

## **A Comprehensive Study on Analogical Factors affecting Workplace Expectations of Different Generations**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Human beings mature and develop through different and inevitable life spans. Due to these spans there are related physical changes in their bodies, their relationships and their economic contexts and factors relating to life segmentation. Behavior of an individual is greatly stirred by these life stages which affect his working style and in turn his societal perceptions. Older people with more skill and experience of working are seen showing more maturity, better responsibility and working loyalty towards their organization as compared to young people. Different age groups of people create different generations that develop different value systems which impacts their behavior and the way they interact with people around them. Their working style is a significant factor impacting the work culture of any organization and therefore understanding this diversity among generations and the gap between them at workplace is important for smooth functioning of work.*

*Business in today's competitive world is threatened by the well-documented demographic time bomb. In few years, world will observe people shortage rather than talent shortage for running businesses. Although most organizations are investing their time and resources trying to manage and boost diversity, what gets neglected and unread is the scale and the factors which make them antithetic. The paper depicts and elaborates different generations working presently in organizations defining their individual characteristics. We attempt to unveil factors on which these generations stand similar in their workplace expectations and detail out a comparison of factors which at the same time make them different. The paper also endeavors and suggests possible ways of managing generational diversity and avoiding the conflicts between them.*

**Keywords:** Generational Diversity, Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, Work Values, Workplace Expectations..

### **INTRODUCTION:**

Managing and motivating diverse workers has been a striking area with gender and culture being the center of the conversation. Now, the youngest generation is taking place in organizations, generational diversity is being observed and so various generations are working together. A generation is a group of people born around the same time which exhibit some peculiar similar characteristics affected by the span that they are born in. The characteristics of these generations are different and they are the connecting dots that influence people and their surroundings. Many managers are learning that a one size and one strategy style is not going to work across generations. Different generations bring out different viewpoints and are guided by deeply rooted values in their unique experiences.

Among three generations after World War II, namely, Baby Boomer, Generation X and Generation Y, Generation Y is the generation which has got striking characteristic. These features are observed to be unique and are found to be different and difficult to tackle. Employers to a great extent are finding it difficult to handle this generation and take out work from them. This generation is found to have high turnover rate and they are studied to leave an

organization within a very short duration of time. Is this because of the other generations they are working with or their needs being unfulfilled? Millennial thinks differently about work, learning and relationships because of the environment they grew up in. Yet, even though millennial employees are crucial to the future of work, organizations are jeopardizing their ability to recruit and retain them by simultaneously not overlooking other existing generations at work. There are lots of myths about generations in terms of their reputation, loyalty, decision making, digital addiction and most importantly their career goals and expectations (Fortune Insider report 2015). Generation Y is tagged to be anti-careerist and are found difficult to work with other generations, which is considered to be again a myth (Schumpeter, 2015). The erroneous assumptions about how to work with Millennial makes it more difficult for employers to attract them. The notion of India’s demographic dividend makes it more important to study Indian Generation Y (Raina, 2016).

Different generations can do well in the workplace provided understanding is given to their different style (Roberts, 2000). Employers need to seek greater understanding and more ideas relating to hiring and retaining of this generation as some economic and legal issues are expected to emerge in a workplace populated by this new generation (Cole, Smith & Lucas, 2002). Different generations behave differently at workplace and this significant difference in their workplace behavior affects the rules of engagement and transforms the landscape of Talent Management. The generational differences exist in some workplace behaviors and so the organisations should be cautious in implementing HR strategies that recognize the unique values and characteristics of each generation versus general strategies apply to all generations of employees (Becton et al., 2014). The generational differences have positive and negative impact on organisations and surfaces out few challenges. Understanding and managing generational diversity can bring a range of benefits and perspectives to the workplace also understanding the multi-generation workforce today is the key focus for HR managers of corporate India (Tiwari, 2016).

**TIMELINE GENERATIONS:**

The terminology which is used to tag people belonging to different generations is not fixed. There is no standard language describing different generations as there are different researchers working in different countries in respective contexts, exploring and bringing in variety of names for different generations. Although in some countries, the moments are very specific about the year when one generation ends and when next starts, significant differences have been found among the labels given to the area of time period covered by a specific generation as assigned by different researchers. Before looking at the characteristics of the different generations, it is important to note the contestations surrounding the birth dates of each generation. Table 1 shows the comparison of different generational timeline comprehending different interval of years according to previous research. In addition, it also shows the sources and the tags being given and used by these researchers.

**Table 1: Generations on the Timeline**

| Previous Work                 | Generation Tags                     |                                |                              |                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                               | Howe and Strauss(2000)              | Silent Generation<br>1925-1943 | Baby Boomers<br>1943-1960    | Generation X<br>1961-1980                                                                     |
| Zemke et al (2000)            | Veterans<br>1922-1943               | Baby Boomers<br>1943-1960      | Gen Xers<br>1960-1981        | Nexters<br>1981-1999                                                                          |
| Lancaster and Stillmann(2002) | Traditionalists<br>1900-1945        | Baby Boomers<br>1946-1964      | Generation Xers<br>1965-1980 | Millennial Generation, Echo Boomers, Generation Y, Baby Busters, Generation Next<br>1981-2000 |
| Raines (2003)                 | GI & Silent Generation<br>1901-1942 | Baby Boom<br>1943-1960         | Generation X<br>1961-1980    | Millennials<br>1980-2000                                                                      |
| Martin and Tulgan(2005)       | Silent Generation<br>1925-1942      | Baby Boomers<br>1946-1960      | Generation X<br>1965-1977    | Millennials<br>1978-1999                                                                      |

As illustrated in the table above, the second generation start year is 1943 (Howe & Strauss, 2000), (Raines, 2003),

(Zemke et.al, 2000) and interestingly the end year is 1960. This generation is alternately called either Boom Generation or Baby Boomers. Some researchers state that the fourth generation people were born as early as 1978 (Martin & Tulgan, 2005) whereas others believed it to be 1981(Lancaster & Stillmann, 2002). Though lot of labels is given to this generation but they are most popularly known as Millennial generation or simply Millennials. Third generation is known as Generation X and most of the research opinionated it to end by the year 1980. Though there are lot of stories, Generational theory was probably most popularized by the works of Neil Howe and William Strauss in the year 1990s. There are different generations according to their theory but the focus of this paper is on three generations starting from the generation of Baby Boomers as members of these three generations existing and working currently together at workplaces and will be in the workforce over the next 15 years. This article uses the generally accepted dating for each generations currently working together in organizations. The generations are labeled and depicted in Table 2.

**Table 2: Generation Timeline**

|              | <b>Baby Boomers</b> | <b>Generation X</b> | <b>Millennials/Generation Y</b> |
|--------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| Born Between | 1946-1964           | 1965-1980           | 1981-2000                       |
| Age Range    | 53-71 years         | 37-52 years         | 17-36 years                     |

**GENERATIONS AT A GLANCE:**

Strauss Howe’s Generational theory explains that the era in which a person was born affects the development of his view about the world and his value systems are shaped by observing the working pattern of his immediate previous generation (Strauss & Howe, 1991). All the three generations have different concepts of authority, motivation, way of working and working place expectations. Generational theory explains that the era in which a person was born affects the development of their view of the world (Strauss & Howe, 1991). Our birth year, our parents and the society that we live in shape our life and our value systems in the first decade. Later the significant events and the striking events influence us. People of the same age face similar issues, go through similar events, share same experiences and so they form the same value systems, regardless of their country or community of birth. These value systems are the drivers of behavior and attitudes, and are good predictors of behavior and expectations. (Codrington, 2008).Based on the generational theory, this part now discusses the three living generations in focus. These three generations are currently found working together at organisations. These three generations are; the Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y.

**Baby Boomers (1946-1964):**

The Baby Boomers are a generation of people born post World War II during the years 1946 to 1964 (Baltes,1980). Baby Boomers are the postwar generation, who grew up during a time of expansive visions. This generation of Baby Boomers struggled in a time of relative severity, but because of good education, government subsidies and rising property prices they have emerged as a successful and affluent generation. They are now either settling or have already settled into retirement enjoying luxuries and comforts. They have created more wealth than any other generation, ever. They are a workaholic generation, goal oriented, urged to action and strongly focused. Boomers are passionate workers concerned about equal participation in the workplace who are motivated by vision, mission, objectives and strategy and also believe in creating a fair workplace.

**Generation X (1965-1980):**

Generation X came after the Baby Boomers, and typically covers people born between the mid 1960’s and the early 1980’s (Baltes, 1980). The generation is open to change and has acquired the skill to encompass differences. They are against long term commitment believing that they are always unlikely to pay in future. They don’t believe in being naïve as the previous generations and look for quick term rewards. They are the ones who love taking risks and work hard for achieving the goals. They demand flexibility and work well with alternatives. They work well in output driven organizations but need flexibility and freedom to work. They feel insulted under close supervision. They love change in every aspect of their lives. This generation is considered to be multitasking, task oriented and keeps confirming attitude towards work and life. They also seek more work-life balance. Xers are realistic, independent, self-supporting, entrepreneurs, good at multitasking, market savvy, comfortable with technology; less loyal; love fun and enjoy work/personal time balance (Srinivasan, 2012)

### **Generation Y (1981-2000):**

Generation Y came after Generation X. Generation Y covers people which are born between the 1980's and the year 2000, and these individuals are sometimes called as Generation Y, Gen Yers, Millennial Generation, Echo Boomers or simply Millennial (Baltes, 1980). The terms Generation Y and Millennials are generally used interchangeably. They are born in the new era of globalisation, communication technology and wireless connectivity. Generation Y have become tech savvy as they are molded by the technological changes that occurred all over their early days. They demand reasons and rationale for doing anything or for fulfilling orders. They like to work in teams and work best when in groups, as opposed to individual assignments. Also, they are used to tackling multiple tasks with equal energy, so they expect to work hard. They are good multitaskers, having juggled sports, school and social interests growing up. This is the generation which wants to change the world. Baby Boomers and Generation X have received considerable attention but a new generation is now recognized as being different (Zevenbergen, 2004)

### **EXISTING WORK ON DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES OF GENERATIONS:**

The literature review result says that all researchers have concluded that difference among generations exists. This difference exists in terms of their characteristics, in their behavior, likings and disliking at workplace. Each generation is different based on different values and characteristics (Oer, 2007) Generation Y is found to be unique and different, in their work behavior and work needs. There is a difference in the individual and his or her underlying values, or personal and lifestyle characteristics including core values, family, education and money matters (Hammil, 2005) One of variable that is suspected to affect the work behavior is the age factor. The effects of aging on work values vary from generation to generation (Becton et al, 2014).

Personalities of these generations have shifted both in general and in relation to work: successive generations appear to be more neurotic, extroverted and conscientious, and regard themselves in an increasingly positive manner. Younger generations express greater interest in careers that are expressive of extroversion and social influence (Lyons & Kuron, 2014). The importance of material rewards and leisure appear to be increasing, whereas work ethic and the centrality of work in people's lives are decreasing (Lyons & Kuron, 2014). Conflicting results appeared in desire for job stability, meaningfulness in job and job satisfaction. The new generation requires higher stability in job and meaningfulness of work they are doing as this only will bring satisfaction from job (Twenge, 2010). The different backgrounds and life experiences result in five areas of potential workplace strife surrounding their differing expectations, distinct work ethics, deep-seated attitudes, opposing perspectives and diverse motivators (Glass, 2007). Millennials are stereotyped regarding salary preferences. They are found to value their compensation packages highly and believe in the system of equal work, equal pay at workplace.

Generation Y expressed a negative perception towards teamwork, organizational commitment and loyalty towards the employer. The main reason given by workers from Generations Y who intends to quit the organization is their own career advancement. Gen Y rate work as less central to their lives, value leisure more, and express a weaker work ethic than Boomers (Twenge, 2010). Millennials reported lower levels of engagement in conscientious behaviors compared to Baby Boomers (Chahil, 2015). The proportion of Generation Y who intend to quit scored lower on absence of conflict and warmth in comparison with other generations. Peer-to-peer recognition, results-based recognition and employer recognition all have the potential to ignite engagement in the youngest generations in the workforce (Nelson, 2011). Desire for work/life balance, an incredible comfort with technology and an appetite for responsibility are found to be higher in Gen Y. Gen Y colleagues are seeking a balance between their work and personal lives (Dunn, 2008). Gen Xers and Millennials prefer a flexible work schedule because they are confident they can complete the work effectively if given the freedom to accomplish it on their own time (Margaret, 2005). Boomers generally prefer to sort their problems directly through face-to-face interactions with their superiors and colleagues rather than speak on the telephone or send instant text messages (Angeline, 2011). Unlike their Gen X and Gen Y counterparts, Boomers, are high touch and low tech employees. The Gen X and Y employees are comparatively more mobile than their Boomer colleagues (Angeline, 2011). Job satisfaction and organizational commitment appear lower among younger generations, but career mobility higher (Becton et al., 2014). The desire for individual-focused leadership, competitiveness and self-reliance appears greater in younger generations, whereas the appeal of teamwork is lower (Lyons & Kuron, 2014). Generation Xers main focus is on self rather than society but the younger cohort, in its quest to find fulfillment, may give short shrift to some seasoned tenets of corporate conduct, including organizational mission, organizational politics, and organizational loyalty (Boyd, 2010). The Gen X and Y employees are not afraid to hop from one job to another if they are unhappy with their jobs and organizations (Angeline, 2011) The proportion of Generation Y employees who intend to quit is almost three times higher than that of other hospital workers (Tremblay, 2010).

Gen Y's job satisfaction will be derived from intrinsic factors, where the opportunity to take ownership and responsibility for a variety of work tasks and meaningful projects with proper support, training and development opportunities will be of high importance (Srinivasan,2012). With the advent of technology, work can often be completed at home. Gen Xers and Millennials like this opportunity because they can work at their own pace and have more control over their personal time (Margaret,2005).The generations in today's workplace differ in aspects of their personalities, work values and attitudes, leadership and teamwork preferences, leader behaviors and career experiences. Younger generations express greater interest in careers that are expressive of extroversion and social influence significant generational differences in work attitudes (Lyons & Kuron, 2014). Though there were no generational differences in altruistic values (e.g., wanting to help others), need of high competing colleagues and intention of doing good work (Twenge, 2010). The similarities found among all the three generations are: time out to explore passions, hobbies, good works, shared vision and values. Autonomy to work and motivation to work are needs that should be fulfilled to work to the fullest (Sylvia, 2009).

In terms of employment perks, Gen Y also show accelerating factor to take time off to travel (Cox, 2008). Generation Y goals include providing better cafeteria benefits, flexible work schedules, quality-of-life programs (Tolbize,2008). According to National Business Ethics Survey in 2009, all younger workers but Millennials especially are a significant area of vulnerability in terms of observed misconduct. Younger workers are more likely to observe misconduct, less likely to report it, and have fewer resources to draw from, given that they have the least life and work experience. Little support was found for differences in work values or motivation (Macky, 2008).All the three generations are found to need motivation as one of the factors to work more and better in future. All the generations have high degree of altruistic values and they plan to take time out to explore passions, hobbies, and good works. High-quality colleagues and autonomy are the two highly rated rewards by the generations. All the generations need a competitive team to work with. Recognition from one's company or boss is yet another similarity found among generations (Sylvia, 2009)

Theoretical frameworks have not supported the existence of fundamental systematic differences between the generations related to values, expectations regarding working conditions, and attitudes and behaviors at work. Their expectations with regard to job stability, autonomy and recognition are the same (Saba, 2011).

With few similarities and high differences, the Literature reviews majorly brings out the result that all the three generations currently found at workplace have very different workplace needs and behavior. Boomers and Gen X shares many similar characteristics while Gen Y is found to be distinctly different. Generation Yers are independent, entrepreneurial thinkers who relish responsibility, demand immediate feedback, and expect a sense of accomplishment hourly (Murray, 2008). They enjoy flexibility and freedom, survive on meaningful challenging work and love giving creative outputs. Guided by managers who are willing to confront their challenges and meet their expectations, they have the potential to become the highest performers in history (Twenge, 2010). They expect challenging work assignments, socially responsible workplaces, flexible work environments, collaboration, innovation from their jobs and strong work ethic (Srinivasan, 2012)

### **GENERATIONS AT WORKPLACE:**

Lot of researches have been conducted in past on different generations to understand whether the diversity in work values of different people belonging to different generations really exist or not. If it exists what are the work patterns and work styles which make them differ from each other. In 1998, National Opinion Research Center Survey indicated that 44% of those aged 18 to 24 indicated that they would choose to spend more time at work, compared to 23% of workers of all ages which shows that difference in work pattern do exist between generations. A survey conducted by Kayacan, et al. in 2016 revealed that Xers are influenced by intrinsic values like effectiveness, independence, moral values, autonomy and use of capabilities, responsibility, creativity and success which is different than Generation Y among Turkish university employees. Twenge in 2006 surveyed school children, adolescents, and college students using questionnaires and proved that most of today's young people are far away from reality and hence different from other generations.

According to the survey conducted in USA in 2006, the career goals of today's college graduates are "to balance their personal and professional life (59 percent), pursue further education (46 percent), build a sound financial base (32percent), and contribute to society (27 percent) which is found to way too different from previous generations. A recent research conducted by Elettar in 2017 on a total of 49 people consisting of 40.8% were Generation Y, followed by 38.8% from Generation X, and a relatively smaller number of respondents, 10 people (20.4%), were Boomers proved that there is no significant difference between generations on work values. Respondents as a whole identified extrinsic factors such as job security, intrinsic interest, social, and power work values as the most important values. The results revealed that there are no variations in work values (Elettar et.

al, 2017). The following table extracted through literature brings out a detailed comparison between generations and the factors making them stand different and look similar. Anick Tolbize studied generational differences in workplace in 2008 and detailed out the work values and attributes of all the three generations.

**Table 3 : Generational Difference based on Anick Tolbize’s Research**

|                                            | <b>Baby Boomers</b>                   | <b>Generation X</b>                   | <b>Generation Y</b>                   |
|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Preferred leadership Attributes            | Credible (74%)                        | Credible (71%)                        | Listens well (68%)                    |
|                                            | Trusted (61%)                         | Trusted (58%)                         | Dependable (66%)                      |
|                                            | Farsighted (57%)                      | Farsighted (54%)                      | Dedicated (63%)                       |
| Perceived elements of success at workplace | Use computers (82%)                   | Use computers (79%)                   | Use computers (66%)                   |
|                                            | Willingness to learn new things (80%) | Meet deadlines (75%)                  | Meet deadlines (62%)                  |
|                                            | Get along with people (78%)           | Willingness to learn new things (74%) | Multitasking (59%)                    |
|                                            | Meet deadlines (77%)                  | Speak clearly and concisely (72%)     | Willingness to learn new things (58%) |
|                                            | Organizational skills (73%)           | Get along with people (71%)           | Speak clearly and concisely (55%)     |
| Most important aspect of Work Culture      | Fair (86%)                            | Fair (87%)                            | Fair (66%)                            |
|                                            | Ethical (84%)                         | Ethical (83%)                         | Ethical (66%)                         |
|                                            | Straightforward (76%)                 | Straightforward (74%)                 | Friendly/social (59%)                 |
|                                            | Professional (70%)                    | Collaborative/team feeling(71%)       | Straightforward (54%)                 |
|                                            | Collaborative/team feeling(70%)       | Friendly/social (66%)                 | Professional (48%)                    |
| Communication tools used for Work          | Desktop computer (81%)                | Desktop computer (75%)                | Desktop computer (71%)                |
|                                            | Landline phone (84%)                  | Landline phone (81%)                  | Landline phone (67%)                  |
|                                            | Fax (74%)                             | Fax (65%)                             | Fax (52%)                             |
|                                            | Mobile/cell phone (66%)               | Mobile/cell phone (65%)               | Mobile/cell phone (46%)               |
|                                            | Laptop computer (44%)                 | Laptop computer (44%)                 | Laptop computer (26%)                 |
|                                            | PDAs with phone and Internet (15%)    | PDAs with phone and Internet (15%)    | PDAs with phone and Internet (6%)     |
| Top values                                 | Family (45%)                          | Family (67%)                          | Family (73%)                          |
|                                            | Integrity (32%)                       | Love (32%)                            | Love (49%)                            |
|                                            | Love (27%)                            | Integrity (24%)                       | Spirituality (28%)                    |
| Top reasons for happiness in the Workplace | Feeling valued (87%)                  | Feeling valued (84%)                  | Feeling valued (85%)                  |
|                                            | Recognition and appreciation (78%)    | Recognition and appreciation (74%)    | Recognition and appreciation (74%)    |
|                                            | Supportive environment (71%)          | Supportive environment (69%)          | Supportive environment (73%)          |
|                                            | Leadership I can relate to (71%)      | Leadership I can relate to (68%)      | Leadership I can relate to (72%)      |
|                                            | Capable workforce (64%)               | Capable workforce (66%)               | Capable workforce (68%)               |

**Source:** Anick Tolbize (2008): Generational differences in the workplace. Research and training center of community living

According to the above table, Baby Boomers are the most credible employees among the three generations while Generation Y is the most dedicated and less farsighted in comparison to other generations. Different generations perceive different elements responsible for success. For Generation X and Generation Y, meeting deadlines is important element perceived for success whereas learning new things is most important for Baby Boomers. This generation believes that an individual having organizational skills will be the most successful at workplace whereas Generation Y considers being multitasking as one of the element required to be successful. On the

thought of being fair, straightforward and ethical as the three aspects of work culture, all the three generations agree and vary slightly. Generation X is found to be most social at workplace whereas Baby Boomers believe to work in a professional culture. Landline phones and fax is the most convenient communication tool preferred by Boomers followed by Generation X. Surprisingly Generation Y has least preference of using laptops, phones and internet for communication in comparison with other two older generations. Out of top three values as ranked by the generations, Generation Y scores highest in being with family. Integrity is highest in Boomers while spirituality is only opinioned by Generation Y. The generations share similar reasons for being happy at workplace. Being valued is the most important reason for Boomers while supportive environment is crucial factor to be happy for Generation Y. Leadership and team to work are the highest scored factors as being ranked by Generation Y.

**Factors Accounting Similarities:**

Expectations from workplace and their fulfillment decide the happiness quotient of employees leading to their job satisfaction which in turn affect organizational commitment. Different generations behave differently at workplace and this significant difference in their workplace behavior affects the rules of engagement and transforms the landscape of talent management. Many theories and their frameworks have not supported the existence of generational differences relating to the values and expectations regarding conditions at workplace. Macky (2008), Sylvia (2009) and Saba (2011) believed that the differences in expectations are the stereotypes and it's the personality that affects the attitude which in response affects working of an employee which may belong to any generation. Generational differences are not created at workplace but they are built-in in an individual. It's not the generation but the age in which every individual behaves the same (Deal, 2007).The extensive study of past work found the following similarity among generations shown in table 4.

**Table 4: Factors Accounting Similarity among Generations**

|                              | <b>Baby Boomers</b>                     | <b>Generation X</b> | <b>Millennials</b> |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Autonomy                     | Freedom to set own work rules           | Found Similar       | Found Similar      |
| High-quality colleagues      | Need a good team to work with           | Found Similar       | Found Similar      |
| Recognition from Boss        | Seek respect and opportunity to advance | Found Similar       | Found Similar      |
| Reaction to change           | Resist change                           | Found Similar       | Found Similar      |
| Time out to explore passions | Need personal time                      | Found Similar       | Found Similar      |
| Altruistic Values            | Always ahead to help others             | Found Similar       | Found Similar      |
| Motivation to work           | Need to work even better                | Found Similar       | Found Similar      |

The expectations relating to autonomy, recognition and motivation are same for all the generations. All generations need freedom to frame their rules of working. They can't work under the framed rules and policies as they feel restricted and tied up hindering their work plans. To complete promised task on time, all the three generations need a good team of people to work with. They always are in search of high quality peers who are equally responsible and hungry for meaningful work and put in their best to meet deadlines. Recognition and appreciation from the reporting supervisor or immediate boss is the catalyst to work better and holds true for all of them. Opportunity for advancement is the best source of recognition being perceived by them. With passion to complete work on time, these generations also strive to take time out and explore their hidden passions. All of them are found to be always there and ready to help others but accepting and adjusting to change is the only factor that they resist from.

**Factors Accounting Differences:**

Various evidences are found leading to the acceptance of generational diversity. There are many factors affecting the workplace expectations and work values where the generations are found to be different. Every generation has their own way of working and different perceptions and need relating to the manner of work. Table 5 shows the list of researchers who worked and concluded that there definitely exist generational diversity. It also list outs the year in which the research was conducted. Different researchers worked on different factors, extrinsic or intrinsic and construed the presence of difference among these generations relating to their workplace expectations.

**Table 5: Previous Work Relating to Generational Diversity**

| Researcher       | Work Year |
|------------------|-----------|
| Tolbize          | 2008      |
| Tremblay         | 2010      |
| Twenge           | 2010      |
| Murray et al     | 2011      |
| Kapoor & Solomen | 2011      |
| Solnet & Kralj   | 2012      |
| Srinivasan       | 2012      |
| Saba             | 2011      |
| Lyons & Kuron    | 2014      |
| Kaur & Chahil    | 2015      |
| Tiwari           | 2016      |

There is a long list of factors on which the generations have different anticipations and their outlook towards the work is affected by the same. The following table gives the comparative difference between all the three generations with respect to a total of 18 factors extracted from the extensive study being undertaken on in-depth review of past work.

**Table 6: Factors Accounting Difference Among Generations**

|                           | Baby Boomers                                | Generation X                                                       | Millennials/ Generation Y            |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Organizational commitment | Value organizational commitment and loyalty | less loyal to organization in comparison with previous generations | Are prone to job hopping             |
| Leadership                | Less value it                               | Ultimate Leaders                                                   | Important for work                   |
| Technology                | Always worried about it                     | With it                                                            | Always ahead of it                   |
| Work Flexibility          | Not required                                | Much Needed                                                        | Prefer work from home                |
| Dress code                | As exists                                   | Follows the code                                                   | Need Flexi                           |
| Engagement                | Highly Engaged                              | More Engaged                                                       | Less engaged                         |
| Meaningfulness in job     | Unaffected                                  | Required                                                           | Is a need                            |
| Work Ethic                | Workaholic                                  | Only work hard as needed                                           | Work equivalent to pay               |
| Feedback                  | May be insulted by regular feedback         | Need immediate feedback                                            | Need immediate and continuous        |
| Teamwork                  | Likes teamwork                              | Need quality colleagues                                            | Likes teamwork                       |
| Salary                    | Not much concerned                          | Need higher                                                        | Still ambiguous                      |
| Support from manager      | Respects                                    | Don't care                                                         | Need supervision                     |
| Job satisfaction          | More satisfaction                           | Less satisfaction                                                  | Less satisfaction                    |
| Peer impact               | Reluctant to go against peers               | Little influence                                                   | Likely to perform poor if others are |
| Training need             | Never bothered                              | Work according to system                                           | Regular                              |
| Work life balance         | Sacrificed personal life for work           | Value work/life balance                                            | Value work/life balance              |
| Conflict appetite         | Uncomfortable with it                       | Unaffected                                                         | Prone to it                          |
| Career consciousness      | Unaffected                                  | Moderate                                                           | High                                 |

An employee being career conscious looks for challenging work profile and is always eager to find meaningfulness in job to understand the duties and responsibilities of a job. The need analysis suggests regular trainings on the job which enhances the confidence of an employee and gives more job satisfaction and this satisfaction increases loyalty towards the organization and boosts the organizational commitment. Generation Y is most conscious about their career and so they are averse of doing monotonous jobs. They are always inquisitive about why and how a particular task has to be carried out. They always enjoy performing tasks that challenge their efficiency. On other hand, Boomers never thought about climbing the development ladder and are not

sensitive about their career. There is a regular need of training which is expected by Generation Y though other two previous generations remain unaffected by it. Generation Y is a generation which is difficult to get job satisfaction as they have varied expectations from employers which if remain unfulfilled leads to dissatisfaction. Boomers on other hand are more satisfied with less need. They value organizational commitment and loyalty while Generation Y believes in leaving the job if their needs are not met. Hence they are also known to be the job hoppers. Generation X is found between these two extreme behaviors.

Generation X has low work ethic. They believe in working as hard as it is required to complete a job. They don't expect continuous advice from supervisor as they trust in working with high quality colleagues to work. They are not much bothered by what others are doing or saying and are not affected by their colleagues' working behavior. In contrast, Generation Y is easily affected by their surroundings. Their belief is to work in proportion to their pay so if their colleagues are not working, they also end up working lesser. Though this generation is a good team player but they are prone to misconduct and often get involved in work fights and that's where they require constant supervision from managers. Baby Boomers are just workaholics, not influenced by people surrounding them and just believe in working. They fear from fights and so they never go against their peers as conflicts at workplace make them uncomfortable. Relating to the factor of flexibility, Generation X and Generation Y both need freedom to work from home as they value work life balance and believe in living life without pressures. Baby Boomers have always followed the code of conduct as prescribed for work hours and have always sacrificed their personal life for work.

Generation Y prefers to work in an organization which is high on technology and uses modern methods of communication. For them continuous feedback is important which is possible only when the quick transparency is maintained by an employer. Generation X employees are ultimate leaders who believe in learning and going with the technology so that the tasks can be completed before time. This Generation expects higher packages than Boomers. Technology is ever changing which makes Baby Boomers restless as they take time in learning and coping with it. They believe in always finishing the work to ultimate satisfaction never bothering about salaries.

#### **WAYS TO MANAGE DIFFERENT GENERATIONS AT WORKPLACE:**

The study says that there are lots of factors; mentioned above, that affect any generation's work behavior. There are lot of factors like: motivation, career consciousness, job satisfaction, flexible schedule, training, feedback, technology, leadership, salary and work life balance, learning opportunities, meaningfulness of job etc. on which different generations hold different views, perceive them differently and behave accordingly. Among all the three generations, Baby Boomers are the simplest people with least expectations and Generation Y is the most difficult and fussy generation that has striking tantrums. This generation doesn't work to live but they believe in living first and then work. The generational differences have positive and negative impact on organizations and surfaces out few challenges. Every generation brings its own history, strengths and challenges (Wilson, 2004). Summing up generational differences at work and the implications for corporate business managers, understanding and managing generational diversity can bring a range of benefits and perspectives to the workplace also understanding the multi-generation workforce today is the key focus for HR managers of corporate India. (Tiwari, 2016). The generational differences exist in some workplace behaviors and so the organizations should be cautious in implementing HR strategies that recognize the unique values and characteristics of each generation versus general strategies apply to all generations of employees (Becton et al., 2014). The best way to deal generational diversity is to address it efficaciously making use of the differences in their work values and the workplace expectations of each generation. Following are suggestions which can help managers avoid working conflicts between the three working generations:

1. Provide mentoring to different age employees so as to encourage more interaction.
2. Focus on the results produced by employees rather than on how they get it done giving them flexibility to work.
3. Keep employees engaged at work and be open to different learning styles following not sticking to one mode of work.
4. Use rotation for change in work profiles and create recognition programs for increasing motivation of employees.
5. Don't apply a blanket communication-method policy by giving employees freedom to put forth their points.
6. Keep employees' focus on goals and set clear expectations for them.
7. Show employees the future of organization and its benefits on their career progression.
8. Develop a mentorship or coaching program and encourage employees to be a part of it.
9. Always keep a frame of reference in mind to solve conflicts between employees.

10. Interact with teams on daily basis to make them feel important and a part of organization.
11. Maintain a supportive attitude and always listen to their problems to give practical solutions.
12. Always appreciate your employees and the work that they deliver to enhance their motivation levels.
13. Don't take a common approach to solve problems. Find customized solutions.
14. Give employees the periodic opportunities to learn for betterment of their leadership skills

## CONCLUSION:

An analysis and comparison of factors affecting generational workplace behavior distinctly proves that there exists significant difference between the workplace expectations of generations. Employees' needs and expectations vary from one generation to another and these expectations change depending on a variety of factors impacting their work values. The study construes that lot of diversity exists when all the generations work together in the same organization. Workplace conflicts and tensions are unavoidable if the Baby Boomer, Generation X and Generation Y employees fail to understand and accept the unique and different characteristics of each other and to embrace each other's similarities. This research based on the analysis of previous work clearly lists out the factors affecting generations. The study brings out a total of 7 factors on similarities and 18 factors where the generations have different views and equally different needs impacting their work abode behaviors. Generation Y among all the three generations is found to be the most different and have vociferous demands. In future to come, businesses will be flooded with Generation Y and so the understanding of the factors identified in this work can be useful for the employers in managing this generation. A better understanding of the differences and similarities among the various generations in today's workforce can help managers be more informed and take better decisions. Managing generation gap in the workplace is all about empowering the employees and showing them respect. Simplest mantra of managing generation gap in the workplace is to be comfortable with it and approach it with ease bringing about higher rates of both productivity and employee engagement.

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