (Eisenhardt 1986, p. 539).

Data collection is an essential part of the research. The quality of the study is defined by the adequacy, reliability and relevance of the data. Sources of data are classified into primary sources and secondary sources. Primary sources are the sources that researcher straightly collects, and secondary sources are sources that are already existing, but are used again for another purpose. (Krishnaswami & Satyaprasad 2010, p. 87-86) In this thesis, data collecting is done through theme interviews and these will be primary sources.

Choosing the sampling for the research is essential part. Well-selected sampling results to more accurate findings. Moreover, sampling is done to test the hypothesis of the thesis. When choosing the sample group there are certain issues that needs to be considered. A good sample group must fulfill certain criteria's which are representativeness, accuracy, precision and size. (Krishnaswami & Satyaprasad 2010, p. 52-53) In this thesis, the sample group are young adults who are working in international working environment, as in this case all of the six participants are. The sample group of six persons is good sample for qualitative research.

There are different sampling techniques and methods from probability to random sampling and non-probability to non-random sampling. This research follows the non-probability sampling and more precisely purposive sampling. Purposive sampling means a selection of participants by criteria decided before the research. (Krishnaswami & Satyaprasad 2010, p. 77) Moreover, it means that for this study there are selected participants who fits to the criteria of the study, which are in this case the generation and working in international environment.

**Table 2.** Participants to the research

<b>Interviewees</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Role</b>
Interviewee 1	Female	23 years	Finnish	Commercial
Interviewee 2	Female	30 years	Greek	Manager
Interviewee 3	Female	19 years	Finnish	Seller
Interviewee 4	Male	26 years	Finnish	Operator
Interviewee 5	Female	25 years	Finnish	Coordinator
Interviewee 6	Female	22 years	Finnish	Manager

Interviews in this thesis were conducted as face-to-face theme interviews in the period of 7th of June to 22<sup>nd</sup> of June with six participants. Participants were chosen from the age group of 19 to 30. There was one male and five females interviewed to this thesis and five of them were Finnish and one Greek. All of the participants are working in an international working environment. Interviews took approximately 45-60 minutes per participant. The interviews were conducted in the following date and times:

- Interviewee 1: June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023 from 17:00-17:45
- Interviewee 2: June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023 from 19:00-20:00
- Interviewee 3: June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023 from 14:00-14:35
- Interviewee 4: June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023 from 16:00-16:55
- Interviewee 5: June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023 from 16:00-17:05
- Interviewee 6: June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023 from 19:00-19:45

### **3.4 Data analysis**

Data analysis were conducted by qualitative techniques. All of the interviews held were recorded through phone in order to have all the data in a digital form later on. After that, the recordings were listened and conducted into written form as transcripts of theme interviews. This ensures that analysis can be done from the data collected (Poland, 2001, p. 629). In addition, it is essential to pick only the relevant information from the interview for the transcription. This is called the data reduction part since the unnecessary data is reduced from the results. (Roulston, 2014.)

The analyzing method chosen for this research is thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a method used in qualitative research and its purpose is to find meanings and patterns to different themes. (Kiger & Varpio 2020, p. 846) This is the most accurate way to analyze the data since the text can be studied precisely and from text form it is easier to read and analyze the main findings from the study. (Kananen 2015, p. 83-85) Themes can be built inductively or deductively. Inductive approach was used in this data analysis, which means that the themes were emphasized from researcher's data. In addition, researcher utilized the framework of six-step process which are 1) familiarizing the data, 2) accomplishing initial codes, 3) examination of themes, 4) analyzing themes, 5) defining themes and 6) conducting the report. (Kiger & Varpio 2020, p. 846)

The analyzing method used in this thesis are transcripts of theme interviews. A transcription will be done from each theme interview in order to analyze the data. Transcription will be condensed and analyzed by themes so that all parts of the interviews are taken into consideration. (Kananen 2015, pp. 147-170) This method of choosing certain categories from the findings will help to understand the results. Researcher herself can choose the dimensions from the study or these can be existing literature. (Eisenhardt 1986, p. 540) In addition, most of the interviews were held in Finnish so these needed also to be translated into English for the transcriptions. Researcher followed the six-step process in order to keep on track what needs to be done in the analysis (Kiger & Varpio 2020, p.846).

After the transcripts are made, they are analyzed by the three main themes in the research. The themes of motivation, productivity and engagement and performance were analyzed by reading the transcripts one by one. Researcher conducted the theme analysis by using Word and gathering all data into one document by themes in order to emphasize the bigger picture of the findings. After that, the results from the theme analysis were combined with the secondary sources, so the theories used in this thesis (Eisenhardt, 1986).

## **4 FINDINGS**

This part presents all the results gained from the six different interviews that were held. After that, the results are discussed and analyzed by themes and in accordance with the relevant theory and lastly, the findings are summarized.

The results proved that work motivation affects work productivity in many different ways. Motivation affects to the work and individual's performance. Key factors for motivation are colleagues and the team at the workplace. In addition, feedback is super important for employees as well as good and inspiring work environment. The findings emphasize that there are different factors affecting productivity at the workplace which are motivation, health and energy, shift rotation, colleagues, and work environment. When considering productivity at the workplace, the results show that health, energy, shift and schedule impacts more than colleagues and environment.

As a result, from the research, it can be stated that motivation is one of the key factors in performance and engagement in the workplace. Performance and engagement are also affected by colleagues, team, salary, position, stress, work environment, well-being, and time management. Moreover, colleagues and team are the key factors in performance and engagement. Findings elaborates that motivation is a key factor in working life and affecting a lot on productivity, engagement, and performance at work.

### **4.1 Interview results**

In the following section, the findings from the interview will be introduced by themes.

#### **Work motivation**

First theme of the interviews was work motivation and its affection. It started with the general question of how motivated the interviewees to their work are. The results vary

from being quite motivated to being not so motivated. Nobody answered that they are highly motivated or not motivated at all. Also, interviewees stated that motivation can depend on the day and that they could be more motivated or were more motivated before. Work tasks, colleagues and stress level seem to be a factor to the answers.

*“Mostly I am quite motivated but there are times that I lose my motivation. Very often I have too much work but too little time. That causes me stress and lowers my motivation level.” – Interviewee 1*

*“I used to be very motivated but nowadays not that much.” – Interviewee 2*

*“I am very motivated actually and I like it for now. This is a temporary work for me before my university studies starts. I like to work with customers and every day is different. I like my colleagues a lot.” – Interviewee 3*

*“I am quite motivated.” – Interviewee 4*

*“I could be more motivated.” – Interviewee 5*

*“Depends on the day. Work tasks that I like to do makes me more motivated but then all the negative issues bring the motivation down.” – Interviewee 6*

Then the interviews continued with the question about level of the motivation and its effect on the work. Most of the answers are including the result that motivation is a key effector and when you have the motivation you will also work better. Also, one interesting finding is the cultural difference from the Greek interviewee who mentioned that in Finland the motivation and loyalty is more to themselves and not for the company. There was also one neutral answer that stated that for her the level does not affect that much and she will still try her best. Motivation makes employees happier and positive and days goes faster.

*“When I am motivated, I am also happier and positive towards my work. When I am motivated, I also work faster.” – Interviewee 1*

*“I believe it affects a lot but also differs from my home country Greece. Commitment and loyalty are mandatory in Greece, in Finland people are more loyal to themselves and that is my mindset nowadays and my motivation is just enough for my work.” – Interviewee 2*

*“When I am motivated, I want to go to work and workday goes better and faster. I feel like it is comfortable to be there.” Interviewee 3*

*“I think that motivation is one of the biggest factors affecting the productivity of my work. When I am motivated, I am more productive. Of course, motivation also affects well-being in the workplace. When I am motivated, I think that it is nice to go to the office.” – Interviewee 4*

*“It affects quite a lot because then I also want to do the work better.” – Interviewee 5*

*“Neutrally.” – Interviewee 6*

After that, there was discussion about factors affecting to the motivation. The main factors affecting work motivation according to interviewees are stress, managers, employee situation, colleagues, feedback, team, training, credit, environment, salary and compensation, benefits, work tasks, and variability and pressure. The answers about the factors are quite similar depending on the interviewee and include the same issues. The most mentioned factors are feedback, environment, and colleagues.

*“Stress affects negatively as well as too low salary. Managers also affect the work a lot and if they are good, it affects positively. The number of workers is one factor and we do not have enough workers. Colleagues affect me in a positive way when they are nice to work with as well as in a negative way if they are rude or unfriendly. Feedback is super important and affects the motivation as well as credit from the work.” -Interviewee 1*

*“A great team includes loyalty, dedication of personal time, getting out of the comfort zones, and not expecting that you have to earn something. In-depth training is one of the main factors so that I feel that I am trained for my responsibilities.” – Interviewee 2*

*“Nice colleagues, good credit, and feedback are super important. It is good to know what you are doing great and what you can still improve.” - Interviewee 3*

*“Colleagues are one big factor. In my opinion, work motivation is a lot higher when there is a good team to work with. Of course, like colleagues, managers have a big impact on motivation. If there is for example unfair treatment and unnecessary monitoring, it greatly reduces work motivation. The feeling that someone appreciates my work boosts my work motivation. Of course, salary/compensation is*

*also a factor affecting motivation. I think that almost no one is working just because it is fun. The amount of money paid is not in itself the largest of the compensations affecting to motivation. Fringe benefits can also have a big impact on motivation. When you get paid fairly for the job it also makes you feel important, and this again boosts the motivation.” – Interviewee 4*

*“The main factors are work environment, colleagues, work tasks and their variability.” – Interviewee 5*

*“The main factors negatively are rush, pressure, bad feedback and negative people around me. Positive factors are good feedback, feeling of success, life outside of work and positive people around me.” – Interviewee 6*

## **Productivity**

The second theme is about productivity at the workplace. The interviewees all felt that they are productive almost all the time or frequently. Also, productivity depends on the day for some interviewees.

*“I think I am quite productive and have good work ethic. I try to be as productive as I can.” – Interviewee 1*

*“I am very productive, and I always plan how I should divide my shift in order to cover all the needs of the day.” – Interviewee 2*

*“I feel that I am productive but of course, it depends on the day and how am I feeling overall that day. I feel that I am doing my best and being as productive as I can.” - Interviewee 3*

*“I am highly productive.” – Interviewee 4*

*“I feel quite productive at work.” – Interviewee 5*

*“Usually I am really productive.” – Interviewee 6*

Then the discussion continued with the factors affecting to productivity which were motivation, health and energy, shift rotation, colleagues and work environment. Shift rotation is a common answer in this question for those who work shiftwork. Here the key

factors are health, well-being and environment which are affecting to the energy and productivity the most.

*“Motivation affects a lot. Also, health and good energy and also bad health and migraine. Shift rotation – for example, if I have only a morning or evening shift, I am more tired and less productive. In addition, colleagues, private life issues, and stress are the main factors.” – Interviewee 1*

*“Shift rotation affects the most since if it is a morning shift I work more productively.” – Interviewee 2*

*“Good energy and good sleep. Also, how many days I have already worked. If I had day offs, then I have more energy and productivity after that to do the work.” – Interviewee 3*

*“Well, first of all, I like my work, and this is most probably the biggest factor. After that, I would say that colleagues and the work environment are big factors when thinking about productivity.” – Interviewee 4*

*“Working environment and motivation, the colleagues and how nice they are and how different your work tasks are.” – Interviewee 5*

*“Negative factors are tiredness, stress and pressure and positive factors are good sleep, not feeling rushed or pressured. Productivity depends on the work shift and work week.” – Interviewee 6*

The interviewees were also asked how the motivation affects to their productivity. Five of the interviewees answered that motivation goes along with productivity and that the more motivated you are the more productive you are. One of the interviewees answered that motivation does not actually affect that much since the work tasks need to be done anyway whether you feel motivated or not.

*“Motivation affects a lot also to productivity since then I am faster, more creative and more productivity when I am motivated.” – Interviewee 1*

*“The more motivated you are the more productive you are. Currently, I feel okay and fulfill my responsibilities, but I will not want to push myself to extra work.” – Interviewee 2*

*“If I am motivated to do the work, I am more productive. These two are going together from my point of view.” – Interviewee 3*

*“Motivation affects highly to my productivity.” – Interviewee 4*

*“It does not affect that much, when you are at work you need to do the needed tasks even when you do not feel so motivated.” – Interviewee 5*

*“If I am not motivated, I am not productive.” – Interviewee 6*

### **Performance and Engagement**

Third theme was performance and engagement. There was discussion about the performance at work and how do the participants feel about their performance. Most of the answers emphasize that interviewees feel that they perform well at work and are trying their best. Answers also elaborate that when you have the needed skills and training the performance is on a better level and you feel more confident. Also, the cultural aspect can be seen from the answer of the Greek interviewee who stated that according to Finnish standards, her performance is more than good.

*“I think It is quite good. I always try my best.” – Interviewee 1*

*“Comparing to Finnish standards I feel that it is more than good.” – Interviewee 2*

*“ I am fast-learned and want to learn. I am independent now and like to do everything by myself. I like to feel confident, so I do not really like the training process of the work since this is still quite new work for me.” – Interviewee 3*

*“I think that my work performance is on a really good level. I have the needed skills and know-how that are needed to perform my tasks, I am motivated and productive and perform my tasks with good end results.” – Interviewee 4*

*“I think my performance is at a good level but could be also better.” – Interviewee 5*

*“I am always doing my best at work” – Interviewee 6*

The next phase was about engagement to the work. In this part, the answers vary a lot. Some of the interviewees feel that they are committed and engaged, and some are not. One of the interviewees is even too engaged and takes all the work to home. One interviewee mentioned that it requires more time in the company to feel engaged and one mentioned that the work feels monotonous and days repeat themselves.

*“Currently I am quite committed to my work but of course, I am open to new opportunities.” - Interviewee 1*

*“Not so good at this specific workplace.” – Interviewee 2*

*“I haven’t been working so long in this position, so I do not still feel engaged to it. It is something new and I like it, but I think it will require more time to achieve the engagement to it.” – Interviewee 3*

*“I think that I am quite engaged. I have mainly positive feelings towards the company I am working in, I think that I belong to our team and like my work. Of course, some days repeat themselves and the work feels monotonous. On those days I might start to think about my level of engagement again.” – Interviewee 4*

*“No good or bad feeling.” – Interviewee 5*

*“I am maybe even too engaged. I always think to work things in my free time.” – Interviewee 6*

Then there was discussion about the motivation and its effect to performance and engagement. According to interviewees, motivation is one of the key factors that affects their performance and engagement. However, if they do not feel motivated, they still will try their best to do the work. One participant mentioned that she is available for new job opportunities.

*“When I am more motivated, my performance is also better. My working attitude is better, and I have more motivation to help colleagues and customers.” - Interviewee 1*

*“Currently I am doing fine but I hope that in the future I will find new opportunities.” – Interviewee 2*

*"When I am motivated to learn my performance and engagement also grows." – Interviewee 3*

*"Motivation affects in my opinion more to the performance than it affects engagement. When I am motivated, I think that I perform my tasks faster with better quality." – Interviewee 4*

*"I try my best at work even when I am not motivated towards the work tasks or the people I work with." – Interviewee 5*

*"When I am motivated, it will affect in a good way, but if I am not then I still always will try my best." – Interviewee 6*

Further, the discussion continued with the factors affecting to the performance and engagement. The main factors affecting the performance and engagement of the interviewees are again colleagues, motivation, managers, salary, passion, stress level, environment, time management, well-being, and work experience. Mostly mentioned factor in this discussion was again colleagues.

*"Colleagues and their motivation, managers and their performance, salary and if it is too low compared to responsibilities, passion to the work, working hours and overall atmosphere of the workplace." - Interviewee 1*

*"Stress level, workplace choice and passion for work." – Interviewee 2*

*"Colleagues performance, good environment, good managers and most important is a salary in this position." – Interviewee 3*

*"Time is a big factor affecting my performance. If I am in a rush and all the tasks must be performed in a certain time period, I think that my performance level decreases. I have also noticed that keeping breaks will boost work performance. Passion for work and well-being are also factors that are affecting my performance. Colleagues and managers also affect work performance." – Interviewee 4*

*"Main factors are definitely the work environment and the colleagues I work with. If my colleagues are not nice to me or other people, I do not feel motivated or happy to work in that place. Work tasks can be anything, but if the people are mean to each other then I do not want to stay in that workplace." – Interviewee 5*

*"Stress as a negative factor and not thinking anything else than work-related things. Positive factors are salary, work experience, and position." – Interviewee 6*

## 4.2 Discussion

The main target of this thesis was to find out about work motivation and its effect on productivity amongst young adults in the international working environment. The target group was interviewed for this thesis in order to understand the topic researched. Qualitative research included six face-to-face theme interviews amongst young adults working in different types of roles in international work environments. This part of represents and discusses the results gathered in the light of the relevant theory introduced in the thesis. The results are analyzed by themes since the interviews were theme interviews. This makes it clearer to understand and organize the answers.

As a result of this study is to understand how motivation affects the target group's productivity and overall, their work. As stated in the theory, the balance between work and private life is a new concept not studied much as well as nowadays motivation (Mordue, p. 13-14). Motivation is a key effector and usually motivated workers bring more value to the company.

When considering the theory combined with the interview results about motivation there can be clearly seen a connection. Motivation as a concept is situational, and individual and reaches for better engagement and results (Viitala 2003, p.150). As also stated in the interviews, motivation can vary from day to day, but the base is the same. Motivation helps an individual to achieve success and be invested in the work role and organization (Mathe et al., 2011, p. 1-3). The Greek interviewee felt that in Finland the investment to the company is not on the same level as in Greece. All of the interviewees agreed that motivation leads to better results. In addition, proper training was mentioned to affect motivation. When analyzing motivation, training is affecting to motivation since it will improve an individual's skills and behavior and help to achieve motivated employees (Bowling et al., 2008, p. 137-138).

When emphasizing the organizational behavior, it is stated that people achieve higher results together as a group when they work as a team with a common goal (Pettinger 2000, p. 7). Teamwork is a highly essential part of organizational behavior and gives opportunities to gather multiple skills and ideas (Smith et al., 2012, p. 5-6). As well as from the results there can be seen the importance of colleagues and overall team. It is mentioned several times by several participants that colleagues and team are the key factors to motivation and job satisfaction. In addition, work life can be challenging, and motivation can decrease or even disappear since employees can be asked to do more with less resources (Ulrich 2007, p. 162-163). This can be pointed out from the results as well since participants mentioned that their motivation has decreased, or they are not motivated anymore. Moreover, one participant mentioned exactly the fact that there is too much to do with too little time.

Self-determination theory is a study about intrinsic motivation which means an individual reaching their goals. It supports the idea that when a human has psychological health and well-being in a good condition, it will lead to better results in working life and productivity. (Gagne 2014, p.2-3) From the results of the interview, the self-determination theory can be recognized since the interviewees answered that one of the key factors affecting their motivation is stress, environment, and pressure which are all linked to an individual's well-being. In addition, the self-determination theory highlights the importance of respect and feeling valued which will lead to better motivation (Jungert et al., 2018). Interviewees answered that key factors for motivation are as well credit, compensation, feedback, and benefits. These are all linked to the respect and value of the employee. Cultural differences might affect motivation based on work norms, codes, and behaviors (Shkoler 2020, p.2). As could be seen from the interview as well since the other interviewees were from Finland and one from Greece. According to Porter and Miles (1974) there are three main factors affecting to the state of motivation which are employee's personality, the job and the work environment. (Viitala 2003, p. 151) Key factors of motivation from the interview results also are work environment and work

tasks. Work environment was mentioned from couple times and especially the colleagues they are working with.

The main theory of the thesis is Maslow's hierarchy of needs which focuses on work productivity, motivation and organizational behavior. It is based on the set of needs which are physiological, safety, social, esteem and self-actualization. Related to the motivation part there can be found similarities from many of the needs. Physiological need can be comfortable working environment and salary which were mentioned as a key factor in the interview results. Social need includes teamwork and social atmosphere which were also mentioned in the interview as an effector to the motivation. When team is better and strong, the motivation and atmosphere is also better. In addition, the esteem needs which is the respect and value of the employee and others can be clearly pointed out from the interview results. This includes feedback, recognition and salary which were all mentioned from the interviewees. Self-actualization needs and especially opportunities for learning and challenge also connect to the results as variability in the work tasks was mentioned. (Smith et al., 2012, p. 62)

The second theme in the interview was productivity and its affection for work motivation. Work productivity is a measure of performance in the working place and it is the output of the individual. It can be seen from the results gained. (Hastari et al., 2021, p. 426) Most of the interviewees felt highly productive or productive. None of them felt non-productive at their work. As studied, motivation has an impact on the productivity of an individual. When an employee is motivated and has clear goals, they can achieve high productivity. (Smith et al., 2012, p. 60) Productivity can be increased by attitude, motivation, abilities, management of the company, work conditions, rewards, and with cooperation (Mawaddah & Paskarini 2021, p. 404). Interviewees mentioned the key factors to productivity as motivation, health and energy, shift rotation, colleagues, and work environment. These are very similar reasons with the theory except none of the interviewees did not mention management or rewards at this point. One of the interviewees

mentioned that motivation does not affect her job since the job needs to be done anyway whether you have motivation or not.

When emphasizing Maslow's hierarchy of needs to work productivity and its interview results there can be pointed out a couple of observations. Again, there is a physiological factor in the work productivity from the interview results which is the work environment. In addition, the safety need can be recognized from the results as the interviewees answered that health and energy are affecting their productivity. Safety need includes also performance and planning which can be related to the shift rotation that was mentioned in the interview. Social need in work productivity is again teamwork and colleagues as well as from the interview results colleagues were mentioned in this part. (Smith et al., 2012, p. 62-63)

The third and last theme in the interview was about performance and engagement. When combining the theory part of the performance and engagement to the results there can be seen similarities. Work performance is the way you present yourself at the workplace and how you perform. According to the self-determination theory, employees perform better when they are motivated autonomously and treated with respect (Smith et al., 2012, p. 60). Interview results also showed that motivation is one of the key factors in their performance. Some of the interviewees still mentioned that they will try their best even though sometimes they do not feel motivated to do their work and this of course affects negatively to the work. Performance and performance management are essential factors in the workplace. Performance management is about improving and evaluating employees as well as improving corporate performance, targets, and goals. (Bowling et al., 200, p. 269-271) Two interviewees mentioned that they are available for new opportunities. This can be combined with the theory of – the exit – voice – loyalty – neglect framework – for job dissatisfaction, introduced before in the thesis. The part of looking for new opportunities categorizes to exit response which means that employee is dissatisfied and either resigning or looking for new opportunities. (Robbins & Judge, p. 72)

Work engagement as a concept is defined as mindfulness at work. An employee who is engaged in their work is usually positive, satisfied, and has a work-related state of mind. This consists of motivation, recognition, passion, and dedication to the work. (Shkoler & Kimura 2020, p. 2) Engaged employees are committed, strong, and have clear goals in their minds. They are focusing their energy well and giving their all at work. (Bakker & Leiter 2020, p. 3-4) Interview results vary in terms of engagement. Some of the interviewees feel that they are committed and engaged, and some are not. They pointed out that the time they have been in the company affects their engagement as well as colleagues, motivation, managers, salary, passion for the work, stress level, environment, time management, well-being, and achieving work experience. There are many different factors according to the interviewees that are affecting the performance and engagement. Passion was mentioned as a new factor in this section and it is highly related to the theory of the engaged employees as they usually are highly passionate about the work. Also, motivation plays a big role again in this part as well. These factors can also vary a lot depending on the country, as can be seen from the answer of the Greek interviewee who stated that according to Finnish standards, her performance is more than good.

When considering Maslow's hierarchy of needs in terms of work performance and engagement there are again consistencies. As a physiological factor in this part, salary, and environment were again mentioned in the interview. Safety need includes performance and planning which also connects to the result of performance and engagement. Thus, safety need connects also to well-being at the workplace. Social need and teamwork were clearly seen from the interview results as colleagues were again a very popular answer among the interviewees. In addition, managers were also mentioned in this section. Esteem need also includes salary and from the status point of view also achieving work experience would go to esteem need. Moreover, self-actualization need can be connected to the time management part of the results since it is part of taking control over activities at the workplace. (Smith et al., 2012, p. 62-63)

### **4.3 Summary of the findings**

To summarize the findings of this research there can be stated many different perceptions. The aim of this research was to find out the state of work motivation and its effect on productivity amongst young adults working in the international working environment. As a result of this study, there should be more understanding of how motivation affects the productivity of the interviewees with the help of the theory related to this topic and used in the thesis. The theory related to the research is combined and analyzed in the discussion part.

Work motivation was the first and biggest concept dealt with in the research. From the interview, there can be drawn clear conclusions. First of all, motivation is a large concept and varies from day to day still holding the basic level of motivation. It also changes over time, some of the interviewees felt that they used to be motivated and not anymore, and others feel that they are motivated but could be even more. All of the 6 interviewees agreed on the hypothesis that motivation level affects positively to work and its productivity. There were also some cultural differences affecting. Interviewees stated that motivation makes them happier, more positive, faster, productive and they work better. The factors that were affecting to their motivation were stress, managers, colleagues, feedback, credit, team, training, salary, benefits, work environment, work tasks, variability, rush, pressure, and success. These all affect in a positive and negative way depending on the situation. As a biggest factor that can be pointed out from each interview is colleagues at the workplace. It is clear from the results that colleagues make the most difference since you are working with them each day and if the team is strong and friendly the motivation will also go higher.

The productivity theme in the research is also an essential part of this study. Results show that the target group feels quite or highly productive at work. This also has of course variations depending on the day and shifts they are working. Motivation, shift

rotation, energy, colleagues, work environment, and overall well-being are mentioned as key factors to productivity. Again, colleagues are pointed out in many of the interviews but also health and well-being are one of the biggest factors in productivity in both positive and negative ways. Motivation affects to interviewee's productivity a lot. 5 of the 6 interviewees stated that motivation has a high impact on productivity and that these two go along together, the more motivated you are the more productive you are. An interesting finding was that one of the interviewees answered that motivation does not affect that much to productivity since the work has to be done in any case whether you are motivated or not. From the results, there can be said that motivation makes the employee want to work more productive, more creative, and faster.

The third theme in the research dealt with performance and engagement and its affection for motivation. All the interviewees felt that they are performing well at their workplace. One of the interviewees answered that it could be better as well. There can be also seen a cultural dimension since the Greek interviewee stated that she is doing more than good compared to Finnish standards since they have different work ethic and standards in her home country. The engagement of the interviewees varies in the answers. Some of the interviewees were quite engaged, some were not, and one was even too engaged. Motivation from the interviewees' point of view is affecting performance and engagement positively but it is not absolutely necessary. It was stated by a couple of interviewees that even if they are not motivated, they will still do their best. In addition, one interviewee mentioned that motivation affects more to performance than engagement.

The main factors found from the research affecting performance and engagement were colleagues, managers, salary, passion, shifts, stress level, work environment, time management, and work experience. Here the results vary quite a lot but still, colleagues and managers were mentioned a couple of times as a key factor. Also, the work environment and passion for work were highlighted. In conclusion, performance and engagement are affecting motivation somehow, but employees can perform quite well also without

motivation since they must work. In addition, the employee can perform well even though they would not feel that engaged in the work. Still, if employee has good motivation, they could perform better and feel more engaged in the work.

## 5 CONCLUSION

This thesis observes the connection between work motivation and productivity in an international working environment amongst the young adults. Through this research, the goal is to have a deeper understanding about nowadays work motivation amongst young adults and how it is affecting to productivity and other relevant fields such as performance and engagement.

This field was not yet deeply researched since the generation is entering the working life and therefore it is highly essential to understand them. The qualitative research was conducted as face-face theme interviews to six different participants in order to understand the phenomenon researched. The interview was conducted as a theme interview including three different main themes and background information. All of the interviewees were young adults working in different roles from managers to basic level employees. There were five females and one male participating to interview. Five of them were Finnish and one Greek. This interview group enabled the results to be more diverse since they were different ages, nationalities, and genders.

Through this research, there can be answered to the research question on how motivation affects to the productivity of these young adults. It can be stated that productivity depends on the day and has variations. The interviewees who work shift work and has a different kind of schedules stated that it affects productivity. The most important factors for productivity that could be found from this research are motivation, health and energy, shift rotation, colleagues, and work environment. One interviewee stated that motivation does not play that huge role and that the work still needs to be done but still the major agreed that the more motivated you are to the work the more productive you are. As a conclusion major of the findings emphasize that motivation is a main factor to productivity in a positive way, when you feel motivated you will most probably also be more productive.

Furthermore, it can be stated that work motivation is a highly important factor in young adults' working careers. Motivation is a multifaceted concept, depending on the day and time but remaining at the base level. Motivation affects to the work and how individuals perform at the workplace as well as the productivity of the work.

The second research question was about the factors affecting to the motivation. It was found out from the research that the key factor for young adults' motivation are colleagues and the team at the workplace. When the team is strong and colleagues are nice, the work also feels more motivating. On the contrary, if the colleagues are not nice or the team is not good, it will affect negatively the motivation. Other relevant findings from the research are that feedback and work environment make an impact on work motivation as well. It is important to receive feedback on the work done to understand how the employee is performing and what they can improve. Positive feedback is always encouraging and motivating as well as the work environment in general. When the work environment is good more likely the people will also thrive better. Therefore, companies should focus on the work environment including the people who are working there to also achieve higher results in other fields.

Third research question were about high motivation, and can it be seen in work results and productivity. As a result, from the interview, it can be stated that motivation is one of the key factors that affect to performance and engagement even though it is not absolutely necessary. Moreover, if employee has high motivation, they are more likely to perform better and feel more engaged in the work.

The last topic researched in this thesis was performance and engagement and its effect on motivation. Answers elaborate that performance is better with proper training and confidence in the work. There are also cultural dimensions affecting to the research. Engagement in the work is achieved with a passion for the work and with motivation. Other factors affecting to engagement and performance found from the research are colleagues, motivation, managers, salary, position, stress level, environment, time

management, well-being a work experience gained. Again, colleagues and team are playing the key factors and affecting the most. As a conclusion performance and engagement are affecting to motivation but are not absolutely connected since an employee can perform well without motivation to work. This means that the employee is just focusing on the fact that he or she needs to work even though the work does not seem interesting.

The results are highly connected to the organizational behavior and the importance of the colleagues and team. When the employees are valued, committed and heard they are also happier in the company. Participants proved the importance of colleagues and team by pointing it out multiple times in the interviews as a biggest factor in motivation and well-being.

As a result of this research, it is easier to understand the reasons behind work motivation and its affection. Young adults were a relevant target group for this result since they are the future of the working life. From this research we can learn the importance of the team and colleagues and overall the atmosphere at the work. This should be the primary focus of each company in order to achieve highly committed, motivated and happy workers who are willing to develop in their careers and stay long time in the company. Also, as a result of good working environment there would be more happy people since the working life affects to our life a lot and if people are happy and successful and work it could be also seen in their private life.

## **5.1 Limitations**

There are certain limitations affecting to this research. First of all, the sample size was six interviewees. This can affect to the study since there can be a risk of not receiving enough information for the study. However, these six interviews were conducted as a face-to- theme interviews which allowed to gather in-depth data for the research. Another limitation affecting to the study is the selection of participants. It was limited to

certain age group and only to people working in international environment in different fields. Also, the position and field could affect to the results.

## **5.2 Practical implications**

Work motivation affects to the work productivity in many ways. The findings suggest that the most affecting factors are colleagues and work team. In addition, feedback was highly important. As a practical implication, companies should focus more to the team and work environment to create a strong and happy team. Also, feedback was another key finding. Companies should have regular meetings or other happenings where employees would receive feedback from their work at regular intervals. When considering productivity at the workplace, even more important factors that the research suggest are health and energy. This could be applied to working life by ensuring that all employees have a proper health care service. Energy could be ensured with the workload, work hours and shift rotation being reasonable. Motivation also was found out to be one of the key factors to engagement and performance at the workplace. Motivation could be improved in a practical manner by for example ensuring good work-environment, good benefits, nice colleagues, and salary.

When combining key findings with the theory used in the research there is a clear connection. First, findings suggest that colleagues and work team are the main factor to motivation. Also, Maslow's hierarchy of needs includes the social need with involvement of other, teamwork and social atmosphere (Smith et al., 2012, p.62). Moreover, it was stated that personnel, managers, and supervisors affect positively to the well-being at work (Saramies & Törnroos 2021, p. 40-41). According to Porter and Miles (1974) there are three main factors that increases motivation. These are employee's personality, the job, and the work environment (Viitala 2003, p. 151). The colleagues are not represented in these as a key factor but mentioned in all the parts in some way. Self-determination theory shoes also that conditions that affect positively to employee well-being are affecting positively to productivity and commitment (Gagne 2014, p. 13). It is argued that employees' health and well-being are very important workplace outcomes (Gagne 2014,

p. 2-3). As it was found out from this study as well that the well-being at work is one of the most important factors. This research emphasizes new findings about the work motivation emphasizing the importance of colleagues and work environment.

According to the relevant theory, the factors affecting to productivity are motivation, attitude, abilities, and management of the company (Mawaddah & Paskarini 2021, p. 404). This research suggests that even more important factors to productivity are health and energy. In addition, it is stated that employees who are engaged to the work are also more motivated (Scholer & Kimura 2020, p.38). This contributes with the research findings as well.

### **5.3 Future research suggestions**

As stated before, the work behavior and motivation amongst Gen Z is not enough researched field since this generation is still entering the working life (Aggarwal et al., 2022, p. 1). Employers are struggling to understand today's generations and how they act in working life (Mahmoud et al., 2021, p. 194). Therefore, this field of study is highly important to research and continue researching.

Although this study emphasized the connection between work motivation, productivity and other relevant fields there is still space for further research. As an example, this study focuses now on this specific group of people working in specific fields. With different sample selection, there could be already different results gained.

The researcher suggests that her findings from the work motivation amongst young adults could be applied to different participants. Moreover, the importance of well-being at workplace was mentioned multiple times in the research results and could be further researched more from this point of view. Furthermore, how well-being affects to the motivation and results in the working life. It was found out that well-being is one of the most important factors for success in the company. Field of well-being is highly important factor which is valuable topic for further academic investigation.

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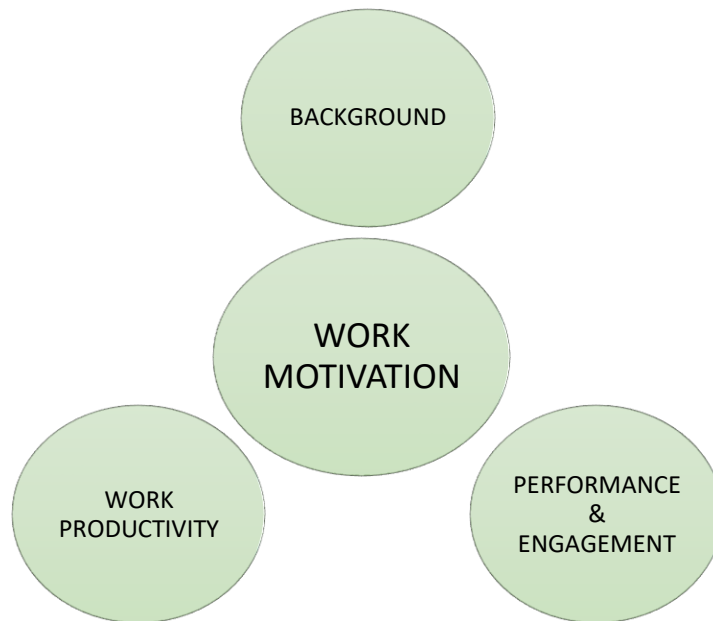
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## Appendices

### Appendix 1. Theme interview questions

*This face-to-face interview is carried out with the aim to analyze the connection between work motivation and work productivity in an international working environment.*



Themes in the interview.

#### Background

1. **Gender:**
2. **Age:**
3. **Nationality:**
4. **What is your current position?**

#### Work motivation

5. **How motivated are you to your work?**
6. **How do you feel that the level of your motivation affects to your work?**
7. **What are the main factors affecting to your motivation at work and why?**

**Productivity**

- 8. How productive do you feel that you are at work?**
- 9. What affects to your productivity?**
- 10. How does your motivation affect to your productivity?**

**Performance & Engagement**

- 11. How do you feel about your performance at work?**
- 12. How do you feel about your engagement to your work?**
- 13. How does your motivation affect to your performance and engagement?**
- 14. What are the main factors affecting to your performance and engagement?**