

Two Pandemics and Workplace Shifts: Generational Considerations: A Multi-Factor Comparison of How Pandemics Impact Young Workers: Insights for Management and Employees©

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This paper will compare several business-related factors. There has been relatively little academic research conducted to compare and contrast a breadth of workplace issues and dimensions during the early twentieth century's Spanish Flu epidemic and the early twenty-first century's COVID-19 pandemic in the United States. This manuscript analyzes several variables and adds to the literature by examining significant factors that impacted workers and their workplaces during these two significant healthcare incidents. The major factors discussed include the labor force members during both of these pandemics, the demographics of those workforces, the workplace safety, the labor economic data during these two pandemics, the wages & how they fluctuated, the labor unions & evolving perspectives towards unionization, and the dominant industry shifts. Several of the findings regarding Millennials and Generation Z workers are supported by this author's current research of university students who were employed during the COVID-19 pandemic. The insights provided in this manuscript are instrumental for business managers and human resource management professionals, higher education, and for those who provide corporate training.

Keywords: management, human resources, all disciplines

20TH CENTURY SPANISH FLU AND 21ST CENTURY COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The H1N1 influenza virus, more commonly known, and referred to in this paper, as the Spanish Flu pandemic, which began in early 1918, came in four waves. The second wave phase, which occurred in August of 1918, was very deadly. The epidemic officially ended in the summer of 1919. However, there was a fourth wave that occurred in 1920 (Clay). The 4th latter wave in 1920 led to the majority of pandemic deaths in the United States (Barry, 2022). The pandemic also coincided with World War I which began in 1914 and the United States entered in 1917. The Armistice for World War I occurred in November 1918.

The 1918 influenza killed approximately 50 million people worldwide. At that rate of deaths, more people died in the Spanish Flu pandemic than were killed in World War I and World War II combined (How the Spanish Flu..., 2020). An estimated 675,000 Americans were among the dead. Furthermore, 10 times as many Americans died of the 1918 flu as those who died in World War I (McHugh, 2022). Indeed, 25 percent of the US population was infected with the Spanish Flu (Pandemic History, Spanish Flu, para 1). Nearly 0.8% of the USA's 1910 (census-reported) population died due to the flu (Garrett). This included people from various economic backgrounds, from cities as well as from country settings (McHugh, 2022).

While WWI is held responsible for the creation of the "Lost Generation", the Spanish Flu was quickly relegated to obscurity because of the war experience. Social and economic reorganization followed (Reid,

2005). Unlike the 21st century's COVID-19 pandemic, the Spanish Flu disproportionately affected young men (Blackburn, Parker, Wendelbo, 2018). In 1918, the mortality rate from the flu and pneumonia among men 15-34 years old was more than twenty times higher than before 1918. Half of all flu deaths were among adults 20 and 40 years old. Unlike the recent pandemic that was more dangerous for those 65 and older or those with pre-existing conditions (until the Delta variant), 99% of flu deaths in 1918-1919 were those younger than 65. That variant infected younger and healthier people more than prior COVID variants. This led to a dramatic impact upon the workplace (Garret, 2009, and Correia, Luck, Verner, 2020 in Wheelock, 2020). More American soldiers died from the flu than were killed in World War I battle and many of the deaths attributed to World War I were a combination of the war and the flu. Demographic data shows that nearly 175,000 more men, many of whom were in the military, died than women in 1918 (Blackburn, Parker, Wendelbo, 2018). It is noteworthy that the flu was not a reportable disease in 1918, which meant that doctors were not obligated to report cases to the authority. That meant that those authorities failed to see this pandemic coming (Spinney, 2020). Unlike seasonal flu, which mostly threatens the health of the very young and elderly, the Spanish Flu caused serious illness and death in otherwise young, healthy people. During the Spanish Flu pandemic, the average lifespan in the United States decreased by 10 years (Clay). Comparable to the recent pandemic, during the Spanish Flu pandemic there were public gathering bans based upon what was constituted "essential" versus "unessential" activities (Tomes, p.54,55).

The Spanish Flu devastation compares to the COVID-19 pandemic which started in December 2019 and led to major quarantines in the USA by March 2020. By May of 2023, the World Health Organization declared an end to the global coronavirus emergency with almost 7 million people having died of COVID-19 (History. com Editors). As of May 2, 2023, the number of COVID-19 global cases had reached over 687 million. The United States is the country with the highest number of confirmed cases and deaths. As of April 26, 2023, the number of COVID-19 cases in the USA had reached over 104.5 million, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (Elflein, 2023, December). Between the beginning of January 2020 and June 14, 2023, over 1.1 million deaths were caused by COVID-19 in the United States. Approximately 307,169 deaths occurred among those aged 85 years and older. The next highest group of fatalities were those aged 75 to 84 at 291,444 deaths; then 65 to 74 years, at 254,710 deaths, followed by those 50 to 64 with 201,940 deaths (Elflein, 2023, June). After the rollout of the vaccine, the U.S. became one of the countries with the highest number of vaccinations administered worldwide (Elflein, 2023, December).

Although, as of September 21, 2021, COVID-19 killed as many people in the United States as the Spanish Flu did, the population of the United States is now three times more than it was in 1918, so the Spanish Flu pandemic killed a larger percentage of Americans (Spanish Flu, Cleveland Clinic, 2021). During COVID-19, to prevent the spread of the virus, most states in America closed bars, restaurants; cancelled public events and banned large gatherings. At the end of March 2020, it was estimated that over 90% of the United States population was under some kind of a stay-at-home order (Elflein, 2023). The dramatic impact that this had on the modern United States workplace continues to be felt and realized. The COVID-19 pandemic officially ended May 5, 2023, according to the World Health Organization (Surg, 2023).

Some factors complicate direct comparison between the Spanish Flu and its influencers because the American Expeditionary forces arrived in Europe in 1917 during World War I. There was an Allied victory over Germany and Austria in November 1918 (Hindley, 2017). The war efforts, in many cases, have overshadowed analysis of the Spanish Flu's impact. Furthermore, the business makeup of the time contributed to the Spanish Flu's severity. "The second industrial revolution directly or indirectly led to a vast expanded public school system, huge factories and office buildings, extensive public entertainments, and mass transportation systems that connected all these elements together. By the early 1900s the interlinking of public spaces created a vast highway... by 1918 the United States had 10 cities with more than half a million in population, the largest of which was New York City" (Tomes, 2020, p.52).

The economic effects of the 1918 influenza pandemic were short-term and affected several types of businesses differently. Many businesses, especially those in the service and entertainment industries, suffered double-digit losses in revenue. Other businesses that specialized in health care products

experienced an increase in revenues (Garrett). “Unessential” activities, such as theaters, could be forced to close. It is estimated that theater owners lost close to \$50 million in the Spanish Flu pandemic. Unlike the recent pandemic, in many cities in the United States there were few businesses that were forced to be closed (Tomes, p. 54,55). In comparison, according to the National Cinema Foundation, the U.S. lost over 200 movie theater screens between 2019 and 2022, a 5.3% drop (Morris, 2023). Ticket sales in 2020 fell 80% to \$2.28 billion; compared to \$11.4 billion in 2019 which was the 2nd largest box office sales in US history. This was the lowest sales for the USA domestic box office in nearly 40 years. Furthermore, the domestic box office industry did not top \$100 million in any 2020 month since March of that year (Whitten, 2020).

Despite concerns for the need for services and for workers to earn wages (Tomes, 2020), during the Spanish Flu pandemic, telephone, mail, and garbage collection services, as well as other businesses stopped because workers became ill and could not do their jobs. Infection and death rates were higher among adults and highest among adults 20 to 50 years old (Pandemic History, Spanish Flu, para 1,4; History.com Editors). In some places there weren't enough farm workers to harvest crops (History.com Editors). There was a shortage of health care workers (Pandemic History, Spanish Flu, para 1,4). However, longer non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs) may have reduced uncertainty, anchored expectations, preserved business capital, and, therefore, increased post-pandemic invention ... The adoption of NPIs might have contributed to higher aggregate productivity growth, and cities adopting more stringent NPIs might have experienced a positive persistent effect on their long-run economic performance (Berkes, Deschenes, Gaetani, Lin, Severan, 2020, 2023).

Labor Force

Most of the people who died during the Spanish Flu were prime-age workers (Clay), who were young without pre-existing conditions (Social and Economic..., 2020). In 1918, approximately 10.6 million were employed in agriculture, and approximately 27.8 million were employed in non-agriculture (Statista Research Department, 2007). The farm labor force did drop slightly from 10.5 million in 1916 to 10.3 million workers in 1918, but farming included many low-productivity workers and farm output on the whole was sustained (Rockoff, 2008). During the Spanish Flu pandemic, the labor supply declined while real wage rates rose considerably in locations with a high incidence of the 1918 flu (Garret, 2009, and Correia, Luck, Verner, 2020 in Wheelock, 2020). The labor force participation was 54.3% in 1920 (Smiley, 1993, Labor Force Growth). It has been posited that a pandemic result in a significant negative impact on manufacturing labor supply. However, the concurrent existence of World War I mitigated that impact (Berbenni, Colombo, 2023). The labor force participation decline over the next twenty years was completely due to a fall in male labor force participation rates (Smiley, 1993, Labor Force Growth).

Women's workforce participation was dramatically impacted by World War I. In April 1917, three million women joined the United States workforce after the country joined the war: a little more than one year before the Spanish Flu pandemic's first wave (Mochari, 2014). Female workforce participation rates also grew between 1920-1930. Male participation rate was 84.6% in 1920. Female labor force participation was 22.7% in 1920 (Smiley, 1993, Labor Force Growth). Following the war, the number of women in the workforce was 25% higher than before World War I. By 1920 women constituted 21% of the USA labor force (Clark, 2021). Because the 1918 pandemic disproportionately affected young men and World War I was ongoing, there was a shortage of labor. That gap led to women having a new role in the workplace.

The Spanish Flu pandemic temporarily shut down parts of the economy. In 1918, in New England, coal deliveries were so severely affected that people froze to death because of the lack of ability to keep their homes heated. Researchers estimate that the number of businesses in Little Rock, AR, experienced a 40% to 70% decline. Women filled the workplace gap in unprecedented numbers when they took jobs outside of the home. Positions were in manufacturing, including the textile industry, science, research, and medical laboratories (Rogers, 2021). A contribution of the Lost Generation (born 1893-1900) was the shift in the female labor force participation as women left farms and joined the mercantile and industrial workforce in record numbers. Women took on leadership roles, and with more financial power, influenced community decisions (Dayhoff, 2019). This led to demands for equal pay for work. As women gained more economic power, they became more active advocates for various women's rights including the right to vote. They

gained leadership positions especially in the garment industry, also in the military and police forces. In 1918, President Woodrow Wilson began to state that women were part of the American war effort and economy and should be afforded the right to vote (Blackburn, Parker, Wendelbo, 2018). Just after World War I, the Women's Bureau was established within the Department of Labor. It was to investigate and report with the goal of promoting the welfare and opportunities of working women (U.S. Department of Labor: Chapter 2: The 1920s and the Start of the Depressions 1921-1933). On January 12, 1915, the U.S. House of Representatives rejected a proposal to give women the right to vote (Leon, 2016). In contrast, on June 4, 1919, the 19th amendment was passed giving women the right to vote.

The 1918 pandemic actions of women in the workplace are in contrast to women in the recent pandemic. The difference is a result of inadequate childcare options, school closings during major quarantines, and females' lower earnings. "When schools and daycares shut down or moved to a virtual platform, women's jobs were disproportionately affected because women are still the primary care givers in the home. In one survey, 1 in 4 women who became unemployed in the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic did so due to lack of childcare—double the rate of men. In two-income households where one partner must leave the workforce, it is typically the person with the lower income, in many instances, women. Between 2020 and 2021, more than 2.3 million women in the U.S. dropped out of the country's labor force, causing women's labor force participation rate to fall to 57%—a 33-year low" (Clark, 2021, para 6). Generational views about women working demonstrates differences that may be affected by the pandemic. Generation Z's and Millennials are less likely than older generations to say that single women raising children on their own is a bad thing for society; half stated that it does not make much difference (Parker, Igielnik, 2020). Furthermore, one year after the COVID-19 pandemic was officially stated to have ended in the United States, women were staying in the workforce due to workplace flexibility. This contrasted with research that stated that only 60% felt that their companies provided ample opportunities for career growth. Yet only a third were looking or planned to look for a new job in 2024. Flexibility is an important aspect of the workplace for most current, younger generation employees. Workplaces have responded so that it is increasingly possible for female professionals to adopt a flexible working model. A concern is that flexibility may affect their pay or their career growth (2024). This concern is likely to grow because, at a labor force participation rate of 77.8%, as of 2023 there were more women in the workplace than ever before. As of 2023 and, at least early 2024, the job market continued to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic (Wallace, 2023).

During the middle and latter parts of the 21st century COVID-19 pandemic, there was a uniquely tight yet resilient labor market. Correspondingly, there was a mild recession between August of 1918 and March of 1919, and there was a tight labor market that led to high employment and rising real wages. The labor market remained tight until the Federal Reserve began rapidly increasing the discount rate due to inflation fears in January and July of 1920. The mid-1918 recession had a larger effect on male employment than female employment, because male workers were employed more in the manufacturing sector. That had the largest negative effect during the recession. The service sectors had the least effect, so in that recession, the workforce composition benefited female workers because they were more employed in the service sector after World War I than men were.

DEMOGRAPHICS

"The demographics of the workforce are radically different today than they were in previous decades" (Mochari, 2014, para 2). This section will analyze pandemic-related events for many generations and will demonstrate that by understanding the generation to which most grandparents or parents belonged, one can gain insights into another generation's members' perceptions and attitudes. Although the reader is cautioned not to over generalize or stereotype, by looking at normative data each generation's descriptors can be enhanced, and new insights may evolve regarding the impact of pandemics.

The majority of those who died during the Spanish Flu were from the ages of 20 through 40 years old (Chorba, Breedlove, 2018). That would have included members of the Lost Generation and of the Greatest Generation. These generations were most affected by the war and heightening social and economic

dislocation (Reid, 2005). In contrast, the greatest marriage year, to that point, in human history was 1920, including in the United States when the number of marriages reached a new high (Slichter, 1944).

The Lost Generation, born between 1893 to 1900, came of age during the Spanish Flu pandemic. They also came of age during World War I. Due to the war's duration, they suffered loss or disillusionment. Between 1914 through 1918, because of World War I and the Spanish Flu, approximately 100 million persons of the group born between 1883 and 1900 died (Dayhoff, 2019). They felt that their inherent values were irrelevant in a post-World War world and experienced spiritual alienation from the United States for a number of reasons including that it was seen to be materialistic (The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica Lost Generation). They rejected former generations' values. They wanted to experience new opportunities in the world. This shift included unconventional, for the time, "self-identities like gender-bending"; ...they questioned "traditional images of masculinity and their perceptions around differing roles of men and women in society" (Longley, 2022, para. 3, 14). Similarities are occurring with younger generations who experienced the 21st century COVID-19 pandemic.

Furthermore, the Greatest Generation, born between 1901 and 1924 were also directly impacted by the Spanish Flu pandemic. Unlike the Lost Generation, they had traditional morals and strong work ethics. This was impacted by their service in World War II. Their grandchildren, the Millennial generation seeks a work-life balance and the opportunity to contribute to the greater good. This latter factor mirrors the Greatest Generations' focus.

Another generation that was impacted indirectly (or subsequently) by the Spanish Flu pandemic in the 1900s was the Silent Generation, born between 1925-1928 (Indeed Editorial team, 2023) through 1945. This generation is also known as "Radio Babies" or "Traditionalists". That generation had higher employment rates than the Greatest Generation and is known for wanting "to go against the government or the 'system'" (Axis, A Parents' Guide...). They are, along with older Baby Boomers, the grandparents of Gen Z. Some of their characteristics are hard work, loyalty, and thriftiness when they were coming of age (Indeed Editorial Team, 2023). They also have a desire for economic comfort. Correspondingly, their grandchildren, Gen Z, seek stability at the workplace (Gen Z Bosses..., 2024). The Silent Generation are also known for being resilient, including in industries that fluctuate with market pressure. A sense of fairness and justice in the workplace was important to this generation. Similar to their grandchildren Generation Z, even though it is common for a member of the Silent Generation to be completely or mostly retired, many seek employment reasons for other than full-time wages and want flexible scheduling (Indeed Editorial Team, 2023). Correspondingly, around 60% of 18- to 25-year-olds said that they're likely to switch jobs in 2023 which was up from 53% in 2022 (Kelly, 2023, July). Additionally, 90% of Gen Z's are much more likely to redesign work formats toward remote or a hybrid, four-day work week setting. This is of interest because a Pew study in 2020 found that remote work was an option for less than one-third of workers who were in Generation Y and Z (from ages 18-29) because they were most heavily concentrated in the service sector, hospitality, and retail jobs (Shoichet, 2023). In fact, 59% of young professionals who are in Generation Z stated in a survey that they are likely to leave their jobs due to dissatisfaction with fulfillment (Segal, 2023, May).

The workplace has changed significantly from the time of the Spanish Flu pandemic to the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. And yet there are some interesting similarities. During the mid-1910s the Behavioral Management theories began. One of these theories was the Human Relations movement at workplaces and was developed by Elton Mayo. Elton Mayo conducted the Hawthorn Experiments that looked "to inspire company loyalty, discourage high employment turnover and unionization, and present a good face to the public". Findings of his research included that workplace policies and procedures influence workers' attitudes. Additionally, it found in contrast to, or evolving from the prior management theories, that motivation, productivity, and job satisfaction depend more on cooperation, involvement, and recognition than on physical working conditions (Ward, 2021).

The 21st century "COVID-19 pandemic caused lasting disruptions to work worldwide, affecting the engagement and wellbeing of millions of employees. Post-pandemic engagement trends vary across age generations, with younger employees feeling the most detached from their work and employers, but Baby Boomers remaining engaged" (Harter, 2024, para 1-2). Baby Boomers were born 1945-1964 (Pew

Research, Parker, Igielnik; 2020, May 14) or 1965 (Investopedia research, 2022, Sept 20, Kagan, Estevez). Their parents include older members of the Lost Generation and members of the Greatest Generation. There are approximately 71.6 million Baby Boomers in the USA (Fuscaldo, Howard, 2023). They are, normatively, parents of Millennials.

Looking to another generation and the impact of a pandemic upon them, the Silent Generation includes parents of Generation X. There is disagreement about Generation X's exact birth years. Numbering 66 million in the United States, they were born between ~1960, 1961 (Kagan, 2024, Jan), 1965 to 1979, 1980, (Investopedia research, 2022) or to 1981 (Kagan, 2024, Jan). All agree they are after Baby Boomers and before Millennials. They experienced the dot.com bubble burst in the late 1990s and various recessions, including the COVID-19 recession (Gailey, 2023). This generation could be described as slackers or whiners, particularly in the 1990s. (Note that all do not agree with those descriptions.) The impact of the Great Recession and the COVID-19 pandemic had a more significant setback on Gen Xer's retirement funds than other generations (Generation X, Encyclopedia Britannica 2024). Like the Silent Generation, this generation is sometimes defined as an "in-between" generation (Kagan, 2024, April 23). It is speculated that Gen X may be the first generation whose members will not be more financially well off than their parents (Generation X, Encyclopedia Britannica 2024), although their level of savings has increased significantly over the last several years (Kagan, 2024, January). This generation has been described as more ethnically diverse than previous generations, tending to be more liberal on social issues and open minded (Gailey, 2023). Furthermore, influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic, the workplace engagement of this generation declined by 4 points from 35% to 31% from March 2020 through the end of 2023. The percentage of actively engaged Gen X employees increased by only one point from 17% to 18%. For every actively disengaged Gen X employee, there are less than two engaged Gen X employees (Harter, 2024).

Millennials or Gen Y have certainly been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Millennials were born approximately from 1980, 1981-1995, 1996 (Kagan, 2022; Vogels, 2019) or through 2000. Their grandparents or great-grandparents were members of the Greatest Generation (Kagan, 2022). Their parents, the Baby Boomers generation experienced the Civil Rights Movement and the beginning of the space age (Kagan, 2022; Indeed Editorial Team, 2023). Similar to their children, Baby Boomers are competitive and self-assured (Indeed Editorial Team, 2023; Kagan, 2022). Millennials, or Gen Y, who will comprise approximately 75% of the workforce by 2025 want an opportunity to make a difference at the same time that they want flexibility. They value flexibility over base pay as their top priority in choosing and remaining in a job. Unlike their Baby Boomer parents, they frequently job hop (Reiche, Tenzer, Harzing, 2022). However, let us consider that it was the Baby Boomer generation that was the first generation that had more loyalty to their profession than to their company because of economic hardships that they experienced along with the subsequent corporate responses to those hardships.

Millennials rank pursuing their passions, as part of the American Dream, much higher than prior generations do with 47% of Generation Y stating that perspective in research. Only 27% of Baby Boomers rank that aspect that high. Yet Millennials agree with Baby Boomers that a top priority is to be debt free. In research, Millennials ranked that characteristic as the second most important ingredient of the American dream. Baby Boomers listed it as the third most important ingredient. In 2011, after the Great Recession, 75% of Baby Boomers reported being a homeowner (Section 5: Generations and the Great Recession, 2011). Similarly, regarding the attitude in general that remaining debt free is an important priority, 61% of Baby Boomers stated "yes" in a recent survey, and 51% of Millennials stated "yes" in the survey (Mollenkamp, Rhinehart, Schmitt, 2022).

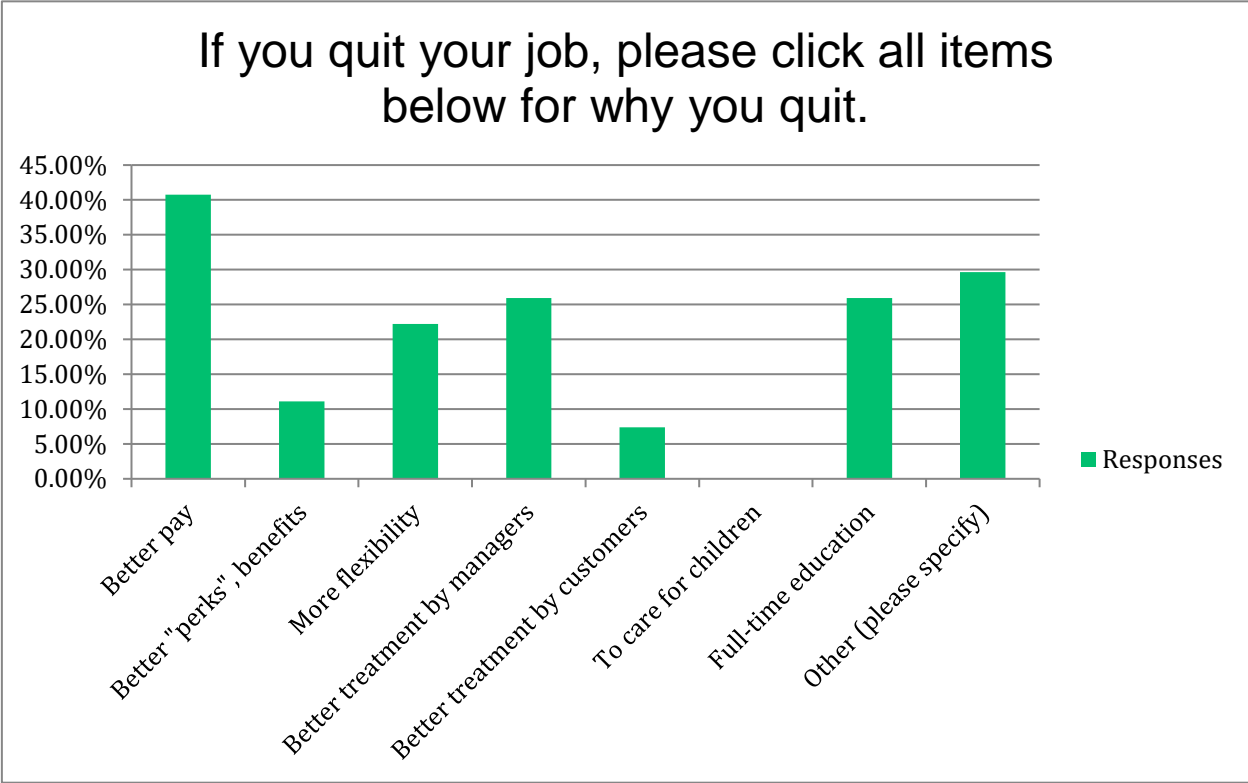
By 2029, Millennials, with more than 38.5 million members, will outnumber all other age groups. The COVID-19 pandemic pushed companies to shift traditional requirements of working in a physical office and the move to all remote or hybrid work has largely been successful. Some companies push to have everyone in the office, yet many are offering hybrid or remote-by-choice options (Fuscaldo, Howard, 2023) which appeal to many Millennials.

COVID-19 was a major influencing factor for Generation Z (Noor, 2024). Generation Z was born approximately 1995-2010 (Kagan, 2022). With 60 million members in the United States (Segal, 2022, March), Generation Z makes up 30% of the world's population and is expected to account for 27% of the

workforce by 2025 (Vitug, 2022) and 30% of the workforce by 2030 (Gen Z Bosses..., 2024). As of March 2020, Generation Z was particularly hard hit in the early weeks and months of the Coronavirus crisis, as a Pew Research Center survey found that half of the oldest Generation Zers at that time (who were aged 18 to 23) reported that they or someone in their household had lost a job or taken a cut in pay because of the outbreak. That was higher than Millennials at 40%, Generation X at 36% and Baby Boomers at 25%. They were also overrepresented in high-risk service sector industries at that time (Parker, Igielnik, 2020). According to a LinkedIn survey, Generation Z is the most likely generation to have left or considered leaving a job because their employer didn't offer a flexible, feasible work policy with 72% of respondents stating that view.

In research conducted by this author, 113 Gen Y and Z college students responded about quitting jobs during the COVID-19 pandemic. (Please refer to the Figure 1 below.) It would be expected that they would respond in these ways. As discussed here, employees - particularly younger ones --expect better pay. Also note that almost 1/4 of the respondents expected better treatment by their managers and wanted more flexibility at work. Additionally, Gen Z wants training at work. Those factors influenced their quitting their jobs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**FIGURE 1
QUIT RATIONALE**



The difficulty of the pandemic, in part, encouraged some members of Gen Z to prioritize life just as much as work, and to be clear about those expectations with potential employers. “Work-life balance” or “work-life integration” is often a consideration during a job interview — and often Gen Zers ask questions about these issues early in the job search process. Furthermore, the ages most affected by deaths during the recent COVID 19 pandemic included grandparents of Gen Z, as well as those of Gen Y. That loss may partially affect their life/work balance views.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been credited with reminding many workers that life continues outside a 9-to-5 job. While these emerging expectations do include paid time off and ending the day at 5 p.m., what many job seekers are looking for is flexibility (York, Rose, 2023a). Furthermore, according to McKinsey generations, 77% Generation Z respondents to one of their surveys consider work life balance crucial when considering job opportunities. According to a Nielsen study, 54% of Generation Z is seeking an opportunity to start their own company (Noor, 2024). In another shift, Gen Z workers surpassed Baby Boomers in terms of small business participation in July 2022 and are quickly gaining ground on Gen X and Millennials. Their small business ownership has grown approximately 18% from 2011-2023. Analyzing the non-seasonally adjusted trends, Gen Z suffered the largest share of employment loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic as they were more likely to work in an affected industry (Leisure and Hospitality, Education and Health Services) (The Rise of Generation Z, 2023).

Generation Z, as we have seen, directly experienced the effects of the recent pandemic at a young age and are demanding that their personal values, goals and purpose are recognized and addressed at work (York, Rose, 2023b). For example, 85% of respondents in a survey conveyed that they want to work for a company with a mission and 89% said they will leave a company that doesn't include them (Segal, 2022). Since the COVID-19 pandemic, employee engagement at the workplace has been declining among younger workers including Millennials and Gen Z employees more than older generations. They are less likely to feel connected to their organization's mission. Additionally, they are less likely to perceive that their opinions count at work (Cromidas, 2024). The engagement factors that have seen the greatest decline include feeling cared about by someone at work, having opportunities to learn and grow, and having career-progress discussions with their managers (Harter, 2024). It is recommended to engage the younger employees at work, organizations need to offer more flexible working policies, and to create pathways for growth and advancement. These organizations need transparency at work (Cromidas, 2024). Furthermore, managers need to be trained in how to manage a hybrid workforce. It is important for managers to set clear expectations for in-person office time, especially for young employees who need development and mentoring by their leaders and managers. It is essential because younger employees, since the pandemic, developed a gig-worker mindset which is detached emotionally from the organization (Harter, 2024). This detached thought process resonates with some characteristics that were shown by many in the Silent Generation (Vitug, 2022). When the Silent Generation came of age, roughly between the late 1940s to the early 1960s, they demonstrated a rebellious tendency that emerged across social, political, and cultural aspects that were focused on reforming the system (Wallenfeldt). There is a restlessness with their grandchildren, the Gen Z workers. In 2021 they shifted jobs nearly 40% more than in 2020 and at more than double the rate of Millennials. GenZers state that this is due to a career awakening that was started by the COVID-19 pandemic. They can feel bored, want more work life balance, and 86% want an alignment of their job with their passions and values. They want more authenticity from their employers. According to a January 2020 survey, 72% of Generation Z were most likely to have either left or considered leaving a job because their company did not offer a feasible flexible work policy. 69% of Millennials agreed with this thought process, compared to 53% of Gen X and 59% of Baby Boomers (Vitug, 2022). Generation Z will quit their jobs if their expectations are not met at the workplace.

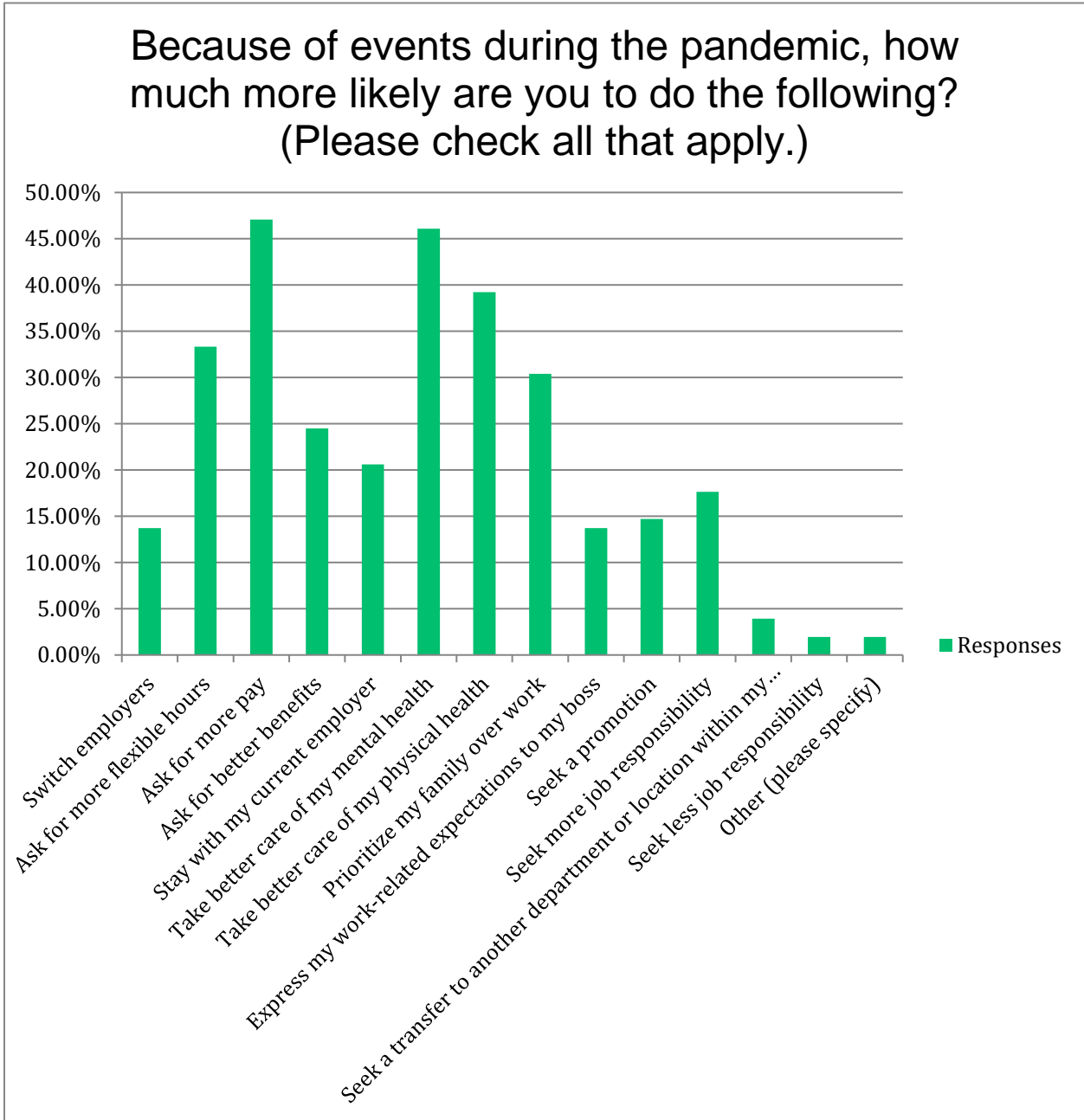
In contrast, the Silent Generation sought stability. Because they were not a large generation, they could command high wages and salaries in a relatively scarce labor market (Silent Generation, Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 2023). After the 20th century's Great Recession, this generation, in a survey, viewed their financial situations more positively than younger generations. 44% of the Silent Generation said their finances had not changed during the Great Recession. 82% of this group are homeowners (Section 5: Generations and the Great Recession, 2011). Known for their relatively staid lifestyle, there were currents of dissatisfaction among the Silent Generation; it has been said that getting ahead for this generation was based on how they were perceived by others (Silent Generation, Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 2023). One cannot fail to notice the potential similarity of a Generation Z during the robust labor market of 2020 through 2023 at least. "With the Covid pandemic, opportunities disappeared for the kind of part-time employment and internships that undergraduates were once able to have to build their résumés" (Kelly, 2023, July).

The Silent Generation enjoyed watching the new invention of television when they were teenagers. The impact of technology, specifically, social media on their grandchildren, Generation Z has caused the importance of how one has been seen by others as a debatable advantage or disadvantage (Noor, 2024). For example, Gen Z's social media usage has reached four or more hours a day which is double the rate of all adults in the United States (Kelly, 2023, July). Furthermore, partially due to the impact of COVID-19, Generation Z prioritizes financial prudence as their grandparents' generation did. They advocate saving money and making informed financial decisions (Noor, 2024). Their experiences were shaped in many ways during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic; there was a resultant sense of isolation during their personal development, and their expectations for work reflect that impact. The oldest members of this group had a different internship and job search experience than their immediate predecessors (Abril, 2022). This may have contributed to why they are seen by 74% of managers and business leaders as difficult to work with, and more difficult to work with than other generations. Reasons include that the group tends to feel entitled and demonstrate a lack of effort, motivation, and productivity (Kelly, 2023, July). They want meaningful work and culture and consider their potential employers' values when assessing a job offer. To help provide that workplace meaningfulness, they prefer opportunities for training, professional growth, and mentorships. They are willing to job hop (unlike the Silent Generation), and they prefer a hybrid format (Abril, 2022). Unlike during the 1918 pandemic when stores and factories staggered their business hours and yet the traditional hours of work returned after the pandemic, by 2024, the hybrid workplace format appears to be the prevalent new model of the 21st century post-pandemic workplace. Due to the availability of online meetings, trainings, and other work activities, what may be permanent shifts in the workplace are evident (Rogers, 2021).

Generation Z, who are the children of Generation X and the grandchildren of many in the Silent Generation, are progressive and pro-government. They are also the most racially and ethnically diverse generation to this point in the workplace and they see that as a good thing (Parker, Igielink, 2020), and consider it imperative that their workplace promotes respect, equity, and inclusion (Abril, 2022). 22% of Generation Z have at least one immigrant parent which is notably higher than the 14% of Millennials. In the Western part of the United States, 40% of Generation Zers are non-Hispanic white, 40% are Hispanic while 10% are Asian, 4% are black, and 6% are another race. In the Southern part of the United States 46% of Generation Z years are non-Hispanic white. Because Generation Z is also the best educated generation to this point in the workplace, they are less likely to be working than previous generations when they are teens and young adults. Only 18% of this generation's teens were employed in 2018 before the COVID-19 pandemic (Parker, Igielink, 2020). Furthermore, Generation Z are accelerating a number of trends that Millennials started, including an expectation of authenticity (Bhargava, Finneman, Schmidt, Spagnuolo, 2020).

The data in Figure 2 supports this information about Generation Z. Most of the respondents in this research are Generation Z members. Notice that in the research that was conducted by this author, the respondents stated that because of the events of the pandemic they were more likely to ask for more pay and expect flexibility from their employers. Notice that almost one-third of the respondents also noted that they will now prioritize family over work. Furthermore, the importance of mental health attention at work is a priority. That latter aspect will be discussed more in the Workplace Safety section below.

FIGURE 2
WORKPLACE MODIFICATION



The Silent Generation, the grandparents of Gen Z, were more unassuming (Indeed Editorial Team, 2023, Kagan, 2022). In contrast to their grandparents, Generation Z is gaining much attention in the workplace. Many of this generation are not appearing for job interviews (also referred to as “ghosting”) or they are not staying past the first day of work (Royle, 2024). The March 2024 World Happiness Report showed that self-reported data from those under 30 led to the United States not being listed as one of the top 20 happiest countries for the first time since the annual report - which is analyzed by Gallup, the United Nations and other groups -was initially published in 2012. There is a myriad of potential reasons for this including the rise in virtual school and remote work (Cann, 2024) which grew due to COVID-19.

Workplace Safety

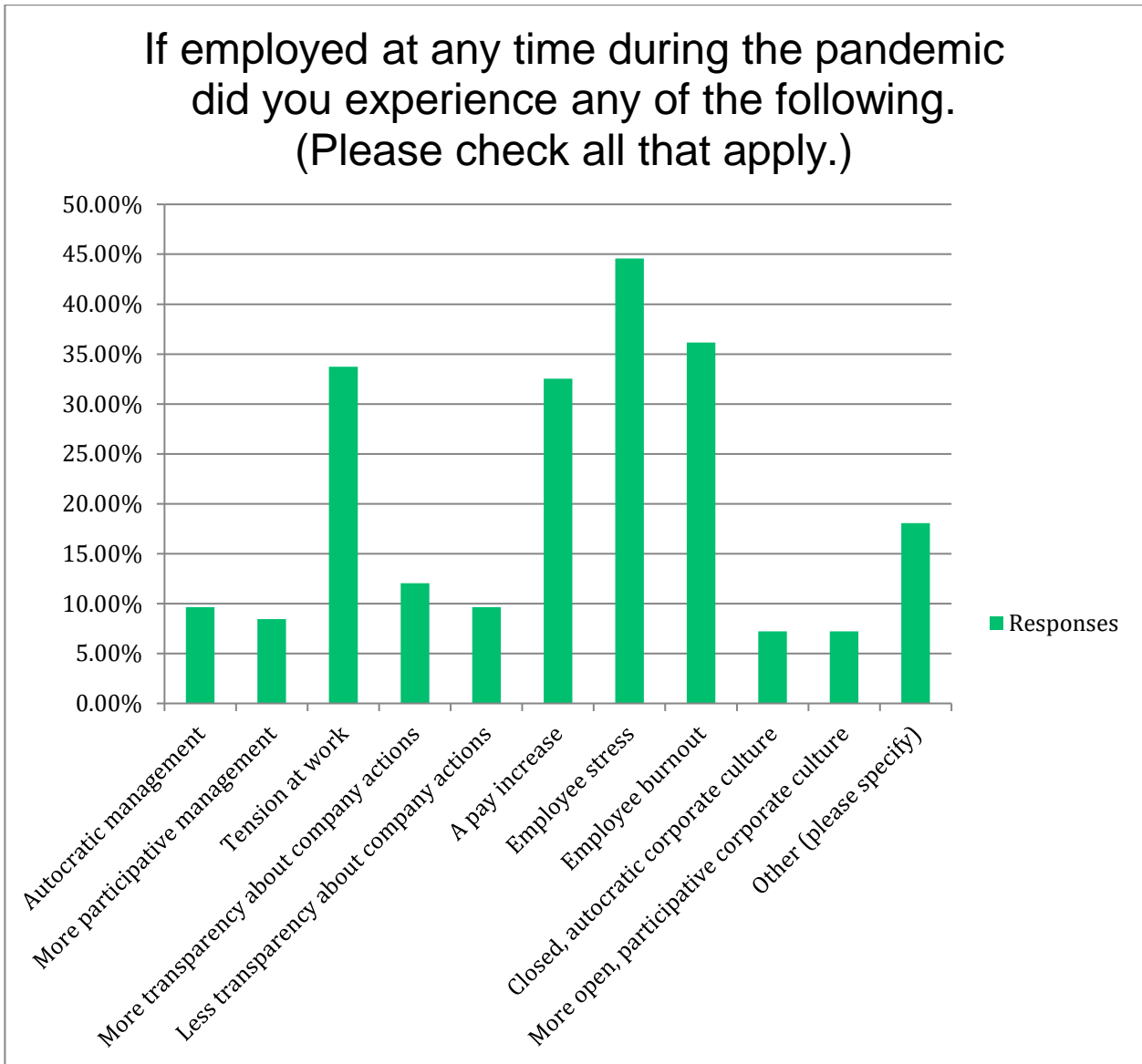
During the 1918 pandemic there were minimal safety nets for workers who became ill. If workers could not work, typically, they and their families would not be paid and therefore could not eat (Clay). Up to the 1920s, the United States was among the most dangerous places to work in the world. American workers were two to three times more likely to be injured or killed than their European counterparts. Focusing on the Scientific Management theory, there was little attention paid to ergonomics and worker health. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics in 1913, 23,000 industrial deaths occurred among the workforce of 38 million. That was a rate of about 61 deaths per 100,000 workers. (In comparison, by 1933, that rate had declined to 37 deaths per 100,000.) Child labor existed yet was on the decline in certain parts of the United States. By 1913 all but nine states had fixed 14 years as the minimum age for factory work and a majority of these states had extended the minimum to stores and other specified places of work” (Greengard, 2012).

The demands of WWI military production were a core factor that kept factories open when it was possible. Some cities did close schools, bars, and theaters but not at the comparable level of the most recent pandemic (Clay). Furthermore, a number of current-day safety perspectives, and social safety nets did not exist. For example, shortly after the Spanish Flu pandemic, in the 1920s, the General Management view was that workplace injuries and deaths occurred mostly because workers were careless. There were no safety engineers (Greengard, 2012). It was not until 1938 with the passage of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) that meaningful child labor legislation was enacted and this hallmark law governing minimum wage, overtime and record keeping was instituted (Kerschner, 2013, para 9).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, in addition to measures that were taken to protect the physical well-being of individuals, there was an increased attention on mental health. This impacted all generations. Specifically, Generation Z was very affected as a likely consequence of the pandemic. A May 2020 survey by McKinsey and Company found that Generation Z self-reported “remarkably high rates of mental health struggles”. Correspondingly, 55% of 18- to 24-year-olds reported that they had received a diagnosis and or treatment for mental illness (Kelly, 2023, July). This contrasts with 21% of American adults experiencing mental health challenges before the COVID-19 pandemic (Ferland, 2023). In a recent survey, nearly 60% of employers said they started a conversation about mental health in the workplace during the pandemic. More than 40% of employers reported an increase in reasonable accommodation requests related to mental health issues by employees since the pandemic started. These conversations led to better performing and healthier employees. Despite these endeavors, 51% of employers said they had reports about burnout or mental fatigue (Pandemic-versary..., 2023). Workplaces have responded by offering training, more benefits and mental health services to employees. An early 2023 report stated that 86% of surveyed employers provided mental health support, including more accessibility to assistance programs, access to mental health apps and providing on demand virtual care. Furthermore, workers stated that mental health support was a key factor in their future work and career decisions (Ferland, 2023).

As can be seen in the Figure 3’s results of the research conducted by this author, the largest common experience that the respondents had during the pandemic was employee stress. That was closely followed by employee burnout. Notice that there was also tension at work and less transparency about the company actions. Those negative experiences have shifted how younger generation workers see their workplaces and what expectations they bring. Although Generation Z, for example, may be seen sometimes as difficult at work, there may be important extenuating circumstances directly connected to the pandemic that influence their perspectives and subsequent actions.

**FIGURE 3
WORK EXPERIENCES**



Labor Economics

Deaths due to the 1918 influenza pandemic and WWI had a large macroeconomic effect. The recession of 1920-1921 was a sharp recession following the end of WWI and the influenza pandemic (Anderson, Chang, 2022). It is estimated that “in the typical country, the pandemic reduced per capita GDP by 6% and private consumption by 8%... In the United States, the flu’s toll was much lower: a 1.5 % decline in GDP and a 2.1% drop in consumption. The decline in economic activity combined with elevated inflation resulted in large declines in the real returns in stocks and short-term government bonds.” The estimated drop in the USA was 7% (Social and Economic Impacts of the 1918 Influence Epidemic, para 5,6). The economic impact may have been greater in the 1918 pandemic than the 21st century COVID-19 pandemic due to the higher fatality rate among young manufacturing industry workers in the 1918 pandemic. In contrast, the more prevalent service industry during the COVID-19 pandemic had a more negative economic impact (Wheelock, 2020).

Food prices doubled between 1915 and 1920; clothing costs more than tripled (Mintz). The lowest point of the Recession was March 1919. Coal, steel, and shipbuilding produced large quantities of goods, so those workers continued or returned to work as soon as possible (Clay). However, industrial production and coal production dropped (Velde, 2020 in Berkes, Deschenes, Gaetani, Lin, Severan, 2020, 2023), as did textile and lumber (Bodenhorn, 2020 in Berkes, Deschenes, Gaetani, Lin, Severan, 2020, 2023; Correia et al. 2022 in Berkes, Deschenes, Gaetani, Lin, Severan, 2020, 2023). In general, although industrial production fell sharply, coal, steel, machinery, textiles, and other war-related production also recovered quickly. An exception was manufacturing in several cities with the highest flu fatality rates. Because of the severity of the pandemic in these areas, the Spanish Flu pandemic caused an 18% decline in manufacturing output and a 23% decline in manufacturing employment (Garret, 2009, and Correia, Luck, Verner, 2020 in Wheelock, 2020). Additionally, the retail-oriented sectors except for pharmacies and grocery stores experienced dramatic declines in business. Mandating closure of retail establishments was rare.

The Spanish Flu had a tremendous toll on mortality and the death rate and created economic and social burdens including in the United States (Chorba, Breedlove, 2018). Recessions often occur during pandemics. There was a mild recession from August 1918 to March 1919, and a deep recession began in 1920 and lasted until 1921. By mid-1920 after that recession started, labor markets became less tight because of large contractions in labor demand. For example, in 1919 the percent unemployed in manufacturing, transportation, building trades and mining were estimated to be 6.9%. By 1920 that rose to 7.2% (Historical US Unemployment Rate by Year - The Balance). There was a large decline in the number of job openings during the recession of 1920 to 1921, raising the unemployment rate (Smiley, 1993). Unemployment in 1921 was approximately 23% in manufacturing, 26% in construction, 14% in transportation and communication and 38% in mines, quarries, and oil fields. This is in contrast to 3.7% unemployment in public service, mercantile, and miscellaneous industries (Committee on Economic Security). Whereas wages had grown much faster than employment after World War I, wages fell sharply after mid-1920 (Anderson, Chang, 2022). The unemployment rate remained at less than 4% except for peaks of 5% in 1924 and 4.2% in 1928 (Smiley, 1993). Unemployment insurance was not instituted in the United States until 1935 (Yancy, 2023). As a comparison, the unemployment rate during the COVID-19 pandemic shifted from 14.9% in April 2020 to 3.7% in May 2023 (US Unemployment Rate, 2024).

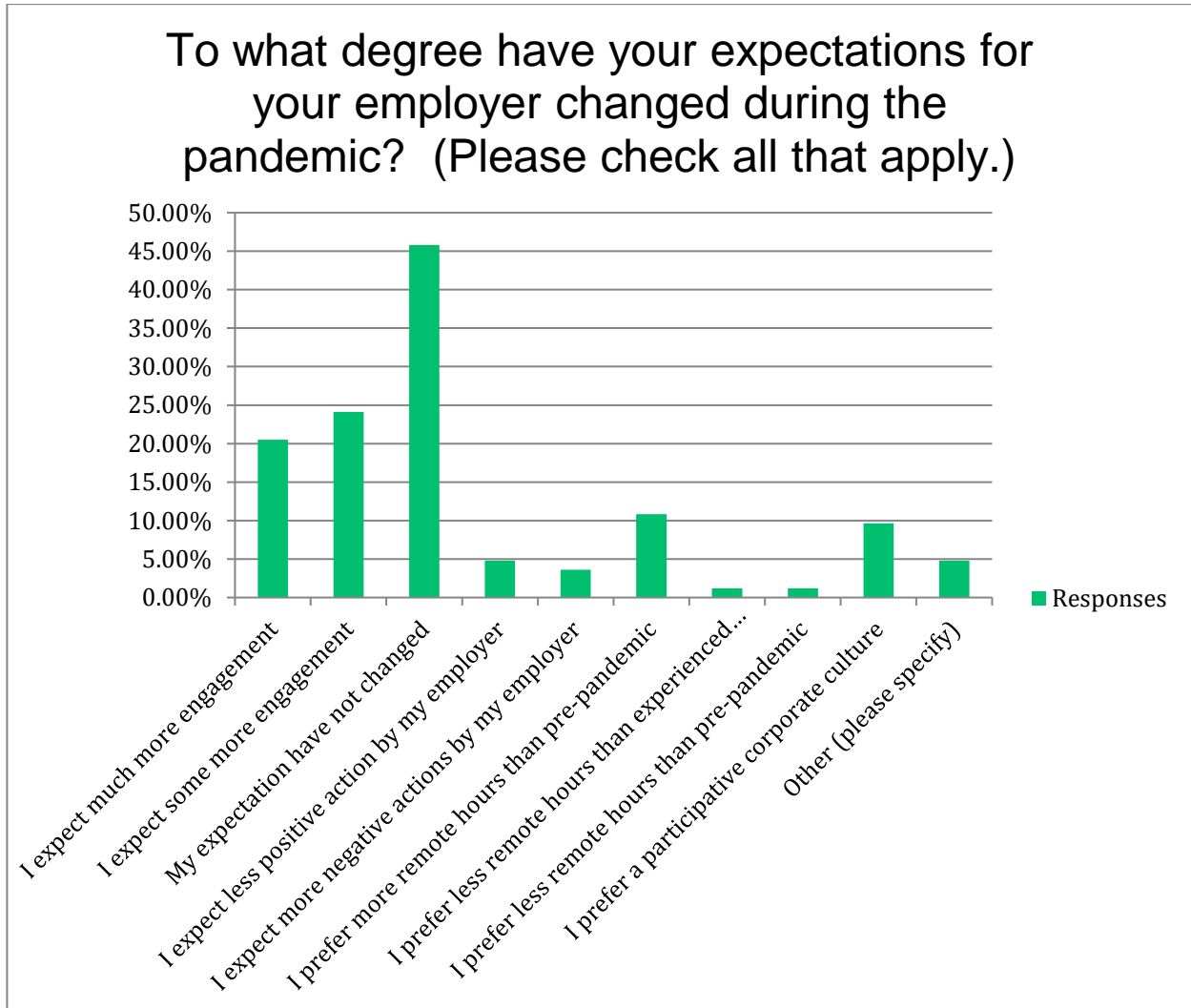
Furthermore, the unemployment rate in the United States reached almost 15% in April 2020, the preliminary stages of COVID-19. By mid-2020 the unemployment rate in the United States had dropped to almost pre-pandemic levels. Additionally, to lessen the impact of COVID-19 on the United States economy, the federal government enacted 6 major bills totaling approximately \$5.7 trillion. The last bill was signed into law by President Biden on March 11th, 2021. The American Rescue Plan Act gave direct payments to individuals, direct aid to local and state governments, and an extension to unemployment benefits. A March 2020 survey found that a sizable share of the United States adults supported the economic relief package (Elflein, 2023, December).

Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, the labor market remained robust and real wages outpaced inflation --which often occurs during or after a pandemic-- for the middle to the officially stated end of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2023, the stock market had its best year in decades. The unemployment rate was below 4% and had been below that low rate for the longest time period since the 1960s. The pandemic and post-pandemic inflation challenged food, gas, and housing prices. Yet even in March of 2024, the US economy added 303,000 jobs --more than expected-- and the unemployment rate fell to 3.8% (Schafer, 2024, April). Various generations are impacted by these economic factors. "Due to challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic and recent economic turmoil, there are unique factors influencing Generation Z employees looking for work. ...Job openings are much higher than usual. As a result, Gen Z employees are more likely to apply to jobs that meet their expectations regarding salary and work-life balance (Korhonen, 2023).

Although, as shown by Figure 4 below, 40% of the participants, in research conducted by this author, stated that their expectations had not changed. The remaining respondents did see their expectation shift. That included almost a quarter saying they wanted "some more engagement". That was in conjunction with 20% of the respondents who stated that they wanted "more engagement". Therefore, that combination of

approximately 45% of the respondents shows how important it is for organizations to demonstrably engage their younger employees. Management needs to understand that they want a participative corporate culture that provides a hybrid format with more remote hours.

FIGURE 4
EMPLOYEE EXPECTATIONS OF EMPLOYER



Wages

Following World War I, and because of the far reaching impact of the Spanish Flu, labor shortages drove up the demand for skilled workers which then increased wages. In the United States those wages had already increased due to the shortage of workers caused by World War I. The trend of wages increasing further occurred in the two or three years after World War I. Between 1915 and 1921 the hourly rate more than doubled across most manufacturing industries with the hourly wage in manufacturing increasing from \$0.21 per hour in 1915 to \$0.56 per hour in 1920. The trend was similar across even higher paying trades such as the building trade which increased from \$0.57 per hour in 1915 to \$1.08 in 1921 (O’Neill, 2022, June). In 1920-1921 annual earnings for employees in manufacturing and construction fell sharply. Workers in mining saw an increase (followed by a dramatic decline in 1922). Employees in transportation saw earnings decline. Employees in other industries including communications, public utilities, government,

and wholesale & retail trade had wages rise. Workers in finance, insurance and real estate saw a dramatic increase of earnings from 1920-1922, and then a decline starting in 1922 (Smiley, 1993, Figure 2.6).

Two years from the start of the 21st century Coronavirus pandemic, the workplace remained in a state of severe disruption. The economy had more than a million more jobs than workers to fill them. Employees were quitting in large numbers (Smart, 2022). In 2022, at the highest point of the phenomenon termed the “Great Resignation”, 4.5 million workers, or about 3% of the United States workforce quit their jobs (Smith, 2024). Furthermore, in one study, 46% of employers said that they had faced higher levels of turnover and 34% said that they had seen increased absenteeism (Pandemic-versary, 2023). By 2023, a survey of US professionals, conducted by LinkedIn, reported that 85% of workers said that they plan to look for a new role in 2024. Americans’ confidence in job hunting prospects reached its highest point in two years as of February 2024. Ironically, another survey found that 80% of individuals who quit during the pandemic’s Great Resignation regretted their decision to leave; that was particularly true of Generation Z who missed working in an office environment and also missed the work life balance that their previous jobs had offered (Smith, 2024, May).

Wages were rising at an annual average of about 5% (Smart 2022). Note that people who change jobs tend to increase their salaries more quickly than those who stay at the same company (Smtih, 2024). The recovery in the labor market was historic, with the unemployment rate at 3.5% as of August 11, 2022, as wages were increasing in many places. By October 2022, wages increased 7.7%, on an annual basis, according to ADP. This was down slightly from the September 2022 pace (Cox, 2022, November).

Labor Unions

“The ravages of a pandemic only bring simmering societal issues to a boil” (McHugh, 2022, para 22). This statement is relevant to the Spanish Flu and to the COVID-19 pandemic.

During WWI, labor unions grew. The American Federation of Labor (AFL) became dominant. The federal government’s policies facilitated that growth (Smiley, 1993). Also, during WWI, the 12-hour day was abolished, the 8-hour day was instituted on war contract work. By 1919, half of USA’s workers had a 48-hour work week (Mintz). In 1919 the AFL conducted a successful membership drive in the steel industry, yet management refused to bargain with them (Smiley, 1993). Over 4 million workers, which equaled 20% of the USA’s workforce, were involved in strikes in 1919 (Great Steel Strike of 1919 Historical Marker). That number included 365,000 steelworkers and 400,000 miners. This was noteworthy because in 1900 not one Pennsylvania steel plant was unionized as a result of prior decades’ anti-union actions by the companies (O’Lenic, Hartjen, 2023, p.220). The Pennsylvania State Police (created in 1905) worked to quell the 1919 steel strike (Library of Congress). The steelworkers’ strike hampered one of the nation’s largest industries. In Pittsburgh, AFL members found that meeting halls had been shut down for “health violations,” and organizers had run-ins with Pinkerton security officers hired by U.S. Steel, headquartered in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The company was the largest employer at the time in the United States and controlled a vast share of the steel market; and was a dangerous place to work. Steel workers worked 12-hour days with exhausting and dangerous work, as well as harsh discipline.

Because of post-WWI inflation, workers wanted better wages, job protection, and improved conditions. On September 22, 1919, the steel strike began. Half the steel industry came to a halt across the country, and workers in six states walked off the job. The strike was a major disruption to the industry. It involved 24 unions. Because it was not wartime, there was no War Labor Board to intervene on behalf of workers (Blakemore. 2019). By mid-October 1919, the American Steel and Wire --now U.S. Steel --Corporation and Otis steel had plans to reopen. On October 17, two pickets outside of American Steel were shot as an armed force tried to keep workers from entering the plant (1919 Steel Strike, 2023). In mid-December 1919, it was estimated that 109,000 strikers were still not at work (Great Steel Strike of 1919 Historical Marker). The strike ended on January 8, 1920, with no concessions from U.S. Steel (1919 Steel Strike, 2023).

In addition to the steel strike, in 1919 the United Mine Workers undertook a strike and lost. Those losses, and the 1920-1921 Great Depression led to notable union membership decline (Smiley, 1993, Labor Unions in the Interwar Period). “During the 1920’s, labor union membership fell from 5 million to 3 million.

The Supreme Court outlawed picketing, overturned national child labor laws, and abolished minimum wage laws for women” (Mintz, para 6).

To put the situation in perspective, though, approval of labor unions is now at its highest point since 1965. In a survey, 77% of adults ages 18 through 34 state that they support them. This group includes Millennials and Generation Z. This mindset is an historically progressive cause according to Pew Research. Correspondingly, Generation Z has been described as more forward thinking on social and economic issues than any other generation (Thier, 2021, Dec). Thousands of twenty-somethings and thirty-somethings in newsrooms, museums, and non-profit organizations are unionizing (Greenhouse, 2022, April). Shortly before the pandemic began, the labor dispute between freight railroads and workers in the United States began in 2019. There was a tentative agreement reached in September of 2022. The deal provided workers with a 24% increase over five years and \$5000 in bonuses, yet it did not provide workers with paid sick leave. When union members voted on the deal, four of the 12 unions who needed to approve the deal rejected it. There was concern that a railroad strike could cripple the economy. President Biden invoked powers under the 1926 Railway Labor Act and allowed Congress to impose the September 2022 agreement on rail companies and union employees. The final agreement added one day of paid sick leave (Statista, 2023). In 2022, there were 2510 union representation petitions filed with the National Labor Relations Board. That was the highest number filed since 2016 and it was a 53% increase from 2021 (Pandemic-versary..., 2023). Additionally in 2023, the number of major strikes increased by 43% to 33 in comparison to what occurred in 2022. Even though most strikes were short in duration, that was the largest number of major work stoppages in America in more than 20 years. The greatest number of the large strikes was because of the SAG-AFTRA strike, which represented 160,000 actors who were on strike for approximately 4 months. The 33 strikes in 2023 were roughly double the number of an average of 16.7 strikes a year over the course of the last 20 years. There were other strikes that occurred that included a smaller number of workers. One study by the Cornell University School of Industrial Labor Relations found that major strikes of 1000 or more employees accounted for less than 10% of the overall number of strikes (Isidore, 2024).

Despite the relatively high public support for unions, there is some ambiguity in the minds of workers about turning to unions. “They are wary of having another boss”. The workers’ calls for more representation are playing out at levels below formal union elections. The current tension is not limited to core employee demands related to wages, hours and working conditions. Employees want a say on issues, including use of AI systems, company mission, structural changes within the workplace, worker councils, dispute resolution, and worker representative on the board of directors (Rosenbaum, 2022).

Dominant Industry Shifts

After the early 20th century pandemic and World War I, the United States saw new forms of mass transportation, and mass media expand (Tomes, 2020) and a change of dominant industries (Smiley, 1993). There was a highly competitive news industry (Tomes, 2020). By 1915 the carriage industry had been decisively replaced by the automobile industry (Introduction: Transportation in America and the Carriage Age, 2007). Cars and trucks replaced horses for distribution (Pollard, 2020). Automobile production rose from approximately 1.7 million in 1917 to 4.6 million in 1929. Electrification of households grew, for example in 1920 approximately 47% of urban and non-farm households were electrified. This led to the rapid expansion in production and consumption of household appliances. The mechanization of the office work such as the development of the mechanical calculator and the typewriter contributed to changes of the demographics at the workplace (Pollard, 2020). By 1920, millions of the Underwood typewriters were produced and this is when almost all typewriters looked and functioned similarly (Polt). During the first two decades of the 20th century, installment credit for consumer durables became much more accepted. In 1919, 30% of all credit outstanding was installment credit (Smiley, 1993).

Similar to this situation, currently there are industry shifts occurring. There are approximately 800 million jobs worldwide that are very vulnerable to climate extremes, and transitioning to a low carbon economy is in process. Half of Generation Z and Millennials believe their employers are already providing skills training necessary for this transition. A study by Deloitte found that more than 300 million additional jobs globally can be created by 2050 due to decarbonization (Deloitte, 2023 Gen Z and Millennial Survey).

These shifts also are leading to Generation Z and Millennials demanding more affordable sustainable products and services, which was similar to what occurred in the 1920s when consumers and businesses saw the need for new offerings.

Technology shifts characterize different generations. In recent Pew research, the Silent Generations experienced the largest growth of the Facebook platform than the three generations that follow them. Although it is less than Gen Zers (91%) and Baby Boomers (85%), 62% of Silents reported using the Internet. Additionally, 78% of the Silent Generation, compared to 90% of Millennials, and 89% of Gen Xers and Baby Boomers view the Internet as a positive for society (Vogels, 2019). As we have seen above, social media is a major technology for Generation Z. With the growth of artificial intelligence, it is expected that there will be a rapidity of technological shifts in the years ahead.

CONCLUSION

This analysis has demonstrated parallel developments in conjunction with two major pandemics in the United States. The impacts upon the workplace and employees are significant. Major structural and social shifts occurred with long term effects. Although the Spanish Flu and the COVID-19 pandemic were 100 years apart, there are some striking similarities, and interesting contrasts in trends and movements that developed during and relatively shortly after each of these occurrences. It is advantageous for company leaders, healthcare professionals, government entities, and employees to be aware of these parallel occurrences during and after pandemics.

As demonstrated in this document; by understanding the generation to which most workers' grandparents and parents belonged, one can gain insights into another generation's members' perceptions and attitudes. Although the reader is cautioned not to over generalize or stereotype, by looking at normative data, each generation's descriptors can be enhanced, and new insights may evolve when analyzing pandemics and their aftereffects in the workplace.

By studying and comparing various relevant factors, including generations, leaders and educators can gain insight for teaching the emerging and future managers of America who may encounter another pandemic in the future. The opportunities and challenges that exist influence teachers' curriculum content and design. By analyzing the impact of pandemics, government and business leaders can better understand subsequent workplace trends and employee demands. This deeper awareness can benefit effective decision making and policy development.

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