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"Mind the Gap": Overcoming the Challenges of Multi-Generational Management

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Over the past several years, the progressive motion of public organizations to embrace, incorporate, and increase diversity in work force personnel has been manifested in many forms, including, but not limited to, race, gender, and ethnic background (Murphy, Gibson, & Greenwood, 2010, p. 34). Be that as it may, one of the more significant areas of organizational diversity is present in both the challenges and the positive opportunities for development associated with the management of generationally diverse personnel (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011, p. 308). Formally defined, the term “generation,” in this context, refers to “...an identifiable group that shares years of birth and significant life events that occurred in critical stages of their [generational group members’] lives in recent times” (Kupperschmidt as cited in Shragay & Tziner, 2011, p. 143). Presently, the public organizational realm is now composed of personnel who represent four distinct generations, which are labeled as “Traditionalists,” “Baby Boomers,” “Generation X,” and “Generation Y” (Bell, 2008, p. 38; Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2007, p. 351; Deyoe & Fox, 2011, pp. 1-2; Dwyer, 2009, p. 102; Joy & Haynes, 2011, pp. 217-218; Kapoor & Solomon, 2011, pp. 308-309; Riccucci, 2012, pp. 31, 35-36). While the presence of four groups can be regarded as a positive reality for organizations in terms of the collective endeavor for greater organizational diversity, there are challenges associated with this new norm in the organizational status quo. Therefore, human resource managers must be aware of potential challenges and strategies for resolution, in order to more effectively promote the health and satisfaction of personnel who contribute to the continuation of organizational health and productivity through interactive and collaborative efforts (Riccucci, 2012, p. 35).

The purpose of this study is to provide a descriptive account of generational diversity in the work force as a significant component of human resource management, which will be conveyed by way of a two-pronged examination. The first part of the paper will be dedicated to a literature review, which will include a detailed explanation of the four aforementioned generational groups and their respective characteristics, an overview of the challenges of managing multi-generational personnel, and potential strategies for human resource managers to address such issues and thus adapt accordingly. The second part will serve as a discussion, containing a section for analysis, critique, and concluding thoughts.

Literature Review

Generational Descriptions

The most ubiquitous element present in the literature took the form of repetitive, and almost horoscope-like explanations of each generational group and its associated characteristics and values. In these descriptions, several of the authors illuminated the significance of select historical events that occurred during the prime years of each generation as a means of explaining the foundations of generational values, in order to convey a more detailed understanding of each generation. The significance of these descriptions is rooted in the idea that generations originate from social interaction between individuals, meaning that without interactional social stimuli, generations and their respective characteristics would not exist (Mannheim as cited in Benson & Brown, 2011, p. 1844). Due to slight incongruities among sources concerning the exact time period of birth that defines a generational group, and also variations in generational characteristics, the following descriptions incorporate a patchwork amalgamation of defining characteristics that were derived from several articles that conveyed similar definitions and identifying factors that distinguish the four generations.

Traditionalists.

The Traditionalists represent the group of individuals who were born within the time period between the beginning and middle of the 20th century, circa 1945 (Riccucci, 2012, p. 31), and the significant historical events that occurred during the Traditionalists' time, were occurrences such as the advent of the “Roaring Twenties,” the Great Depression, and also the outbreak of the Second World War (Dwyer, 2009, p. 103; Kapoor & Solomon, 2011, p. 309). Regarding the values of this generation, an immense sense of hard work and company loyalty, paired with remaining with one organization throughout the duration of one's professional career is viewed as a perceptual sacrament by this group (Deyoe & Fox, 2011, p. 3; Joy & Haynes, 2011, p. 217; Riccucci, 2012, p. 31). Furthermore, any sort of drastic organizational change or introduction of new innovation is not enthusiastically welcomed by this group of individuals (Joy & Haynes, 2011, p. 217). Even though the Traditionalist population is shrinking as time goes on for obvious reasons, there are still those who are still present in the work force (Dwyer, 2009, p. 103).

Baby Boomers.

The majority of the authors generally agreed that the Baby Boomer generation, arguably the largest generational group, consists of those individuals who were born during the time period between the years 1946 and 1964, and some of the significant historical events that occurred during their lives include those such as the Vietnam War, the Civil Rights Movements, and the Cold War (Benson & Brown, 2011, p. 1845; Deyoe & Fox, 2011, p. 3; Dwyer, 2009, p. 103; Riccucci, 2012, p. 31). This generation evidently grew up into an era of economic stability (Benson & Brown, 2011, p. 1845; Deyoe & Fox, 2011, p. 3; Kaifi, Nafei, Khanfar, & Kaifi, 2012, p. 89). According to several sources, Baby Boomers are described as collectively “optimistic,” are team-oriented in a work setting, and are driven by a cast iron work ethic, which implies that Baby Boomers have a tendency to take extreme pride in their work and professional accomplishments (Deyoe & Fox, 2011, p. 3; Joy & Haynes, 2011, p. 217; Riccucci, 2012, pp. 31-32; Shragay & Tziner, 2011, p. 144). Furthermore, Baby Boomers, according to Kapoor and Solomon (2011), tend to strongly support the notion of ranking organizational members by merit, meaning that they tend to favor work structures that incorporate a hierarchical chain of command within an organizational setting (p. 309).

Generation X.

It is generally accepted that Generation X consists of individuals who were born between the years 1965 and 1980, and they lived through less stable economic times than the previous generation (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011, p. 309) in addition to occurrences such as the Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) calamity, the Iran Contra scandal, and Desert Storm (Deyoe & Fox, 2011, p. 3). Compared to generational predecessors, those who are a part of Generation X have a tendency to be much more individualistically-driven, they were the first generational group to legitimize the priority of maintaining a balance between professional life and personal life, and furthermore, their values dispelled the previously existing taboo associated with being affiliated with several organizations throughout one’s career (Riccucci, 2012, p. 31; Shragay & Tziner, 2011, p. 144). Those a part of Generation X tend to greatly distrust authority, prefer to work alone, and do not favor high levels of bureaucratic regulation (Riccucci, 2012, p. 31).

Generation Y.

Members of Generation Y, also commonly referred to as the “Millennials” throughout the literature, are generally confirmed by the authors to have been born between the years 1981 and 1999, meaning that most of them grew up during an eruption of technological advancement (i.e. the Internet) (Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2007, p. 354; Dwyer, 2009, p. 104; Kaifi et al., 2012, p. 89; Shragay & Tziner, 2011, p. 144; Stevens, 2010, p. 80). This generation is described as having a strong sense of moxie in the work setting (Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2007, p. 354; Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010, p. 225). These individuals often desire to be consistently informed of their performance, feel comfortable with working in collaborative efforts with peers, and prefer to work in close contact with superiors, which may perhaps be attributed to the aforementioned need for consistent evaluation and feedback (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010, p. 229). Like Baby Boomers, members of Generation Y are very optimistic and confident of their abilities, (Riccucci, 2012, p. 31). However, like Generation X, members of Generation Y tend to uphold the sanctity of maintaining a work-life balance, prefer to have flexible work schedules, and do not subscribe to the traditional negative implications that are attached to working for several organizations over the course of their careers (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011, p. 310; Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010, p. 227; Riccucci, 2012, pp. 31-32).

Human Resource Management Challenges

The presence of different generational aspects in the work force can be beneficial to organizations in terms of diversity, but there can also be challenges that arise from multi-generational mingling of personnel in the workplace. Major management challenges involve the inevitability of addressing conflict between individuals and/or groups of individuals who represent different generational categories that is largely attributed to exaggerated perceptions and stereotype (Deyoe & Fox, 2011, p. 9; Riccucci, 2012, p. 32), which can lead to misinterpretations in the work environment and even discrimination in hiring. Managers also face challenges in the form of encountering issues of facilitating efficient and effective organizational knowledge transfer between intergenerational personnel (Stevens, 2010, p. 80). Finally, considering that members of older generations are reaching the end of their formal careers, challenges are also present regarding the recruitment and maintaining employees who are a part of younger generations (Kaifi et al., 2012, p. 201). Failing to address these issues could result in high rates of dissatisfaction among personnel, which in turn could lead to the potentiality of high employee

turnover rate, and thus, there is a legitimate possibility of decline in organizational productivity if such challenges are not addressed in a constructive manner (Kaifi et al., 2012, p. 88).

Misinterpretations and discrimination attributed to the influence of perception.

The harsh reality of human resource management is the fact that differences in perception among individuals who work in close contact may cause some form of conflict. Supported by contentions present in the literature, the following descriptions convey three hypothetical dilemmas that relate to the aforementioned generational group characteristics to illustrate the reality of conflict from intergenerational interaction.

First, one might consider the various perceptions that can be derived from the long hours that Baby Boomers have spent over many years contributing, or “paying dues” to their organizations (Benson & Brown, 2011, p. 1845; Kapoor & Solomon, 2011, p. 312; Marston as cited in Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010, p. 227). While this may seem not only normal, but a source of beaming pride for Baby Boomers, Generations X and Y may perceive this value as strange and extreme, due to the fact that those individuals who are a part of Generations X and Y largely tend to prioritize personal life over work life (Riccucci, 2012, pp. 31-32). From the Baby Boomers’ point of view, they may perceive members of Generations X and Y as indolent or nonchalant because they do not share the same work values (Deyoe & Fox, 2011, p. 9; Kapoor & Solomon, 2011, p. 314).

A second example can be demonstrated by considering the meshing between the need for inclusion in important organizational matters that is a signature characteristic of Generation Y (Hurst & Good as cited in Kapoor & Solomon, 2011, p. 312), and the ideals of the Baby Boomers, who tend to uphold the significance of organizational rank and hierarchy (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011, p. 309). This need for inclusion unique to Generation Y may be perceived by Baby Boomers as a hubristic sense of entitlement of the younger workers, and conversely, those a part of Generation Y may become offended if they are not included in important discussions with their Baby Boomer superiors, who, in their minds, are supposed to act as mentors and update them regularly regarding organizational matters (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011, p. 310; Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010, p. 229).

Thirdly, one might highlight a situation in which some organizational project may require extensive collaborative efforts. Based upon observations of patterns and tendencies, Baby Boomers and

Generation Y, who tend to respond positively toward teamwork and collaborative interaction (Joy & Haynes, 2011, pp. 217-218), may be comfortable and enthusiastic about such an endeavor. Conversely, individuals who are a part of Generation X, who generally prefer to work alone (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011, p. 309; Riccucci, 2012, p. 31), may become uncomfortable in such a situation, and therefore potentially less satisfied, or even less productive than they normally would be. While all three of these examples are relative, they still represent possible workplace scenarios that convey the reality of conflict induced by perceptual differences between generational groups.

Generational differences have a tendency to be construed much differently than they truly are, simply because of the influence of personal perceptions unique to the four generations that are founded upon collective experiences and values (Bell, 2008, p. 36; Kapoor & Solomon, 2011, pp. 310, 315). Bell (2008) explained that behavior is driven by perception, which legitimizes the idea that perception is reality for each individual, or in this context, generational group (pp. 36-37). As evidenced, perceptual misconception can lead to misunderstandings in the work force, but also discrimination. For example, Deyoe and Fox (2011) discovered through qualitative surveying among organizations that some managers carefully tailor job descriptions to purposefully avoid hiring members of Generation Y, based upon a collective exaggerated perception that they all lack work ethic and feel a strong sense of self-centered entitlement (p. 9), which is not only a perceptual fallacy, but is also purely unethical. Though this type of behavior may slip through the cracks of carefully crafted policy, it is still a form of discrimination. In organizations, allowing perceptions to rule personnel mentality may not only cause friction among employees, but may also have a septic impact upon hiring processes as well. Thus, if perceptions, which evidently drive behavior (Bell, 2008, pp. 36-37), are not put into perspective, then organizations may suffer any number of negative consequences, such as organizational inefficiency and diminished growth and development (Artley & Macon as cited in Kapoor & Solomon, 2011, p. 313).

Challenges of knowledge transfer from older to younger generations.

“Knowledge transfer,” according to Joy and Haynes (2011) is the collaborative communication of organizational knowledge between members of an organization, and its significance is rooted in the passage of valuable knowledge, whether experiential or policy-related, from more experienced employees to those who are newer (p. 217). As rightly stated by Kaifi et al. (2012), the Baby Boomers

will eventually retire, meaning that Generations X and Y will be the dominating generational groups in the workforce (p. 89), which underscores the essentiality of effective knowledge transfer to insure the growth, development, and continuity of organizations. As articulated by Joshi, Dencker, Franz, and Martocchio (2010), it is challenging for human resource managers to effectively monitor the transmission of “firm-specific” knowledge from personnel representing older generations to personnel of younger generations in manner that is conducive to the well being of both organizations and personnel (pp. 392-393).

The challenge of intergenerational knowledge transfer can be dissected into two different facets. The first is the consideration of potential issues that may arise from the *manner* in which organizational knowledge is conveyed from one generational group to another. This dilemma was explored in detail by Piktials and Greenes, who suggested that the passage of organizational knowledge may be more successful if it is carried out in a way in which knowledge can be most effectively absorbed by each respective generational group (as cited in Smith, 2010, p. 80). Wagner contended that methods of organizational knowledge transfer should reflect the different learning styles of generational groups and also comfort levels of learning among groups, regarding the way that knowledge is conveyed (as cited in Smith, 2010, p. 80). For example, younger generations may learn more effectively and comfortably by the incorporation of technological methods of knowledge transfer, such as webinars, online sources, and electronic messaging (Wagner, as cited in Smith, 2010, p. 80), while older generations may be more comfortable with a traditional classroom medium or even “storytelling” as a means of organizational knowledge conveyance (Lesser & Rivera as cited in Smith, 2010, p. 80).

The second facet is ruled by the potentiality of corruption in knowledge transfer, known as “resistive interaction,” which refers to the aim of a generational group to manipulate information, knowledge, and/or resources in order to gain advantage over other generational groups within the organizational sphere (Joshi et al., 2010, p. 400). Both facets of the challenge of knowledge transfer must be addressed by human resource managers for the sake of not only avoiding inefficiency as the older generations retire, but also to avoid internal discrepancies among personnel that may be detrimental if left unaddressed.

Attracting, hiring, and retaining younger employees as older employees retire.

The retirement of older generations (i.e. mainly the Baby Boomer generation), is not only a driver of organizational knowledge transfer challenges, but is also a precursor regarding the challenges that come with recruiting and retaining employees who represent younger generational groups. According to Twenge (2010), the Baby Boomers' gradual exodus from the work force will have to be supplemented with an inflow of members of younger generations, namely, Generations X and Y (p. 201). On the surface, this reality can be construed as the natural order of organizational progression, however, considering that Generation X, and especially Generation Y, have a greater tendency to “job hop,” compared to their generational predecessors (Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2007, p. 361; Deyoe & Fox, 2011, p. 3; Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010, p. 233), human resource managers must address a complicated dilemma of how to encourage younger employees to remain employed within their organizations (Twenge, 2010, pp. 201, 208). Furthermore, compared to the other generational groups, members of Generation Y are innovative and arguably the most technologically efficient group of individuals (Joy & Haynes, 2011, p. 218). That being said, whether it is offering mentorship from older generational members, or permitting more flexible work schedules, organizations will have to incorporate ways to recruit and retain members of Generation Y, not only for institutional effectiveness and productivity, but also to remain competitive in a workforce that requires technological finesse and high levels of knowledge learning capability among personnel (Joy & Haynes, 2011, pp. 216-218; Kaifi et al., 2012, p. 92).

Strategies for Adaptation and Improvement

Failing to understand generational differences of workers can result in “...misunderstandings, miscommunications, and mixed signals” (Fyock as cited in Westerman & Yamamura, 2007, p. 151), which can be avoided with the incorporation of strategies to help human resource managers overcome unnecessary conflict. The significant strategies that were present in the literature can be condensed to the following: (a) minding the significance of the influence of the work environment in which personnel interact; (b) communicating effectively and consistently; and (c) structuring personnel training to promote tolerance and understanding of all generational groups and their respective characteristics.

Minding the influence of work environment upon behaviors of personnel.

The influence of work environment, whether structural or atmospheric, tends to have a significant effect upon personnel reactions and behavior within their surroundings, and how well personnel mesh

with their surroundings has been understood to be an indicator of how well they perform within their occupations (Westerman & Yamamura, 2007, pp. 152, 156). Various investigations of the influence of work environment upon behaviors such as personnel preferences, job satisfaction, and personnel interaction, were present within the literature, and are relevant in terms of exemplifying the significance of work environment influence.

Concerning personnel preferences and job satisfaction, Westerman and Yamamura (2007) concluded from the results of their qualitative study that younger generations (i.e. Generations X and Y), have a tendency to be more satisfied in their areas of work if they are tasked consistently to complete projects that involve some form of organized goal accomplishment, and regarding Baby Boomers' willingness to cling to an organization, the authors found a positive correlation between the importance of relationships and job satisfaction (Westerman & Yamamura, 2007, pp. 156-158). Pitt-Catsouphes and Matz-Costa (2008) found from their study that personnel from all generational groups have a tendency to be more “engaged,” and perhaps more satisfied in their areas of work if their work environments allow for organizational flexibility (p. 225). Joy and Haynes (2011) discovered from their study that differences in personnel preferences are not only attributed to generational differences, but also to physical surroundings (i.e. physical workplace configuration and arrangement) (p. 216). Regarding differences in generational preferences and spatial significance, Joy and Haynes (2011) observed that Baby Boomers and members of Generation X tend to prefer to hold meetings in closed-off areas to uphold confidentiality, but members of Generation Y tend to desire for meetings to be held in open areas for greater team collaboration (pp. 224-225). Be that as it may, Joy and Haynes (2011) found that all three of the generational groups observed in their study generally had no objection to working in areas designated for team-oriented knowledge sharing (p. 226).

These examples of how work environments can significantly influence personnel behavior could be construed as important lessons for human resource managers. In sum, managers may overcome challenges of multi-generational management by paying close attention to the preferences of personnel and structuring the work environment in a manner that reasonably accommodates the needs and proclivities of each group to encourage both employee satisfaction, as well as organizational efficiency and productivity (Riccucci, 2012, p. 35; Spiro as cited in Kapoor & Solomon, 2011, p. 315).

Adopting effective communication practices.

Communication is an essentiality to the improvement of organizational efficiency, in addition to maintaining some level of harmony between generational groups in the work place (Deyoe & Fox, 2011, p. 11; Kaifi et al., 2012, p. 90; Kapoor & Solomon, 2011, p. 315). Thus, adopting such measures is imperative regarding both personnel collaboration and organizational health and functionality for a number of reasons. Communicating effectively and consistently reduces the probability of organizational error from misinterpretation of information, and also lessens the possibility of misunderstandings among personnel (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011, p. 315).

The importance of enhanced communication practices also intersects with the importance of successful knowledge transfer between generational groups within organizations. Joshi et al. (2010) contended that successful knowledge transfer, or what they call “transmissive interaction,” tends to occur as a result of intergenerational communication and bonding that comes with collaborative efforts to achieve a common goal or set of goals (p. 400). Additionally, Kapoor and Solomon (2011) illuminated the idea that “mixed generational teams” could be a means by which a greater variety of ideas could be exchanged for the benefit of organizations in their entirety (p. 315). Furthermore, Kapoor and Solomon (2011) argued that employees from different organizational groups may be successful in achieving goals by focusing upon group commonalities, as opposed to simply focusing upon group differences (p. 315), which can be realized by way of meaningful and effective communication. In short, effective communication is significant with regard to conflict prevention, conflict resolution, organizational knowledge transfer, and also collective achievement and success.

Promoting tolerance and understanding in personnel training.

Perhaps the most important strategy to combat the challenges associated with managing intergenerational personnel is that of the implementation of training to encourage tolerance and understanding of generational differences (Benson & Brown, 2011, p. 1859; Deyoe & Fox, 2011, p. 7). According to Kapoor and Solomon (2011), “Understanding and respecting each generation’s work styles and challenges are critical in retaining an engaged, successful workforce” (p. 315). Individuals react and respond to various aspects of work, and being able to predict personnel behavior based upon observation and understanding is an important skill for human resource managers (Benson & Brown, 2011, p. 1860).

The same type of understanding should be cultivated within employee attitudes through personnel training because employees of different generational groups may have a greater propensity to accept each others' differences and proceed with collective endeavors in a more productive manner if differences are more thoroughly understood (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011, p. 315).

Discussion

Analysis and Critique

Examinations of generational differences in the workplace have been notoriously difficult to measure for a number of reasons that revolve around two significant points of critique, which include, but may not be limited to: (a) the non-static structure of organizations and respective organizational cultures; and (b) the significance and complexity of human agency. With regard to the first point of critique, it is important to consider that no organization or organizational cultural undercurrent are the same, therefore, the very influence of generational differences among personnel may vary by organization. For example, Joshi et al. (2010) considered the significance of collective generational identity within both “mechanistic” organizational structures and “organic” organizational structures (p. 402). “Mechanistic” organizational structures are those that are dominated by the prevalence of hierarchy, linear regulation, and established institutional processes and procedures (Burns & Stalker as cited in Shafritz, Ott, & Jang, 2011, p. 201). Using the military as an example of a mechanistic organization, this structure tends to harbor direct and consistent interaction between members of the same generational group because military rank, which can be construed as a marker of group association, is often determined by age, among other factors (Joshi et al., 2010, p. 402). Organizational structures that are “organic” tend to represent a more flexible and collaborative type of institutional structure, in which responsibilities are shared between organizational members, and communication is essentially “lateral” within the institution (Burns & Stalker, as cited in Shafritz et al., 2011, p. 202). Using Microsoft as an example of an organic structure, this organization incorporates efforts that require interaction between members of multiple generations on a regular basis in order to be successful (Joshi et al., 2010, p. 404). Thus, multi-generational management tactics that are effective for one organization may not be well suited for managers of another organization to try to implement, meaning that there is no panacea for all intergenerational issues because organizations vary in terms of both structure and culture.

Unlike the first point of critique, which addresses complexity from an organizational dimension, the second addresses complexity from a human resource dimension, that is, the subjectivity of human agency. Similar to how no two organizations are completely alike, the same is true for humans as microcosms of organizations. In other words, every individual is different and unique, and may not fit the stenciled stereotype of generational labeling. For example, the researcher was able to identify two significant instances of empirical findings from the literature in which members of Generation X acted outside of their generational profile. First, one might allude to Shragay and Tziner (2011), who distributed an online questionnaire among organizational members to gauge variables of work values upheld by personnel, such as job involvement, satisfaction, and “organizational citizenship behavior” (OCB), which is the amalgamation of levels of “altruism,” “courtesy,” “sportsmanship,” “conscientiousness,” and “civic virtue” among individuals in an organization (pp. 145-147). Based upon their responses, they found that members of Generation X had greater levels of OCB than Baby Boomers who took the survey (p. 155). One could argue that this particular finding challenges the credibility of generational profiles, especially those that hold that the Baby Boomer generation is the symbolic epitome of personal sacrifice and dedication to organizations, and that the Generation X group has a tendency to be “cynical” and “individualistic” (Ricciucci, 2012, p. 31). Secondly, Benson and Brown (2011) found from their qualitative survey study, that members of Generation X largely indicated that they were appreciative of co-worker support and collaboration (p. 1859). This example challenges the collective stereotype that those who represent Generation X tend to be much more self-oriented, and prefer to work independently (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011, p. 309; Ricciucci, 2012, p. 31). Furthermore, a less apparent, but nonetheless significant critique to challenge generational group characteristics is the fact that not all members of Generation Y have yet come of age to enter the workforce (Kowske, Rasch & Wiley, 2010, p. 266). This truth may lead one to speculate as to whether or not claims of Generation Y behavior are entirely accurate.

As an addendum to the subjectivity of human agency, the ubiquity of the influence of human perception in multi-generational management literature, whether directed toward certain groups of individuals or certain work conditions, is a point of critique as well. To support this claim, Bell (2008) contended in her study that there is actually limited understanding of generational groups in terms of their perceptions of work environment, and how such perceptions impact performance at work (p. 35), which

suggests that the influence of perception and the foundation of patterns and tendencies among generational group members may not be absolute.

Concluding Thoughts

While multi-generational management may come with challenges for human resource managers, this facet of management can be an avenue for organizational improvement and development. In order to effectively address the various obstacles that may arise from managing a multi-generational work force, managers must develop an understanding of each generation, especially with regard to the work value and motivations that are associated with each group, in addition to each group's respective generational values and characteristics, and they must encourage their colleagues do the same. The subject of managing a multi-generational work force is not a new research topic, but rather a quite popular topic of public administration research based upon the abundance and availability of related research. Be that as it may, such does not indicate that research cannot be expanded, for there are several components of generational diversity that can be explored in greater detail. Enhanced understanding among both scholars and administrators may perhaps be translated from conceptual knowledge into realized innovative means to improve both personnel relations and organizational development.

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