MANAGING DIFFERENT GENERATIONS: CANDENTE NEXUS IN CONTEMPORARY ORGANIZATIONS
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SUMMARY

This article presents a study on the challenges faced by contemporary administrators in managing people from different generations within organizations. Problems of conflict between generations, as a rule, are present in companies and with the entry of Generation Z and its specific characteristics, a greater dissonance in work relationships was noticed. The study provided a more targeted analysis of Generation Z with its *modus vivendi*, their motivations and their aspirations in relation to work. It is worth highlighting that elements such as new digital information and knowledge technologies help in understanding and managing the critical points of people management, which now needs to make efforts and implement new proposals to attract and retain talent. The research was carried out in an exploratory manner, with a methodology based on the observation of contemporary social facts and supported by bibliographical research, providing an immersion in piercing questions that are part not only of short and medium term planning regarding people management, but also in the new possibilities of strategies aimed at transdisciplinarity and order ecologies

social, economic and psychological, adding to new digital technologies to equip administrators to encourage leaders who are better prepared to act in a dynamic and constantly changing world.
Key words: Conflicts. Generations. Generation Z. Work relationships. Companies

ABSTRACT

This article presents a study on the challenges of contemporary administrators in managing people from different generations within organizations. The problems of conflicts between generations, as a rule, are present in companies and with the entry of Generation Z and its specific characteristics, a greater dissonance in labor relations was noticed. The study provided a more focused analysis of Generation Z with their modus vivendi, their motivations and their aspirations towards work. It is worth noting that elements such as the new digital information and knowledge technologies help in the knowledge and handling of the critical points of people management, which now needs to make efforts and implement new proposals to attract and retain talent. The research carried out in an exploratory manner, with a methodology supported by the observation of contemporary social facts and supported by bibliographical research, provided an immersion in nagging questions that are part not only of short and medium-term planning

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regarding people management, but also in new possibilities for strategies aimed at transdisciplinarity and at social, economic and psychological ecologies, adding to new digital technologies to provide administrators with the impetus for leaders better prepared to act in a dynamic and constantly changing world.

1. INTRODUCTION

Companies are fundamentally made up of individuals, whose differences embody and form their social fabric. In this line of thought, it is worth highlighting that there are differences related to the generations of people within organizations and that they can present both a competitive advantage and challenges, which need to be observed and managed.

Enterprises as a stratum of social representation, even legally, are representative entities, but with their own existence, made up of people, and carry some conflicts in their structures, just like in life in general. In this sense, contemporary managers or administrators, in order to manage people effectively, need to understand the complexity of this process, considering that in organizations, within *operational locus,* distinct generations that not only do things in different ways but also learn differently.

In other words, when it comes to work and the need to create teams, it is essential to consider that generations have characteristics and behaviors in which the identity of their generation directly influences their actions, decisions and also the *modus operandi* in their work activities. Grub (2018, p. 10) states that:

> Instead of the previous cycles of successive generations, companies are increasingly faced with staff that span increasingly wider age ranges. Senior leaders, managers, and HR professionals must manage a mixed workforce spanning four generations with very different ideas about work ethic, work-life balance, long-term career goals, and other issues.

In fact, managing people from different generations is a daunting challenge for contemporary administrators, as people have unique and sometimes diametrically opposed characteristics and properties, and when it comes to different generations this is accentuated. Leaders need to work on this reality, considering that, despite the

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differences, all employees need to build work and pursue goals together. Added to this complexity, there are new contexts of digital information and knowledge technologies (TDICs) and there is no longer a precise definition of "beginning and end" and the Cartesian thoughts that have led companies to the present day are no longer sufficient to assist in basis for making decisions regarding the management of people and their respective generations of origin.

Among the group of people in organizations, the generation classified as Z is the one that is growing more and more in relation to the number of jobs, bringing new challenges and paradoxes to leaders, including in relation to old remuneration policies and motivation. New paradigms are established and old metrics do not support breaking them.

In the desire to understand this scenario that presents itself in relation to people management, when it is absolutely necessary to consider the characteristics of each generation, administrators are asked some questions to be answered:

- What are the characteristics of Generation Z and what actions companies need to develop to understand and meet this new *modus vivendi*?
- What is the diagnosis regarding the satisfaction of these people and what effective actions are taken by organizations to achieve this satisfaction?
- What is being done in relation to the leadership of people from Generation Z and what are the remuneration policies and advantages offered by organizations to attract and retain talent from this generation?

To this end, qualitative methodology was used, based on the observation of contemporary social and economic facts and the analysis of the current context of organizations as well as bibliographic references that deal with the topic.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In the contemporary context of organizations that are located at the epicenter of exponential changes (social, philosophical, technological, financial), managing people is now a central point and increasingly complex and challenging, since there is a mix of generations of people, which causes a generational cultural clash and some burning conflicts. In the recent past, there was a dynamic of replacement of generations in jobs, a dynamic that did not happen in a linear way, but juxtaposed - a generation

removed from the scene and gave way (still gradually) to the next generation. Due to advances in medicine and technology in a broad and general way, new rules for employment contracts and social security policies have taken new forms, interfering with the dynamics and working time, both of which are increasingly extended within organizations and drive major transformations.

Such transformations integrate demographic and cultural aspects and metamorphoses, not only in the transactional market for products and services, but also in jobs. Now, what is observed is a mosaic of generations and the intense, massive use and application of (TDICs), which is pervasive, reverberates in the beating heart of business, and is used as a tool in daily work within organizations.

Figure 1 shows the generations (Baby Boomers Generation X, Generation Y and Generation Z), with their respective ages, their representation, with emphasis on the participation and growth of Generation Z in the social context of Brazil.

Figure 1 – Generations and their representation in Brazil
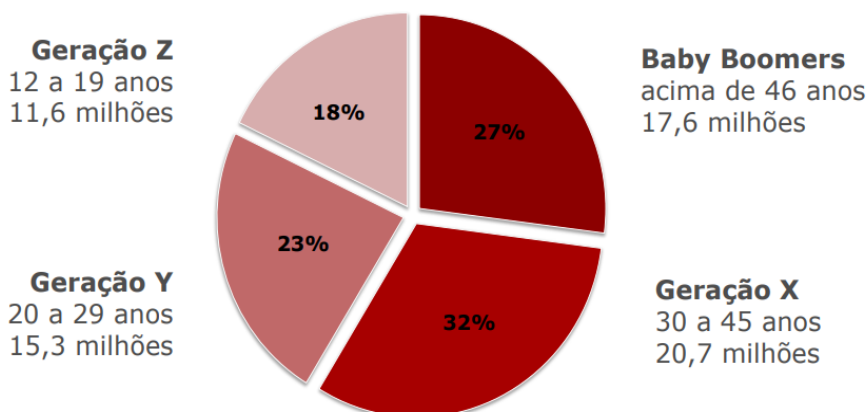
Source: www.Ibope.com.br. Accessed on: 18 Aug. 2021

From what was shown in Figure 1, we have that the Baby Boomers Generation, which is made up of people over 46 years old and its main characteristics is the appreciation of work, the rise of the professional career to guarantee the construction of a good patrimony. They almost always stay in the same job until retirement.

Generation X refers to people between the ages of 30 and 45. They have a more conservative profile, they are not very daring people, however they are the first to experiment with technological advances. Just like the Baby Boomers Generation, they value the search for advancement

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of positions in the enterprise in which they work and generally stay in the same organization for a long time.

As for Generation Y, also known as**Millennials**, comprises individuals between 20 and 29 years old. They are more demanding in relation to the roles they perform at work and are not afraid to change jobs or choose to develop something that truly gives them satisfaction, both professionally and personally.

Specifically about Generation Z, also called Centennial, it concerns people between 12 and 19 years old and practically from birth they are connected by digital technologies. It is important to highlight that this contingent participates in consumption in general, as well as, increasingly, occupying jobs and holding a prominent place in organizations. They are multitasking, independent, immediate and demanding, including in relation to the roles they perform in companies

Given this scenario, contemporary administrators, when managing and supervising companies' human capital, have created effective and assertive actions to guide generations with processes of talent attraction, motivation, recognition, job and salary policies, in a broad and collective way. , but with an increasingly focus on collective harmony, on teams of leaders and on each person specifically.

This new way of conceiving people management is guided by the timeline of the generations that now make up the structural body of organizations, with each of these generations presenting peculiar characteristics, as already mentioned. Specifically regarding Generation Z, Prensky (2001, p. 1) calls them digital natives due to their uses and experiences with new digital technologies:

> They have spent their entire lives surrounded by and using computers, video games, digital music players, video cameras, cell phones, and all the other toys and tools of the digital age. On average, a current graduate student has spent less than 5,000 hours of their life reading, but over 10,000 hours playing video games (not counting 20,000 hours watching television). Computer games, e-mail, the Internet, cell phones, and instant messaging are integral parts of their lives.

As they are surrounded by new technologies, they also have an overhead (*overload*) of information and an extreme need for interaction and expression of opinion. Sometimes, they are detached from geographic boundaries and have a broader perception of the world. Anxiety is a characteristic of this generation which, with acute pragmatism, falters when it comes to intimacy and social interactions. Have low confidence in

social security programs (which suffer impacts of all kinds and directions), in such a way that they seek to be independent, focusing on their appreciation of professional growth and focusing their efforts on personal endeavors.

Added to the lack of experience and family overprotection, they have low concentration and tend to flourish and present results in more contemporary structures. In Figure 2, you can find the main characteristics of Generation Z.

Figure 2 – Main characteristics of Generation Z

Source: prepared by the author based on Grubb (2018)

Figure 2 shows that Generation Z has some of its own characteristics, such as being hyper-connected, pragmatic, socially progressive and having low concentration. With the advent of this generation within organizations, which occupies more and more spaces, and with the meeting of two other generations (Generation X and Generation Y), conflicts are inherent and drive new strategies for leaders and organizations as a all. In addition to promoting social peace and coexistence, leaders need to motivate and train the three generations to develop specific areas, through the following actions:

- take risks promoting innovation and disruption;
- develop endogenous entrepreneurship;
- seek social engagement to satisfy *stakeholders*;
- establish speed in internal processes and;
- understand and work with finite and restrictive budgets.

In fact, the diversity that generations present within the workplace can also be converted into a competitive advantage, because managers can stimulate a greater and wider variety of ideas, with different points of view and a diverse way of thinking. and experiences. Another interesting point for administrators is being able to use their internal knowledge base (skills, competencies, products and services) to evaluate their external knowledge base (markets and consumers). In other words, leaders who are attuned to these perspectives can transform problems into opportunities, as suggested by Grub (2018, p. 54):

> Senior leaders must engage in how to support and encourage innovation at all levels and throughout the organization! Innovation can only flourish in a workplace that fosters a culture of inclusion and willingly welcomes ideas and suggestions from everyone, regardless of age and other personal characteristics. This culture values the experiences and perspectives of workers of all ages and keeps them focused on the company's future.

An important factor that leaders need to pay attention to is understanding employee satisfaction, especially that of Generation Z, which has a high turnover rate within organizations, with their stay lasting no more than four years. It is not enough to just attract talent, effective actions are needed to retain and discourage job turnover (*Turn Over*).

In this sense, the management of organizations, which are responsible for developing remuneration, promotion and recognition policies, aim to mitigate the flight of these "young brains". It is important to institute joint actions stimulating synergy between departments, as well as bringing leadership and employees closer together, with the adoption of job and salary plans that are not too extensive and with a focus on promoting continuous improvements for both the organization and employees. employees), in a harmonious adjustment in which "win-win" prevails.

Another prominent factor in this scenario is organizational culture and diversity. Without the presence of Generation Z for two decades, the culture often prevailed that quality and technical power allowed leaders to develop inappropriate and even aberrative behaviors towards their followers. This occurred because there was some uncertainty among administrators in being able to attract and retain leaders with high technical performance. With the emergence of Generation Z, there is a new work attitude, with a focus on values such as well-being and appreciation of work relationships based on the commitment of the human person and diversity, in addition to the establishment of attitudes and actions that promote

the mental health of employees in the organization as a whole. In this sense and in the intelligence of Martins and Oliveira (2020) who states that it is important:

> Determine that Knowledge Management is an integral part of short, medium and long-term strategic planning, converting intellectual capital into products, goods and services that can be valued across the entire dimension of the organization and with recognition from society. A worrying point regarding knowledge management is the attention to ensuring that the work carried out by employees is not precarious, as well as total attention to avoiding the alienation of employees or disregard for the organizational culture.

Examples of this new culture are the titans of the information technology sector Google, Microsoft and Apple. These companies understand that their greatest asset is in the people who make up their conglomerate of enterprises (and their derivatives) and, to this end, they carry out actions and policies to value people as a cutting-edge strategy added to a competitive market advantage by explaining these policies and strengthen the perception of value of all generations. In effect, this strategy is now being pursued by countless other companies, as well as having repercussions on the ideas of administrators who are still stuck in old models of managing people and their leaders. It is important to highlight that this is not unanimous, such that often unsuspecting managers tend to revisit orthodox concepts from old administration, and these administrative déjàvus return to archaic practices that still persist within companies.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Companies are made up of people and, as a rule, this formation is made up of generations that interconnect as in a mosaic forming a social fabric. Within this diversity, leadership represents an axial point, since diversity involves challenges in managing teams. It can be seen, then, that managing and leading people from different generations presents itself as one of the main challenges of contemporary administration within organizations. In the last 50 years, social, economic, philosophical and even public policy phenomena in relation to labor relations - contracts, retirement rules, for example, have had a direct influence on the management of people within companies, with an effect on negotiations to replace employees. generations, which are becoming obsolete. With the advent of new dynamics in the gears of the increasingly mixed workforce,

where what prevails is the juxtaposition of generations, the generation called Z in this scenario stands out.

Generation Z, which comprises people born between 1990 and 2010, is present within organizations and represents a significant and growing number, and, with this reality, there are new challenges for managers and the enterprise as a whole.

Digital natives, who grew up surrounded by (TDICs), in addition to inciting a natural clash with other generations, present new mental models of motivation and values   related to work practice.

Not very fond of or little in tune with capitalist logic, the rationality and pragmatism of Generation Z directs them towards personal enrichment without moving away from the emotional and sensory fields. Even though they have their own lack of attention, their responsibilities mix self-education with inventiveness for the digital universe, a place where their creativity is almost always innovative and disruptive. Therefore, job planning, salaries and talent attraction and retention programs can no longer support the desires of this generation, which causes disconcerting impacts on the structures of organizations in contemporary times.

In addition to the need for leaders who can encourage engagement in employees with a focus on results, today's administrators face the challenge of empowering new leaders capable of promoting speed in internal processes, fostering entrepreneurship, stimulating innovations (with an eye and focus on external and internal), all this with a scarcity of resources, including financial ones. It is essential that managers seek an organizational climate that can encourage full diversity, in which emotional well-being is constant and uninterrupted.

Even though they may seem like insurmountable challenges, giant companies in the technology sectors apply new ways and practices of managing people, with a focus on Generation Z and these practices are even recognized as a competitive advantage and represent investment in the intellectual capital assets of these organizations, which are exponents in contemporary times. By understanding the potential that Generation X brings in terms of power in interconnectivity with new digital technologies, companies seek to mine this treasure and, at the same time, seek to understand this new burning nexus. Therefore, for efficient and effective management of the amalgamation of generations in companies, attentive administrators need to make efforts to develop internal policies in the company.

area of   people management that harmonizes with the promotion and recognition (collective and individual) of employees and who need to understand that this harmony goes beyond what is conventional or what capitalism says.

The social and psychological ecologies of Generation Z present in their structures new determinants of valuation with regard to work and, in this sense and direction, they bring new approaches and encourage adaptations and remodeling of work relationships in which the gain is mutual, between employees and companies.

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