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Purpose: Employers face the challenge of preparing for a new, upcoming generational cohort that is different in its expectations of the workplace, which goes hand-in-hand with its values. Therefore, Generation Z in Austria must receive detailed attention because it will make up a significant proportion of the workforce in the future. Questions will emerge about how to recruit this cohort or how to retain them. This research fills this gap by analyzing their espoused national cultural values and corresponding work values while considering the implications of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic.

Design/Method/Approach: This quantitative research surveyed 137 Austrians from Generation Z.

Findings: The results show a low Power Distance score, concluding that Austrian Generation Z does not prefer unequally distributed power; a low preference for Collectivism, a higher preference for Uncertainty Avoidance, and lower Masculinity. In terms of work values, Austrian Generation Z demonstrated the strongest preference for intrinsic and social rewards and emphasized the importance of offering benefits such as remote work opportunities and flexibility in scheduling work.

Theoretical Implications: This study shows that espoused national cultural values impact work values in the context of Austrian Gen Z. Thus, both the espoused national cultural framework and the work values framework can be considered suitable for investigating values differences.

Practical Implications: Human Resources practices should be adapted to successfully recruit and retain Austrian Generation Z.

Originality/Value: This research is among the early attempts to not only understand how espoused national cultural values and COVID impact the work values of Generation Z in Austria.

Research Limitations/Future Research: The smaller sample size and the over representation of females impact the extent to which findings can be generalized to all of Generation Z in Austria. Future research should expand the sample within Austria and internationally.

Paper type: Empirical

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Робота та сповідувані національні культурні цінності покоління Z в Австрії

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Мета роботи: Перед роботодавцями стоїть завдання підготуватися до приходу нового покоління, яке відрізняється своїми очікуваннями від робочого місця, й відповідає цінностям певного покоління. Тому до покоління Z в Австрії слід привернути увагу, оскільки у майбутньому воно буде зберігати значну частину робочої сили. Виникатимуть питання про те, як набрати цю робочу сила чи як її утримати. Це дослідження заповнює цю прогалину, аналізуючи їхні сповідувані національні культурні цінності та відповідні трудові цінності, враховуючи наслідки пандемії SARS-CoV-2.

Дизайн / Метод / Підхід дослідження: У цьому кількісному дослідженні було опитано 138 австрійців з покоління Z.

Результати дослідження: Результати показали дуже низький показник дистанції влади, з чого можна зробити висновок, що австрійське покоління Z не воліє нерівномірно розподілену владу; низька перевага колективізму; більш висока перевага уникнення невизначеності та нижчий рівень маскулінності. Що стосується робочих цінностей, австрійське покоління Z продемонструвало найбільш сильну перевагу внутрішній та соціальній винагороді та підкреслило важливість пропонування таких переваг, як можливість віддаленої роботи та гнучкість робочого графіка.

Теоретична цінність дослідження: Дане дослідження показує, що затверджені національні культурні цінності справді впливають на робочі цінності в контексті австрійського покоління Z. Таким чином, як сповідувані національно-культурні рамки, так і рамки робочих цінностей можна вважати придатними для дослідження ціннісних відмінностей.

Практична цінність дослідження: Тому необхідно адаптувати практику управління персоналом, щоб успішно наймати та утримувати австрійців покоління Z.

Оригінальність / Цінність дослідження: Це дослідження є однією з перших спроб не лише зрозуміти, як національні культурні цінності та COVID впливають на робочі цінності покоління Z в Австрії.

Обмеження дослідження / Майбутні дослідження: Невеликий розмір вибірки та надмірне представництво жінок впливають на те, якою мірою результати можна узагальнити для всього покоління Z в Австрії. Майбутні дослідження мають розширити вибірку в Австрії та за кордоном.

Тип статті: Емпіричний

Ключові слова: покоління Z; Австрія; трудові цінності; сповідувані національні культурні цінності.

1. Introduction

G eneration Z is either entering the workforce or will be entering the workforce within the not too distant future. Accordingly, many researchers are shifting their focus to understand Generation Z better. Soon, this new generational cohort will outrun the Millennials as the most populous generation and therefore requires detailed attention (*Moore, Jones & Frazier, 2017*).

Several researchers define Generation Z as a generational cohort "born sometime between the early to mid-1990s through 2000s" (*Farrell & Phungsoonthorn, 2020, p. 2*), while other researchers specifically define Generation Z as individuals born between 1995 and 2010 (*Priporas, Stylos & Fotiadis, 2017*). The starting point of 1995 coincides with the World Wide Web becoming openly accessible (*Chicca & Shellenbarger, 2018*). Thus, unlike other generations, Generation Z is the first generation to be born into a digital environment surrounded by digital communication (*Reinikainen, Kari & Luoma-Aho, 2020; Smith, 2019*). With access to technology throughout their life, this generation is also called "Digital Natives, The Post Millennials, The New Silent Generation, and The Net Generation" (*Bassiouni & Hackley, 2014, p. 116*).

Austria is "one of the most prosperous and stable EU Member States" (*Embassy of Austria, 2022, para. 1*). According to the *World Bank (2022)*, Generation Z makes up approximately 40% of the Austrian population. This represents a significant demographic for which employers must prepare and adapt. To attract and retain employees from this generation, employers will need to understand their values and needs (*Kapoor & Solomon, 2011*).

In addition to generational values, past research has shown that there are also differences in espoused national cultural values (*Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 1983a*). These attributes strongly influence work values and how business is done in Austria. Given the importance of Austria and this generational cohort to Austria and the corresponding dearth of research surrounding the implications of national and generational culture, this research aims to gain insights into the work values of Generation Z in Austria while considering the impact that COVID may have had on those values. Thus, this research aims to answer the question: What effects do the espoused national cultural values and generational values have on the work values of Generation Z in Austria?

To achieve this, the research covers the theoretical framework by providing an overview of generation Z, espoused national cultural values of Austria based on the Hofstede framework, and finally, work values based on the framework from *Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman, and Lance (2010)*.

This research empirically investigates the impact generational and national cultural values may influence work values through the use of an online survey. Accordingly, this study offers a valuable contribution to the area of intercultural management.

2. Theoretical Background

P eople's values are shaped by their interaction with the world around them. Each generation experiences different formative life events resulting in generational differences in various aspects of life. Specifically, *Strauss and Howe (1991)* defined a generation as "a cohort-group whose length approximates the span of a phase of life and whose boundaries are fixed by peer personality" (*Strauss & Howe, 1991*). Building on this work, *Gabrielova and Buchko (2021)*, suggest the four diverse generations engaged in the labor market can be categorized as follows: Baby Boomers (born 1946-1963), Generation X (born 1963-1981), Generation Y (born 1981-1996) and Generation Z (born 1995-2012). As noted by scholars, every generation has had different formative experiences that are reflected in different ways of thinking and living (*Corsten, 1999*). Life events have a considerable significance and therefore influence the behavior and mindset of each generational cohort (*Twenge et al., 2010*).

2.1. Generation Z

G eneration Z is the cohort that recently entered or is about to enter the workforce (*Lapoint & Liprie-Spence, 2017*). Academics also identified that different generations have different motivators within the workplace (*Montana & Petit, 2011*). In contrast to other generational cohorts, Generation Z emphasizes personal growth, clear career paths, and multiple work formats (*Adecco, 2015*). Other studies suggest that for Generation Z, inclusion and diversity in the workplace play an essential role in their decision-making when deciding on a job (*Deloitte, 2020*). It has also been suggested that Generation Z is more intrinsically motivated than previous generations (*Mahmoud et al., 2020*). Moreover, researchers found that within the workplace, Austrian Generation Z is concerned with questions about how their team operates, what the typical workday looks like, and how varied and thrilling their job is or will be (*Zehetner & Zehetner, 2019*).

A significant characteristic dominating Generation Z is that they grow up as digital natives with unrestricted access to technology (*Bassiouni & Hackley, 2014*). While other generations needed to adapt to life-changing innovations like Google, Facebook, Youtube, or Smartphones, Generation Z simply never knew about a world without these gadgets. Therefore, the tech-savvy generational cohort feels comfortable in performing web searches through search engines to gain information, use the internet for content creation, and are said to prefer typing over handwriting (*Berk, 2009*).

However, internet penetration was not consistent worldwide, and generational cohort members may not have enjoyed the same access to technology. For example, in Thailand, internet usage was still at levels many western countries had experienced 10 or 15 years prior (*Farrell & Phungsoonthorn, 2020*). However, as seen in *Tab. 1*, Austria was at the forefront of internet penetration, with the percentage of internet usage in Austria consistently ahead of the EU as a whole and generally not far behind or at times even ahead of North America.

Table 1: Individuals using the Internet (% of population)

	Austria	EU	North America
1995	1.89%	1.51%	8.73%
2000	33.73%	19.65%	43.88%
2005	58.00%	48.30%	68.33%
2010	75.17%	68.70%	72.55%
2015	83.94%	75.65%	76.12%
2020	87.53%	84.74%	91.52%

Source: Data obtained from the World bank database (*International Telecommunication Union, 2022*)

Furthermore, as seen in *Tab. 2*, 100 percent of the younger population access the internet. Thus, supporting suggestions that this generation would be tech savvier than previous generations.

According to *Kaiser-Jovy, Scheu and Greier (2017)*, media consumption is becoming an important leisure activity among children and young adults. They found that, on average, the children and young adults have five to six devices that they use on average up to 12 hours per day. Furthermore, the study found that young people tend to use their devices in parallel, meaning that it is common to use the television or computer at the same time as being active on a smartphone or tablet.

Even though Generation Z has a constant connection to technology, other scholars argue that they prefer face-to-face communication within the workplace as opposed to email, instant messaging, or other (*Randstad, 2014*). This highlights the relevance of the social environment within the workplace, which can have an impact on Generation Z's job satisfaction (*Ozkan & Solmaz, 2015*).

Table 2: Austrian Use in Households

	16 to 24 years	25 to 34 years	35 to 44 years	45 to 54 years	55 to 64 years	65 to 74 years
2010	95%	92%	86%	77%	53%	28%
2015	99%	99%	94%	87%	69%	46%
2016	99%	100%	95%	83%	72%	51%
2017	100%	100%	98%	91%	80%	52%
2018	99%	98%	96%	93%	77%	54%
2019	99%	98%	96%	91%	81%	54%
2020	100%	98%	96%	92%	78%	57%
2021	100%	100%	99%	97%	89%	66%

Source: Data obtained from *Statistik Austria (2022)*

2.2. Austria

Austria is a small country in the heart of Europe. From Mozart to Falco, Austria is known for music and culture (*Szabo & Reber, 2007*). To understand the Austrian culture, it is important to understand its various influences.

2.2.1. Roots of Culture

A county's latitude has been shown to correlate with espoused national cultural values regarding the distribution of power and the extent to which people identify as an individual or as a group. A country's tendency toward the unequal distribution of power is inversely related to its distance from the equator, while preference toward group orientation has a positive relationship with distance from the equator (*Dobson & Gelade, 2012*). Given Austria's location of 47.20° North of the equator (*CIA, 2022*), it can be expected that Austrians will have a moderate relationship with both the distribution of power and the extent to which people identify as individuals.

Furthermore, according to *Hofstede (2013)*, countries with roman roots tend to be less comfortable with uncertainty and do what they can to minimize it. Moreover, Hofstede suggests that societies once conquered by the Romans tend to have an unequal distribution of power while those with Germanic roots tended toward more equality. Austria is in the unique position of having been under Roman rule (*Sheehan, 2003*) while also having Germanic roots.

Finally, Austria is 57% catholic (*CIA, 2022*) which, according to *Hofstede et al. (2010)*, correlates with how the society distributes power and the extent to which individuals are comfortable with uncertainty. Hofstede suggests that catholic societies are not comfortable with uncertainty and also tend toward unequal distribution of power.

2.2.2. Social Values

As seen in *Tab. 3*, data obtained from the European Values Study (EVS) (*EVS/WVS, 2022*), Austrian value family, friends, leisure time, and work the most, although, during the lifetime of Generation Z, the value of work has declined while the value of friends and leisure time have increased.

Table 3: Values in Austria

Value	Year	Descriptives				ANOVA	
		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	F	Sig.
Important in life: Family	1990	1442	1.16	.433	.011	18.638	.000
	1999	1511	1.13	.405	.010		
	2008	1509	1.25	.537	.014		
	2018	1642	1.20	.485	.012		
Important in life: Friends	1990	1450	1.82	.705	.019	104.195	.000
	1999	1514	1.69	.674	.017		
	2008	1510	1.50	.628	.016		
	2018	1643	1.45	.594	.015		
Important in life: Leisure time	1990	1437	1.83	.752	.020	24.550	.000
	1999	1507	1.78	.717	.018		
	2008	1510	1.67	.697	.018		
	2018	1642	1.63	.674	.017		
Important in life: Politics	1990	1426	2.83	.892	.024	32.279	.000
	1999	1513	2.66	.868	.022		
	2008	1504	2.66	.887	.023		
	2018	1638	2.51	.857	021		
Important in life: Work	1990	1433	1.47	.662	.017	31.665	.000
	1999	1508	1.46	.699	.018		
	2008	1508	1.60	.753	.019		
	2018	1640	1.67	.786	.019		
Important in life: Religion	1990	1440	2.30	.995	.026	35.346	.000
	1999	1507	2.40	.996	.026		
	2008	1499	2.55	.992	.026		
	2018	1629	2.64	.980	.024		

Source: Data obtained from the European Values Study (EVS) (*EVS/WVS, 2022*)

Furthermore, according to the EVS, Austrians indicated that feeling of responsibility, manners, independence, as well as tolerance and respect for other people were the top four most important values to teach children. Those values preferences remained consistently important throughout the lives of Austrian Generation Z.

2.2.3. Espoused National Cultural Values

Hofstede's framework of national cultural values is arguably the most predominantly used in academic work, specifically in psychology, sociology, marketing, or management studies (*Srite & Karahanna, 2006*). *Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2010)* suggested four original value dimensions and later expanded the values dimensions by two. Hofstede's original dimensions are: Individualism/Collectivism, Masculinity/Femininity, Uncertainty avoidance, and Power Distance. Later the values dimensions were extended with Long-term orientation and Indulgence.

As the original dimensions are those most used in research, this research will focus solely on those original four dimensions.

Individualism/Collectivism

Individualism vs. Collectivism relates to how interdependent society is between its members (*Hofstede et al., 2010b*). It mirrors the preference of individuals towards a social framework and states that in societies that tend toward Individualism, members tend to prioritize their own interests and aims over the group, whereas in collectivist societies, members value the group, and loyalty towards the group is important (*Zhang & Maruping, 2008*).

Austria's distance from the equator would indicate a moderate preference for Individualism. According to *Hofstede et al. (2010)*, Austria is considered an Individualist society, indicating that individuals are expected to only care for themselves and their nuclear family members. Furthermore, an individualistic society has been found to empower its members to determine their own path in life and to chase their personal goals (*Diener, Diener & Diener, 1995*).

Applied to the work environment, scholars argue that an individualistic corporate environment is characterized by employees not meeting regularly, which impacts the emotional and psychological support, while a collectivist corporate environment puts great emphasis on a sense of community and belonging (*Akuffo, 2020*). Specifically, the current pandemic forced numerous companies in Austria to adjust to remote work, thus limiting social contacts, which can be expected to lead to a stronger preference for individualistic values.

Concerning Generation Z, *Stein (2007)* concluded that this generational cohort tends to grow up with fewer siblings than previous generations, which can cause parents to lavish their children with attention, affection, and money, leading to early signs of egocentric Individualism. Similarly, *Turner (2015)* argues that when comparing Generation Z to other generational cohorts, he observes that they are individualistic, self-absorbed, and less team-oriented. Within the workplace, Generation Z is said to choose a career of their own interest, not because they want to meet anyone's requirements (*Bencsik, Juhász & Horváth-Csikós, 2016*).

Further, *Sirsch, Dreher, Mayr, and Willinger (2009)* suggest that Austrian adolescents rank Individualism, in detail being independent of parents or other influences and deciding on their personal beliefs and values, to be the most significant factor in reaching adult status.

Given that Austria is described as individualistic on a cultural level and the global generational cohort too, it is to be expected that Generation Z in Austria also agrees with this line of argument.

Masculinity/Femininity

Masculinity vs. femininity is seen through the lens of traditional gender roles and stereotypes where aggression and competition are considered masculine values while compassion and nurturing are considered feminine values (*Hofstede et al., 2010b*). According to *Szabo and Reber (2007)*, Austrians tend to be assertive and performance-driven. These values are indicative of a more masculine culture.

Within the workplace, Austrian companies are strongly incentive-driven and focus on measuring success through reward and performance systems (*Reichel, Mayrhofer & Chudzikowski, 2009*). Therefore, employees working overtime hours are more likely to be considered engaged and enabled to rival their colleagues in terms of reward and promotion opportunities (*Burke, 2001*).

Although Austrian Generation Z is raised within a rather masculine society, scholars found that differences in generational values exist (*Wey Smola & Sutton, 2002; Gibson, Greenwood, & Murphy, 2009*). While the Millennials, for example, are among the first generational cohorts that strongly raised the need for a proper work-life balance, Generation Z is stated to be even more self-centered towards their well-being (*Pulevska-Ivanovska, Postolov, Janeska-Iliev, Magdinceva Sopova, 2017*).

Consequently, Generation Z places a higher value on work-life balance as it allows them to smoothly combine work and private life while maintaining a healthy balance (*Sánchez-Hernández, González-López, Buenadicha-Mateos & Tato-Jiménez, 2019*).

Uncertainty Avoidance

Uncertainty avoidance is the degree to which a society feels threatened and vulnerable by unpredictable and unknown situations (*Zhang & Maruping, 2008*). Societies that tend to avoid uncertainty feel an emotional need for rules, and correspondingly, decisions or choices are made after diligent analysis of all available information (*Hofstede et al., 2010*). Austria's previously mentioned tie to Catholicism would indicate a lack of comfort with uncertainty. According to *Hofstede et al. (2010b)*, there is indeed a preference for avoiding uncertainty in Austria.

Within the workplace, Austria is known for its hard-working and punctual mentality (*Hofstede et al., 2010*), and in general, an orientation toward rule-governed behavior has been shown in the German-speaking countries (*Martin et al., 2013*). Applied to the corporate context, this means that a society that avoids uncertainty strives for security and stability in the workplace, which is achieved by establishing norms to govern employee behavior (*Sorge & Hofstede, 1983*). A clear indicator in Austria is the highly regimented employer-employee relationship (*Reichel et al., 2009*).

For Generation Z, scholars argue that being raised in turbulent political and economic periods made them more careful and concerned about emotional, physical, and monetary safety (*Chicca & Shellenbarger, 2018*). Correspondingly, another study revealed that Generation Z is not easily influenced by older generations in their decision-making process and therefore tends to prefer to make decisions carefully and independently (*Kantorová, Jonášová, Panuš & Lipka, 2017*). Given these facts, it is to be expected that also Austrian Generation Z will report a higher index of Uncertainty avoidance.

Power Distance

Power distance is the extent to which the less powerful members of a society accept power differentials and inequality (*Zhang & Maruping, 2008*). Given Austria's latitude, history as part of the Roman Empire, and ties to Catholicism, it could be expected that Austria would tend toward moderate power distance. Still, *Hofstede et al. (2010)* consider Austria a low Power distance society and therefore argue that it is a society that values equal rights and, within the workplace in Austria, superiors that are accessible and empower their subordinates. Furthermore, this also means that Austrians tend to dislike control and embrace direct and participative communication (*Hofstede et al., 2010b*).

In this regard, Generation Z is said to place a particularly high value on equality and fairness in all situations (*Goh & Okumus, 2020*). *Seemiller and Grace (2017)* found in their study that Generation Z

students truly believe in their ability to change the world despite the frustration about the persistent injustices within society.

Having this belief demonstrates Generation Z's readiness and desire to change current problems and ineffective systems that continue to oppress marginalized populations. For this reason, Generation Z is said to advocate for equal human rights and strive for social justice (*Tanaid & Wright, 2019*).

Austria's Generation Z will follow this assertion as they are raised in a country with a low Power Distance index, and in general, Generation Z shows a tendency toward lower equality.

2.3. Work Values

Following the findings of *Wey Smola & Sutton (2002)*, values refer to what people consider to be fundamentally right or wrong, and work values apply this question within the work environment. In accordance, work values can therefore drive decisions, attitudes, and goals (*Ester & Roe, 1999*).

Work values have been examined from different perspectives. *Rhodes (1983)*, for example, examined whether work values are constant and suggested that work values, attitudes, and satisfaction change as employees pass through different career stages. *Dose (1997)* noted that work values enable the perception of employees' preferences within the workplace.

Elizur (1984) more specifically researched the different types of work values and identified that extrinsic work values (e.g., pay and job security) and intrinsic work values (e.g., motivations and challenges) exist. Building on this work, *Ryan and Deci (2000)* developed the self-determination theory, where a distinction is made between different types of values that influence motivational factors based on different causes or objectives that result in an action. There it was also noted that the most basic differentiation is made between intrinsic and extrinsic work values.

Scholars define intrinsic values as "doing something because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable" (*Ryan & Deci, 2000*), while extrinsic values have a strong focus on the outcome of a particular action. More recent studies explored the effect of altruistic work values, such as making a contribution to the well-being of a society or volunteering (*Twenge et al., 2010*), and identified that social characteristics provide a distinct outlook on work design beyond motivational factors (*Humphrey, Nahrgang & Morgeson, 2007*).

Furthermore, *Twenge et al. (2010)* investigated the effect of work values on different generations within the workplace and found that there are several additional work values, such as impact or autonomy in decision-making, social rewards linked to work relationships, and leisure values that address the possibility of time-off, absence due to vacation and freedom from supervision, which may have an influence on each employees' motivation.

Within their research, the scholars relied on validated and successfully used instruments that have been in operation since 1973, and accordingly, their work counts as one of the most frequently cited within generational value research (*Farrell & Phungsoonthorn, 2020*).

Therefore, this study will incorporate these rewards aiming to understand the degree of influence and preference of Generation Z in Austria.

2.3.1. Extrinsic Work Values

As *Elizur (1984)* noted early on extrinsic work values refer to a consequence of work, such as performing a certain action and thus expecting a certain output. Within research, rewards, praise and promotions are among the most commonly used examples to demonstrate extrinsic work values, which go hand in hand with the desire for financial success and prestige (*Ku & Zaroff, 2014*). Since the results are measurable and of practical use, those values can also be called material or instrumental values (*Taris & Feij, 2001*).

A study based on European countries has highlighted the differences in work values and specifically examined whether a country's society would continue to work without a financial necessity. Austria was among the top countries where the majority of participants supported the idea of continuing to work despite having financial security (*Kittel, Kalleitner, Tsakloglou, 2019*). This behavior demonstrates that Austrian society is not motivated by extrinsic factors.

With regards to Generation Z, scholars report different opinions about their motivational factors. While *Twenge et al. (2010)* argue that this generational cohort is stated to place less emphasis on extrinsic rewards like money and therefore in accordance, Generation Z feels that for them, life is more than just a high paycheck, *Iorgulescu (2016)* found in her study among Romanian students, that career advancement and pay are high priorities for college students. One must mention that Romania indicates a high Power Distance index and therefore supports *Hofstede et al.'s (2010b)* argumentation above.

Kirchmayer and Fratičová (2018) confirm *Twenge et al's. (2010)* argumentation and found that this generation put a meaningful job at the top of their priorities. Several studies on meaningfulness within the workplace suggest that employees that perceive their job as meaningful are more willing to accept an unpaid job or a lower salary (*Bunderson & Thompson, 2009; Dempsey & Sanders, 2010*).

In line with the espoused national values, a positive relationship is reported between extrinsic work values and high Power Distance culture (*Hofstede et al., 2010b*). This implies that high Power Distance cultures tend to assign more importance to extrinsic work values. In the case of Austria, that would mean that the lower power distance would relate to the lower perceived value of extrinsic rewards.

It is consequently to be expected that Generation Z in Austria, preferring low power distance, will have a low preference for extrinsic rewards.

> **Hypothesis 1:** *Power Distance will have a positive impact on the preference for extrinsic rewards.*

2.3.2. Intrinsic Work Values

The concept of intrinsic values states that a person is driven to action because of the pleasure or challenge of a task, not because of the external outcome or reward behind it (*Ryan & Deci, 2000*). *Mitchell and Albright (1972)* identified five different types of intrinsic valences that intrinsically motivated people share.

These are (1) feelings of self-esteem, (2) opportunity to think and act independently, (3) options for self-development, (4) feelings of self-realization, and (5) feelings of reasonable achievement. These can all be classified as intangible rewards (*Twenge et al., 2010*). *Vansteenkiste et al. (2007)* further argue that people who are driven by intrinsic values carry a natural desire for their growth and development.

Supporting empirical evidence can be found in research on the impact of individualistic societies and their need and desire for intrinsic values. *Ahuvia (2002)* makes the argument that individualistic societies can facilitate the establishment of one's own lifestyle, which corresponds to personal preferences and is linked to the pursuit of one's own intrinsic goals. Also, *Schwartz (2011)* highlights the fact that people from individualistic societies fulfill their own self through the achievement of their intrinsic goals and engage in behaviors where they have a chance for self-actualization.

With regards to Generation Z, *Seemiller and Grace (2017)* researched the career aspirations of Generation Z students and found that this generational cohort is strongly driven by intrinsic work values. Participants of their study revealed the importance of happiness and enjoyment in their future careers and shared that true passion

for a job outweighs the desire for a high salary. As it can be expected that Generation Z in Austria, tending toward Individualism, will highly value intrinsic rewards.

Hypothesis 2: The cultural value of Individualism will positively impact the preference for intrinsic rewards.

2.3.3. Altruistic Rewards

ltruistic rewards involve the intention to be helpful towards fellow human beings and feeling the urge to make an active contribution to society (*Twenge et al., 2010*). Generation Z, in particular, is said to place a greater value on helpfulness than other generational cohorts (*Ozkan & Solmaz, 2015*). For other generational cohorts, *Twenge et al. (2010)* report a shift away from altruistic work values.

Concerning Generation Z, the Varkey Foundation found supporting evidence in its study "Generation Z: Global Citizenship survey" that over two-thirds of the surveyed sample consider contributing to the community beyond oneself and one's family members an increasingly important activity (*Broadbent et al., 2017*).

Linking altruistic values to the espoused national values, scholars found that people who hold altruistic beliefs are more likely to be rather collectivistic in their interpersonal relationships (*Realo, Allik, Vadi, 1997*). *Finkelstein* (*2010*) also confirms in her study that altruistic values are strongly associated with collectivist societies.

Nevertheless, it is assumed that members of Generation Z in Austria follow their global cohort, and therefore the following hypothesis is formulated.

Hypothesis 3: The cultural value of Individualism will negatively affect the preference for altruistic rewards.

2.3.4. Leisure Rewards

eisure rewards are benefits that relate to working time and therefore include the possibility of time off and the option to work at a reduced capacity (*Farrell & Phungsoonthorn, 2020*). Since 2013, some collective agreements in Austria allow employees to choose between additional leisure options or a statutory pay increase. This indicates that Austria as a society is open to supporting and promoting leisure rewards, and accordingly, a study was conducted to determine the preferences and motives behind the decision. Participants who chose the additional leisure option dedicated this extra time to gain more free time for their hobbies or to spend more time with their family. The study concluded that leisure rewards are strongly impacted by one's values. For example, employees that attach a high value to high financial security did not choose the additional leisure option (*Gerold & Nocker, 2018*).

On the one hand, according to *Hofstede et al. (2010b)*, Austria is classified as a rather masculine society, driven by success and competition, that goes along with placing a greater value on hard work. On the other hand, several researchers emerge generational differences within leisure preferences (*Twenge et al., 2010*) and Generation Z in Austria, for example, is said to place more emphasis on greater flexibility in the workplace, which includes an appropriate work-life balance that frees up time for possible leisure activities. This can also be seen in the previously mentioned Austrian values, where the preference for leisure increased during the lifetime of Austrian Generation Z and the value of work decreased.

Hypothesis 4: The cultural value of Masculinity will negatively impact the preference for leisure rewards.

2.3.5. Social Rewards

ocial rewards refer to the opportunity to build friendships and collaborate with others (*Farrell & Phungsoonthorn, 2020*). This is strongly linked to the desire to build worthwhile relationships among colleagues. With regards to Generation Z, *Barhate and Dirani's (2021)* systematic literature review concludes

that while Generation Z seeks teamwork and social interaction in the workplace, they may also have difficulties with team collaboration, especially when goals are not met or inefficiencies are encountered.

This is consistent with the findings of another researcher, who found that teamwork even reduced Generation Z's efficiency (*Çora, 2019*). Another study also suggests that Generation Z is not favoring teamwork (*Adecco, 2015*).

Research shows that social rewards tend to be preferred more in collectivist cultures (*Kokubun, 2018*), and given Austrians' preference for Individualism, it can be expected that social rewards will be less important. Therefore, the following hypothesis is formulated.

Hypothesis 5: the cultural value of Individualism will negatively impact the preference for Social rewards.

2.3.6. Autonomy

ork autonomy can be defined as the personal influence one has on a particular job in terms of freedom, independence, and discretion (*Johari, Yean Tan & Tjik Zulkarnain, 2018*).

According to *Inglehart and Oyserman (2004)*, Individualism and Autonomy tend to go hand in hand. As Austria tends toward Individualism, it can be expected that, in general, there is a preference for autonomy. That being said, greater autonomy brings about more uncertain work environments (*Ollo-López, Bayo-Moriones & Larraza-Kintana, 2011*). As Austria also tends to be more uncertainty avoidant, this could negatively impact the preference for autonomy.

Twenge et al. (2010) list the desire for increasing work autonomy among intrinsic values, and *Wiedmer (2015)* found that Generation Z puts great emphasis on a higher degree of autonomy at work, which also includes independence among colleagues. This fact is also confirmed by *Kubátová (2016)*, who studied the work-related attitudes of Czech Generation Z and found that this generation has a deep desire for work autonomy and also expects this from their superiors. Given the fact that it is assumed that Generation Z in Austria will highly value intrinsic rewards, it is also expected that this generational cohort also strives for work autonomy within their careers.

Hypothesis 6: The cultural value of Individualism will have a positive impact on autonomy.

Hypothesis 7: The cultural value of uncertainty avoidance will have a negative impact on autonomy.

3. Research Hypothesis

s previously addressed, this study will focus on the following hypothesis.

Table 4: Overview of Research Hypothesis

Number	Hypothesis
H1	The cultural value of Power Distance will have a positive impact on the preference for extrinsic rewards.
H2	The cultural value of Individualism will positively impact the preference for intrinsic rewards.
H3	The cultural value of Individualism will negatively affect the preference for altruistic rewards.
H4	The cultural value of Masculinity will negatively impact the preference for leisure rewards.
H5	The cultural value of Individualism will negatively impact the preference for Social rewards.
H6	The cultural value of Individualism will have a positive impact on autonomy.
H7	The cultural value of uncertainty avoidance will have a negative impact on autonomy.

Source: Research results, 2022

4. Data and Methods

T his study seeks to understand what effects the espoused national cultural values and generational cultural values have on the work values of Generation Z in Austria. As such, this study follows a quantitative research approach. Data collection was carried out online. The analysis was conducted with SPSS, one of the most commonly used statistical software packages (*Greasley, 2008*).

4.1. Data Collection and Sample

T he quantitative research was conducted by using online questionnaires, specifically Google Forms, which enables all participants to access the questionnaire through their smartphone, tablet, laptop, or other electronic devices by following a short link. The questionnaire was available in German and informed consent was sought. Respondents were selected based on the target population, and each respondent was asked to share the link to the survey with others.

The final questionnaire was launched on February 26, 2021, and was open for data collection for a month. A total of 163 people participated in the survey. After cleaning the data and removing respondents who were too young and/or not from Austria, 137 respondents remained.

As shown in *Tab. 5*, the majority of the sample is female, 70.1%, while the remaining 29.9% are male. Looking at the age distribution, 30.7% were 16 to 18. Although still young, even at this age, the youth are preparing for the next steps and setting expectations for what they want when they enter the workforce. The respondents were distributed through Austria, with the majority coming from Vorarlberg and Vienna. Over 50% of the respondents are currently employed.

Table 5: Demographic Information

Total respondents	137	100%
Gender		
Female:	96	70.1%
Male:	41	29.9%
Age		
16-18	42	30.7%
19-21	17	12.3%
22-24	37	27%
25-27	28	19%
28-30	8	5.9%
31+	7	5.1%
Region of residence		
Vorarlberg	83	60.6%
Vienna	37	27%
Other Austria	17	12.4%
Employment status		
Student	54	39.4%
Full-time employee	46	33.6%
Part-time employee	6	4.4%
Currently unemployed	4	2.9%
Full-time employee + student	9	6.6%
Part-time employee + student	18	13.1%

Source: Research results, 2022

4.2. Measures

T he study builds on the existing work of *Farrell and Phungsoonthorn (2020)*, who analyzed the work values of Generation Z in Thailand.

4.2.1. Cultural Values

T o measure the scale of Power Distance, the scale of *Farrell and Pasqualoni (2017)* was used as it captures culture from an individual perspective and has demonstrated validity and reliability (*Farrell & Phungsoonthorn, 2020*). As already introduced in the literature review, Power Distance indicates to

which extent members with less power are willing to accept an unequal distribution of power within a society (*Hofstede et al., 2010b*). Sample questions are "Once a decision of a top-level executive is made, people working for the company should not question it" and "when standing in a queue, if someone of higher status comes later, it is appropriate to let that person go first in line" (*Farrell & Pasqualoni, 2017, p. 19*).

The construct of Individualism/Collectivism states that individuals are grouped according to their preferences to look after themselves and their direct family only or prefer to belong to groups in return for loyalty (*Hofstede et al., 2010*).

In this study, both scales were measured by using *Jung and Kellaris' (2001)* scale, which is considered valid and reliable for measuring Collectivism and Individualism (*Farrell & Phungsoonthorn, 2020*). Sample questions for Collectivism are "I believe that group harmony is more important than personal satisfaction" and "Acting as an individual is more appealing to me than acting as a member of a group" for measuring Individualism (*Jung & Kellaris, 2001, pp. 142–143*).

Masculinity/Femininity was measured by using the scale development of *Farrell and Eine (2019)*. Masculinity places high emphasis on an achievement-oriented and competitional mindset, while a rather feminine mindset values relationships, and achieving quality in life is seen as a success (*Hofstede et al., 2010*). Sample questions are "I judge my performance on whether I do better than others rather than on just getting good results" and "Success at work means," where participants were asked, based on a bipolar scale, to indicate if their idea of success as work is liking what they do or being the best.

Lastly, Uncertainty avoidance indicates to which extent individuals within society "feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations (*Hofstede et al., 2010b*). Accordingly, *Srite and Karahanna's (2006)* scale was chosen because it shows internal reliability (*Farrell & Phungsoonthorn, 2020*). Sample questions are "It is better to have a bad situation that you know about than to have an uncertain situation which might be better" and "People should avoid making changes because things could get worse" (*p. 704*).

4.2.2. Work Values

W ork values are heavily researched, and in particular, the study of *Twenge et al. (2010)* "Generational Differences in Work Values" with over 1000 citations enjoys reliability and validity within literature (*Farrell & Phungsoonthorn, 2020*). The focus group of the study are students reporting work values that are perceived as crucial when reflecting on the ideal job, and the scales, therefore, include intrinsic, extrinsic, altruistic, social, and leisure rewards (*Twenge et al., 2010*). Sample questions of Twenge et al.'s framework include "a job where the skills I learn will not go out of date," referring to intrinsic values, "a job that has high status and prestige referring to extrinsic values, "a job that is worthwhile to society, representing altruistic values, "a job that gives me a chance to make friends" for social rewards and "a job that leaves a lot of time for other things in my life" referring to leisure rewards.

Additionally, since the reliability analysis indicated compelling adjustments in the questionnaire, two additional questions each for the variables leisure and social values with sample questions "a job that does not require working overtime" and "a job that allows for lots of social interaction" were added from *Toskin and McCharthy (2021)*.

The altruistic sample questions were extended by a question from *Koeske, Kirk, Koeske, and Rauktis (1994)* and indicated "the opportunity for really helping people."

4.3. Analysis

S PSS was utilized to conduct descriptive analysis followed by correlation and then regression analysis. SPSS is a commonly used statistical package considered suitable for the analysis of questionnaire data (*Prvan, Reid & Petocz, 2002*) and one of the

more fitting packages for multiple regression analysis *(Pfister, Schwarz, Carson & Jancyzk, 2013)*.

5. Results

This research aims to understand the work values and cultural values of Austrian Generation Z. This was accomplished through the distribution of a survey consisting of well-established scales. As seen in *Tab. 6*, the reliability analysis showed a value above .70 for all scales except for intrinsic rewards in work values at .681 and Collectivism in cultural values at .680. Although not optimal, both were still considered acceptable *(Goforth, 2015)*.

Table 6: Reliability analysis

Values	Cronbach's Alpha
Cultural	
Uncertainty avoidance	.719
Collectivism	.680
Individualism	.705
Power Distance	.842
Masculinity	.834
Work values	
Leisure rewards	.718
Intrinsic values	.681
Extrinsic values	.845
Altruistic values	.856
Social rewards	.762
Autonomy	.868

Source: Research results, 2022

5.1. Descriptive Statistics

To assess the extent to which our Austrian Gen Z respondents matched our expectations, the means, medians, and quartiles were reviewed. As seen in *Tab. 7*, with a mean of 3.236 for the variable, Austrian Generation Z tends to have a slight preference for the value of Individualism. Furthermore, they show slight feminine tendencies with a mean of 2.986 and with a mean of 3.5, lean toward uncertainty avoidance. These findings fit with expectations surrounding Generation Z in Austria. Similarly, the mean of 2.17 fits with expectations set out by *Hofstede et al.* (2010) regarding Austria valuing low Power Distance.

Gen Z Austria was expected to show a low preference for extrinsic rewards. Although, based on the means, it is valued lower than Intrinsic, Leisure, and Social Rewards, the mean of 4.023 (*Tab. 7*) still suggests an appreciation for extrinsic rewards. Similarly, it was expected that Austrian Generation Z would highly value intrinsic rewards and the mean of 4.599 indicates that this is the case. Furthermore, with a mean of 3.908, altruistic rewards are valued but far below the value, Gen Z in Austria places on other work values.

Looking at leisure rewards, Austria Gen Z followed expectations with a mean of 4.026, indicating a preference for such rewards. Furthermore, with a mean of 4.073, as seen in Table 7, it can be concluded that the Austrian Generation Z highly values social rewards. In fact, social rewards are ranked as their second most appreciated. Finally, with a mean value of 3.823, although valued, work autonomy is the leased valued among the work values.

Table 7: Correlation Matrix

Rewards	Mean	Std. Deviation	Pearson Correlation								
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Extrinsic	4.023	.806									
2. Intrinsic	4.599	.414	.227**								
3. Leisure	4.026	.622	.237**	.445**							
4. Social	4.073	.734	.425**	.347**	.252**						
5. Altruistic	3.908	.894	.246**	.452**	.405**	.471**					
6. Autonomy	3.823	.836	.422**	.420**	.612**	.261**	.317**				
7. Uncertainty Avoidance	3.501	.626	.481**	.278**	.347**	.329**	.309**	.339**			
8. Individualism	3.236	.799	.410**	.239**	.239**	.105	.048	.459**	.361**		
9. Masculinity	2.986	.874	.496**	-.043	-.157	.171*	-.140	.152	.239**	.342**	
10. Power Distance	2.173	.953	.398**	.025	.064	.283**	.093	.280**	.498**	.429**	.478**

N =137
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Source: Research results, 2022

5.2. Regression

Regression analysis was conducted to test the hypothesis. Hypothesis 1 suggested that the cultural value of power distance will have a positive impact on the preference for extrinsic rewards. Controlling for age and gender, the regression model can explain 14% of the variance in extrinsic rewards. All VIFs are close to one, indicating no correlation. Looking at *Tab. 8*, with a regression coefficient of .321, Power Distance does have a positive impact on extrinsic rewards, and it is at a level that can be considered significant. The null hypothesis can be rejected. Accordingly, hypothesis 1 is supported.

Hypothesis 2 suggested that the cultural value of Individualism will positively impact the preference for intrinsic rewards. Here too, the VIF is near 1, indicating no collinearity (*Tab. 9*). Although this model, when controlling for age and gender, only explains 5% of the variance in intrinsic rewards, it can still be seen that Individualism has both a positive (B .132) and significant (p=.003)

impact on the preference for intrinsic rewards. Accordingly, here to the null hypothesis could be rejected.

Hypothesis 3 suggested that the cultural value of Individualism will negatively affect the preference for altruistic rewards. As seen in *Tab. 10*, this regression model was only able to explain 1% of the variation in Altruism and Individualism neither had a negative impact (B .060) nor was it significant (p-value .451). Thus, the null hypothesis could not be rejected. Interestingly, however, Gender had a positive impact (B .353) on Altruism. This indicates that females tend to value Altruism more than males. This is at a level that could be considered significant (p-value .044).

Hypothesis 4 suggests that the cultural value of Masculinity will negatively impact the preference for leisure rewards. Again, here the model has limited explanatory power of 3%. As seen in *Tab. 11*, Masculinity does have a negative impact on leisure rewards (B -.101); however, this is not at a level that can be considered significant. Accordingly, here too, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

Table 8: Extrinsic Rewards Regression Analysis

Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate			
.144	.75067			

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Sig.	VIF
	B	Std. Error		
(Constant)	3.469	.285	.000	
Power Distance	.321	.068	.000	1.057
Gender	-.099	.141	.485	1.014
Age	-.024	.045	.599	1.056

Dependent Variable: Extrinsic Rewards, Predictors: (Constant), Age, Gender, Power Distance

Source: *Research results, 2022*

Table 9: Intrinsic Rewards Regression Analysis

Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate			
.052	.416			

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Sig.	VIF
	B	Std. Error		
(Constant)	4.022	.191	.000	
Gender	.107	.078	.175	1.015
Age	.017	.024	.486	1.007
Individualism	.132	.044	.003	1.012

Dependent Variable: Intrinsic Rewards, Predictors: (Constant), Age, Gender, Individualism

Source: *Research results, 2022*

Table 10: Altruism Regression Analysis

Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate			
.010	.926			

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Sig.	VIF
	B	Std. Error		
(Constant)	3.357	.425	.000	
Gender	.353	.174	.044	1.015
Age	.002	.054	.964	1.007
Individualism	.074	.098	.451	1.012

Dependent Variable: Altruism, Predictors: (Constant), Age, Gender, Individualism

Source: *Research results, 2022*

Table 11: Leisure rewards Regression Analysis

Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate			
.035	.619			

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Sig.	VIF
	B	Std. Error		
(Constant)	4.326	.260	.000	
Gender	.207	.117	.079	1.020
Age	-.036	.036	.317	1.006
Masculinity	-.101	.061	.098	1.016

Dependent Variable: Leisure rewards, Predictors: (Constant), Age, Gender, Masculinity

Source: *Research results, 2022*

Hypothesis 5 suggested that the cultural value of Individualism will negatively impact the preference for Social rewards. As seen in *Tab. 12*, this model has no explanatory power. Furthermore, Individualism is neither negative (B .101) nor significant (p-value .189). Thus, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

Hypothesis 6 suggests that the cultural value of Individualism will have a positive impact on autonomy, and hypothesis 7 suggests that uncertainty avoidance will have a negative impact on autonomy. As seen in *Tab. 13*, this model can explain 22% of the variance in autonomy. Furthermore, the relationship between Individualism and autonomy was both positive (B .415) and significant (p-value .000). Accordingly, for hypothesis 6, the null hypothesis can be rejected. Finally, Uncertainty Avoidance does not have a negative impact on the preference for autonomy but rather a positive one (B .258), and that is at a level that could be considered significant (p-value .026).

Table 12: Social rewards Regression Analysis

Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate			
.009	.724			

	Unstandardized Coefficients			
	B	Std. Error	Sig.	VIF
(Constant)	3.767	.333	.000	
Gender	.181	.136	.185	1.015
Age	-.037	.042	.383	1.007
Individualism	.101	.076	.189	1.012

Dependent Variable: Social rewards, Predictors: (Constant), Age, Gender, Individualism

Source: *Research results, 2022*

Table 13: Autonomy Regression Analysis

Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate			
.226	.754			

	Unstandardized Coefficients			
	B	Std. Error	Sig.	VIF
(Constant)	1.514	.471	.002	
Gender	.106	.143	.459	1.035
Age	-.003	.045	.943	1.056
Individualism	.415	.086	.000	1.176
Uncertainty Avoidance	.258	.115	.026	1.233

Dependent Variable: Autonomy, Predictors: (Constant), Age, Gender, Individualism, Uncertainty Avoidance

Source: *Research results, 2022*

Accordingly, as seen in *Tab. 14*, the results of the hypothesis testing can be summarized as hypotheses 1, 2, and 6 were supported, and hypotheses 3, 4, 5, and 8.

Table 14: Hypothesis Testing

	Hypothesis	Result
H1	The cultural value of Power Distance will have a positive impact on the preference for extrinsic rewards.	Supported
H2	The cultural value of Individualism will positively impact the preference for intrinsic rewards.	Supported
H3	The cultural value of Individualism will negatively affect the preference for altruistic rewards.	Not Supported
H4	The cultural value of Masculinity will negatively impact the preference for leisure rewards.	Not Supported
H5	The cultural value of Individualism will negatively impact the preference for Social rewards.	Not Supported
H6	The cultural value of Individualism will have a positive impact on autonomy.	Supported
H7	The cultural value of uncertainty avoidance will have a negative impact on autonomy.	Not Supported

Source: *Research results, 2022*

6. Discussion

This study intended to examine the cultural values and work values of Generation Z in Austria under consideration of the current SARS-CoV-2 pandemic.

Austrian Generation Z adhered largely as expected to the espoused national cultural values. They are moderately individualistic, low power distant, tend toward femininity, and also toward uncertainty avoidance. In terms of Masculinity, Austrian Generation Z does follow its global cohort in being more self-centered about their well-being and quality of life (*Pulevska-Ivanovska et al., 2017*), despite growing up in what has been considered a masculine society like Austria (*Hofstede et al., 2010b*). This is important to consider for human resources practices as

Austrian Generation Z is showing slight feminine tendencies, suggesting that a supportive work environment will be valued slightly more than a competitive one. Companies that want to attract Generation Z as future employees but are highly masculine in their corporate culture by promoting competitiveness will have difficulties in retaining them. This is also consistent with the findings of *Catanzaro, Moore, and Marshall (2010)*, who confirm that new hires who prefer a supportive environment but work in a masculine organization report lower job satisfaction and, consequently, higher turnover is to be expected. Therefore, supportive values should be properly addressed and made visible. Furthermore, the open-ended question "preferred benefits during the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic" revealed concerns of Austrian Generation Z in terms of supportive benefits during the pandemic, such as caring for mental stress by promoting healthy work structures and by offering lectures and exercises related to this topic. Furthermore, new hires wish for proper onboarding in the virtual working world, and others wish to have the dual burden of family and work acknowledged.

Gen Z Austria did show a preference for avoiding uncertainties. This was largely expected as Austria is already considered high on the Uncertainty avoidance index (*Hofstede et al., 2010b*). Furthermore, several researchers highlighted how growing up in turbulent political and economic periods made Generation Z more careful and concerned about emotional, physical, and monetary safety (*Chicca & Shellenbarger, 2018*). Also, the open-ended question "lessons learned from the pandemic" revealed that Austrian Generation Z places high value on job security. Comments like: "one should appreciate that one is not dismissed in such difficult times" confirm the concern with job security. Given these facts, recruiters trying to attract Generation Z employees should transparently explain the recruiting process so that uncertainties are eliminated. Especially delays in the recruiting process are found to be of negative impact in countries with a higher Uncertainty avoidance index (*Ma & Allen, 2009*).

The results indicating a low Power Distance score were no surprise. Generation Z in Austria is being raised in a very low power distant country (*Hofstede et al., 2010*), and equality and fairness are found to be an important values for the global Generation Z cohort (*Tanaid & Wright, 2019*).

Analysis of the literature review based on Generation Z's global work values shows that they highly value intrinsic rewards (*Seemiller & Grace, 2017*), and some studies also suggest that they prioritize intrinsic over extrinsic rewards (*Adecco, 2015*). In terms of altruistic rewards, it is found that contributing to the community is considered very important for Generation Z (*Broadbent et al., 2017*). Furthermore, *Iorgulescu (2016)* found in her study that social rewards were also considered relevant among Generation Z, while leisure rewards were ranked last.

Comparing the results with the Austrian Generation Z, it can be concluded that intrinsic rewards are valued the most while autonomy rewards are ranked last. Social rewards are of second importance, which means that this is one of the most desirable values. This is also consistent with the findings of the open-ended question "lessons learned from the pandemic," where the importance of face-to-face contact and socializing at work was strongly emphasized and therefore contradicts the findings of *Adecco (2015)*. Furthermore, *Farrell & Phungsoonthorn (2020)* found in their study that intrinsic motivation is of the greatest importance for Thai Generation Z, which counts as a global cohort.

Leisure rewards are in the top three, representing a strong significance among Austrian Generation Z's preferences. This strongly supports the argument that Austrian adolescents also expect enough leisure time outside of the work environment (*Großegger, 2014*). The fact that *Scholz and Grotefend (2019)* found that clear boundaries between private life and work are desired is consistent with the wish for a healthy work-life balance.

Surprisingly, extrinsic rewards were also ranked very high, which, although unexpected, is consistent with other findings suggesting extrinsic rewards such as career advancement or remuneration are highly motivating for students (*Iorgulescu, 2016*).

Moreover, despite having a positive attitude towards altruistic and autonomy rewards, Austrian Generation Z favors other rewards by far more, as altruistic rewards together with autonomy rewards rank last among their preferences.

Finally, it was surprising to see that uncertainty avoidance positively impacted the preference for autonomy. This is similar to findings from *Farrell & Phungsoonthorn (2020),* where Uncertainty Avoidance had a positive impact on the preference for Autonomy in Thailand. Although autonomy brings with it a certain amount of uncertainty, perhaps the added control allows individuals to perceive a clear way of dealing with uncertainty, even if no rules or regulations exist.

Practical Implications

This study offers several practical implications; first, it is crucial to understand that already previous studies confirm that Generation Z differs from other generational cohorts in its demands, expectations, perceptions, and aspirations (*Seemiller & Grace, 2017*).

From a practical point of view, it can be concluded that the Austrian Generation Z perceives all six work values very positively. Especially intrinsic rewards, which rank first, are highly favored and have been found to be of great importance in other studies as well (*Farrell & Phungsoonthorn, 2020*). Therefore, retaining an Austrian Generation Z employee requires employers to foster their inner drive by offering challenging or enjoyable tasks paired with opportunities for development and growth. It has already been validated that intrinsic employee motivation is an enabler of employee satisfaction, which is associated with increased rates of retention (*Cho & Perry, 2012*). Therefore, one practical consequence could be to make their career path visible and transparent so that Austrian Generation Z has a clear vision of what one could achieve. In contrast, Austrian Generation Z also scored high in the mean value analysis of extrinsic rewards, although it ranks fourth in the overall rating. This should not be disregarded as career advancement and an attractive salary package are still of high value. Therefore, a combination of both intrinsic and extrinsic factors is required to successfully retain Austrian Generation Z.

Moreover, social rewards are the second most valued work value for Austrian Generation Z and were also mentioned as the biggest learning from the current pandemic. Therefore, a workplace where regular exchange among colleagues is supported is an appealing advantage. Particularly during the current pandemic, where home office options are available, and the team doesn't see each other regularly, employers need to consider how networking events will still be held as the demand for them is strong. Some study participants view a combination of both remote working and office presence as the new world of work, and with regards to social networking, Generation Z has already proven to be very savvy in using these platforms (*Turner, 2015*). Hence, the results are a strong indicator that opportunities that allow for social interaction are highly valued.

Leisure rewards rank third, indicating that Austrian Generation Z put great emphasis on a proper balance between work and private life. *Twenge et al. (2010)* similarly found how the need for leisure rewards increased sharply across the different generational cohorts. Furthermore, the qualitative analysis of the open-ended questions revealed that Austrian Generation Z desires a high degree of flexibility within the workplace in terms of flexible work arrangements. Thus, a package of measures consisting of the desired flexibility and leisure rewards is crucial for employers to consider.

Given that extrinsic rewards and leisure rewards perform similarly in their outcomes, employers might consider tailoring their benefits to each individual's preferences by letting them choose between extrinsic rewards in the form of a pay raise as an example or leisure rewards in the form of an extra day off instead.

Looking at the very low Power Distance score, the results suggest that Austrian Generation Z values a work environment in which not only the manager takes the decisions but also the employees are included in decision-making matters. In addition, decisions made should be allowed to be questioned and challenged. From a managerial perspective, this means that a strongly hierarchical management style, in which control is vested in a few hands, is not favored by this generational cohort. This is also confirmed by the study of *Ozkan and Solmaz (2015)*, which found that Generation Z is more likely to want managers to hear their thoughts and respect their opinion than other generational cohorts, and by *Kubátová (2016)*, who argues that supervisors are required to also be Generation Z's mentors to meet their needs.

Limitations

There are numerous studies relating to generational cohorts, which differ in the age range into which the respective generational cohort is classified. Accordingly, this research could be divergent from some that consider other birth years. Furthermore, the small sample impacts the study's generalizability to Generation Z in Austria as a whole. Additionally, over 70% of the respondents were female, so a fair gender balance was not achieved. Therefore, it is recommended for further research to analyze whether gender influences the perception of culture and work values. Beyond that, the respondents are mainly located in Vorarlberg and Vienna, and therefore the other provinces of Austria represent a minority. Future research requires the inclusion of all Austrian states and a larger sample size to ensure diversity and representativeness.

7. Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate Austrian Generation Z's work values by analyzing their espoused national cultural values and espoused generational cultural values by incorporating the current SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. Thus, this study aimed to fill the current gap in the literature around the values of Austrian Generation Z and serves as a potential roadmap for employers seeking to attract and retain Austrian members of Generation Z. Overall; it can be concluded that Austrian Generation Z is strongly low power-distant and is about as inclined towards Collectivism as they are towards Individualism. Furthermore, they are reporting

low Masculinity and thereby indicating a preference in the feminine direction, and show preferences for avoiding uncertainties. In terms of the espoused generational cultural values, Austrian Generation Z confirmed a preference for all six work values, while intrinsic rewards are of greatest importance and autonomy rewards rank last among their preferences. Furthermore, a positive and significant relationship between Power Distance and extrinsic rewards and Individualism and intrinsic rewards was found, suggesting that respondents who tend toward greater Power Distance will show a higher preference for extrinsic rewards, and respondents who are inclined toward greater Individualism will show a stronger preference for intrinsic rewards.

Given the current pandemic, employers need to understand that offering a mix of remote work and office presence is a key benefit for Austrian Generation Z, as social contacts in the workplace are of utmost importance to them and are one of their biggest lessons learned from the pandemic. Beyond that, the study confirmed that the Austrian Generation Z shows a strong preference for flexibility in various forms in the work environment.

Considering these findings, employers must take into account that both cultural values and work values shape the preferences of Austria's Generation Z, and thus these effects are also reflected in the world of work. Employers incorporating the practical implications will perform better in attracting and retaining Austrian Generation Z.

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9. Competing interests

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