Employer branding in family firm SMEs: how to attract Generation X, Y, Z

initial situation.

Problem statement

- The current working environment is characterized by a multi-generational structure, where different generations are working side by side (Glass, 2007).
- Generation X, Y and Z represent the three largest generational cohorts of the hospitality industry workforce (Self et al., 2019) and have unique values, characteristics and capabilities regarding their employment.
- By understanding the generational values and attitudes, businesses are able to improve the work atmosphere, employee motivation and the employee's intention to work in the hospitality industry (Gursoy et al. 2013).
- In addition, the consideration of generational differences has a positive effect on the establishment of an employer brand (Alnıaçık & Alnıaçık, 2012).

Research question

Which attitudes differentiate Generation X, Y and Z employed in family-owned hotels?

Research objective

The aim is to evaluate the generational differences between Generation X, Y and Z regarding their work in the family-run hotel industry and create a representative employee persona for each generation.

theoretical background.

Family-owned SMEs — Employer branding — Generational differences

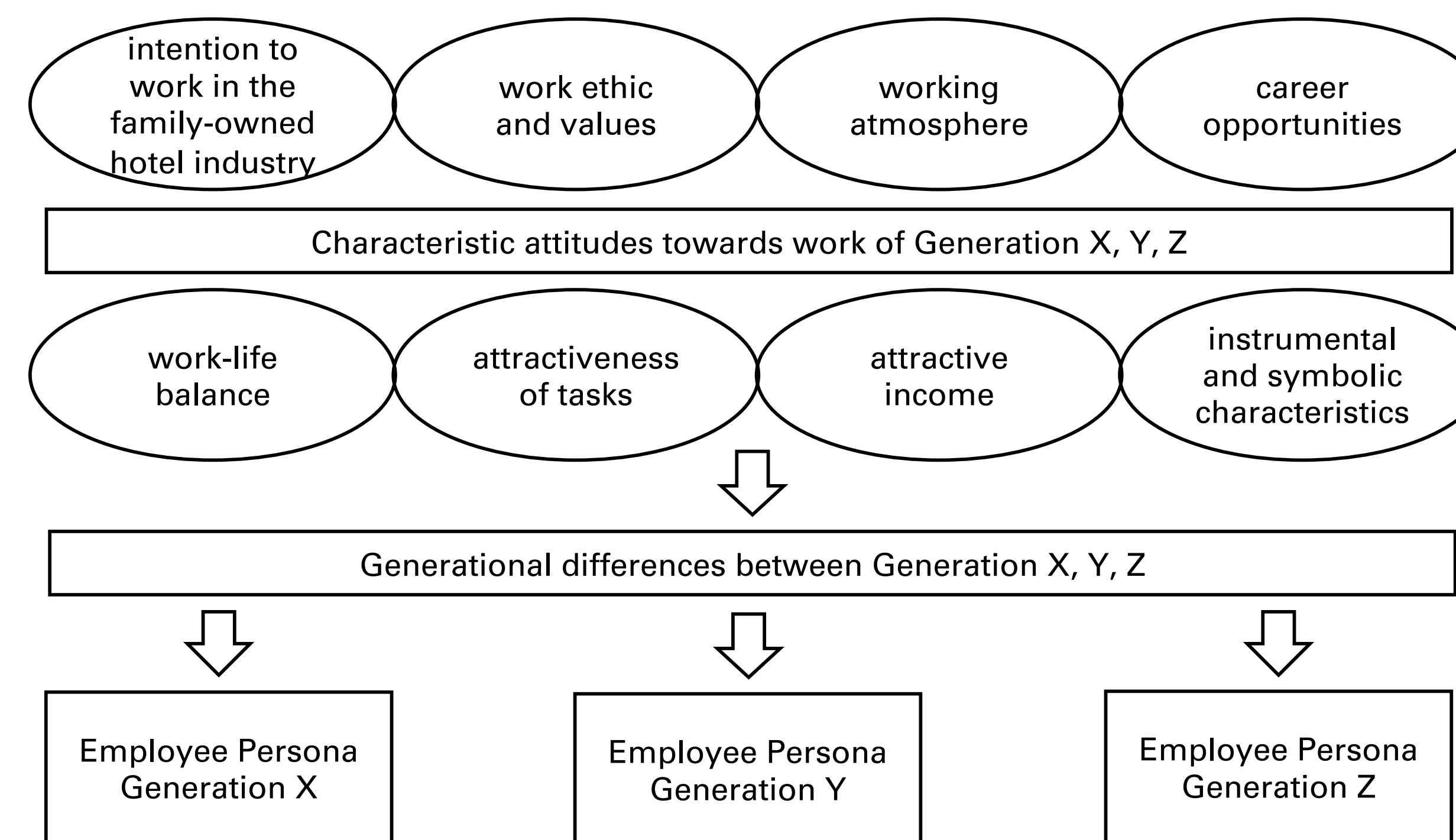Figure 1.: Theoretical background of the master's thesis

research design.

Figure 2.: Model of approach

empirical study.

Table 1.: Description and justification of the empirical study

	Description	Justification
Methodology	quantitative: standardized online questionnaire	clear collection, low costs, large sample size, anonymity (Hussy et al., 2010)
Sample	sample survey, n=226, N=555, X 24%, Y 22%, Z 54%	carried out and evaluated more quickly (Döring & Bortz, 2016)
Evaluation method	SPSS → MANOVA and further post-hoc tests: ANOVA, Tukey's HSD	show significant differences and enable pairwise comparisons (Gursoy et al., 2013; Lub et al., 2012)

Findings

The results of the study show, that Generation X, Y and Z differ significantly in their attitude towards:

- **work ethic and values:** significant differences regarding the acceptance of bureaucracy, loyalty and self-confidence
- **career opportunities:** attitudes differ significantly in terms of the offer of mentoring programs and regular feedback
- **attractiveness of tasks:** significant differences regarding the importance of challenging tasks and the connection to the tasks
- **instrumental and symbolic characteristics:** significantly different perception of employer attractiveness in terms of social and team activities and the cultivation and sustainability of an employer

Employee Personas

The employee personas aim to better reflect the identified character traits and attitudes towards work for Generation X, Y and Z. In addition, they are intended to help family-run hotel businesses to better understand the requirements of the individual generations and position themselves as an attractive place to work.
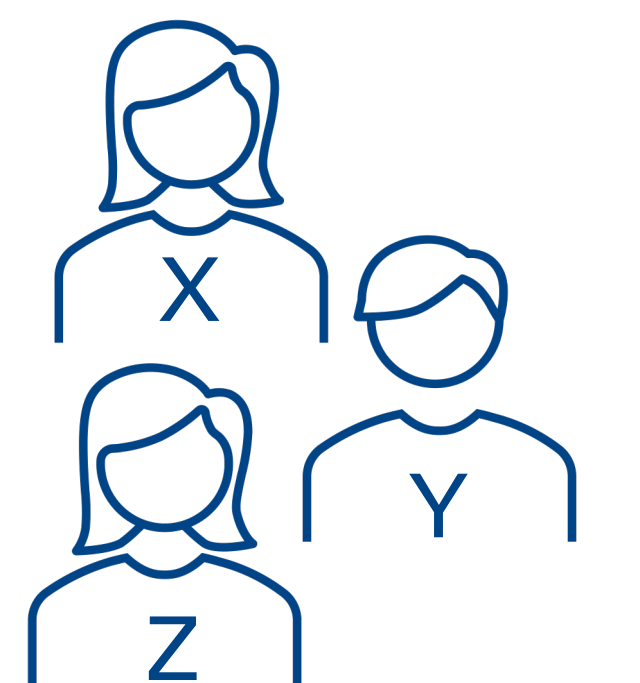

Figure 3: Employee personas for Generation X, Y and Z

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