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AN ANALYSIS OF GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES AMONG ACTIVE DUTY
MEMBERS

THESIS

Stephanie M. Skibo, Captain, USAF

AFIT/GCA/ENV/04M-10

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
AIR UNIVERSITY

AIR FORCE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio

AN ANALYSIS OF GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES AMONG ACTIVE DUTY
MEMBERS

THESIS

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Abstract

There seems to be a wide held belief that different generations have different
attitudes toward work, organizations, and co-workers. Clearly, these observed
differences have implications for managers and leaders. Actions taken by leaders might
be misunderstood by junior organizational members, leading to undesirable outcomes.
Considering that many generational groups are represented within the Air Force, there is
a need to analyze and understand potential generational differences. With the exception
of the Smola and Sutton (2002) study, little empirical research has explored the extent to
which these differences actually exist and whether differences exist among Air Force
members. This research explores the extent to which differences exist among three
generations of Air Force members and the affects these potential differences have on
leadership strategies.

Hypotheses were developed based on generational characteristics and tested using
a questionnaire that includes 77 items to assess general work attitudes, attitudes towards
job and organization, and individual preferences toward work processes. The results of
the study indicate that while generational differences were shown to exist, significant
differences among the groups accounted for a small proportion of the variables tested.
Ultimately, the study's significant findings could be explained by factors such as age or
frame of reference.

Acknowledgements

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Stephanie M. Skibo

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I. Introduction & Literature Review

There seems to be a wide held belief that different generations have different
attitudes toward work, organizations, and co-workers. Indeed, Smola and Sutton (2002)
recently studied differences between Baby Boomers (born 1946 – 1964), Generation Xers
(born 1965 – 1977), and Millenials (born 1978 – 1995). They found that work is not the
central focus in one's life among younger people; yet, younger people hope to be
promoted quickly through an organization's ranks. In contrast, the older workers
reported less of a desire to be promoted quickly and felt more strongly that work is one of
the most important parts of life. Clearly, these observed differences have implications for
managers and leaders. Actions taken by leaders (who are often older) might be
misunderstood by junior organizational members (who are often younger), leading to
undesirable outcomes (i.e., turnover).

Considering that many generational groups are represented within the Air Force,
there is a need to analyze and understand potential generational differences. However,
with the notable exception of the Smola and Sutton (2002) study, little empirical research
has explored the extent to which these differences actually exist. Moreover, the influence
these potential differences have on today's all-volunteer force has not been explored; yet,
it appears to be a vital area of study for the Department of Defense and more specifically,
the Air Force. Accordingly, this research explores the extent to which differences exist

among three generations of Air Force members and the affects these potential differences have on recruitment and retention strategies.

The purpose of this literature review is to investigate generational differences among the workforce. First, generations and cohorts will be defined and the history of generational analysis will be discussed. This will be followed by an exploration of the generational labels and years associated with the labels as found in the literature. Third, the characteristics, stereotypes, foci, and concerns of three generational groups currently in the workforce will be investigated. Finally, the findings related to general work attitudes, attitudes towards job and organization will be highlighted, culminating with a series of hypotheses that will be tested in this study.

Generational Groups

Generational labels and cohort theory date back to the 1920's. In an attempt to explain the political attitudes and behavior of German youth after World War I, German philosopher and sociologist Karl Mannheim (1928/1952) hypothesized that groups of people are bound together by historical events. Specifically, he suggested that groups of different ages undoubtedly share experiences; however, those of the same age tend to view those experiences differently than those that are older or younger. From these differing perspectives, distinct cohorts and generational groups emerge. Since Mannheim's 1928 analysis, the concept of cohorts and generational differences have been accepted and studied.

Based on Manheim's theory, Meredith, Schewe, and Karlovich (2002), for example, determined that generational labels and periods for the US citizenship are as follows: Matures (born prior to 1946), Boomers (born between 1947 and 1965), and Xers

(born after 1965). Essentially, a generation is defined as a group of individuals born during the same time period and who experience similar external events during their late adolescent or early adult years (Schewe, Meredith, & Noble, 2001). Generational groups, referred to as cohorts, are influenced by these shared experiences. These shared experiences unite these individuals of a similar age and give them a common perspective to view the world around them. These common experiences and shared perspectives tend to shape attitudes, values, and preferences during late adolescence and early adulthood (generally between the ages of 17 and 23). These attitudes, values, and preferences endure as these individuals grow older, guiding subsequent activities and choices in later life.

While the idea that there are specific generational groups with shared beliefs is generally accepted, many have acknowledged that the extent to which these groups completely share beliefs should be viewed with some caution (e.g., Bennett & Rademacker, 1997). In other words, the experiences that develop the shared perspectives among a generation are viewed through diverse economic, political, and racial lenses. Therefore, it may be difficult to point to an absolute generational group that is defined by a set of shared experiences. Given this idea, it is not surprising that authors differ in the labels given to these generational groups and the birth years that are linked to each. Figure 1 demonstrates the diversity of generational labels and birth years associated with those labels. These generational labels, and the birth years associated with each group, vary considerably. Typically, however, a generation is 20 to 25 years in length or the approximate time it takes a person to grow up and have children (Meredith & Schewe, 1994). The length of specific generations still varies because a generational group is

defined by shared events among the groups' members. The earliest groupings and labels seemed to revolve around two significant events—the depression and the Second World War. Schewe and his colleagues (1994, 2001, 2002) suggest that there is a Depression Cohort (born between the years 1912 and 1921), a World War II Cohort (born between 1922 and 1927), and the Post-War Cohort (born between 1928 and 1945). These three cohorts, as defined by Schewe et al. (1994, 2001, 2002), are often grouped with the Depression Cohort and labeled the Matures who were born between the years 1909 and 1945 (Pekala, 2001). Zemke (2001) defines individuals born between the years 1922 and 1943 as Veterans.

The subsequent cohort was born during the surge of population that was observed in the United States immediately after the Second World War as service members returned from Europe and the Pacific. This surge in population, commonly termed the Baby Boom, has lead to individuals born during this time being referred to as Boomers. While most authors agree that there is a large cohort termed Boomers that were born between 1946 and 1964 (Smola & Sutton, 2002; Cufaude, 2000), the Boomer cohort is often divided further. Born between the years 1946 and 1954, the Boomer I cohort is followed by the Boomer II Cohort, born between the years 1955 and 1965 (Meredith & Schewe, 1994). More recently, these two groups have been fused together. Smola and Sutton (2002), for instance, have defined the Baby Boomers as those individuals born between 1946 and 1964 while Jurkiewicz (2000) has defined the Baby Boomer generation as those born between 1946 and 1962.

Figure 1. Summary of Generational Labels

Sources assigning generational Lables	Generational Labels & Years Associated with Each						
Meredith & Schewe (1994)	Depression (1912-1921)	WW II'ers (1922-1927)	Post-war (1928-1945)	Leading-edge Boomers (1946-1955)	Trailing-edge Boomers (1956-1965)	Generation X (1966-1976)	N Generation (1977-1984)
Schewe & Meredith (2002)	Depression (1912-1921)	WW II'ers (1922-1927)	Post-war (1928-1945)	Leading-edge Boomers (1946-1955)	Trailing-edge Boomers (1956-1965)	Generation X (1966-1976)	N Generation (1977-1984)
Schewe et al. (2001)	Depression (1912-1921)	WW II'ers (1922-1927)	Post-war (1928-1945)	Boomers I (1946-1955)	Boomers II (1956-1965)	Generation X (1966-1976)	
Pekala (2001)	Matures (1909-1945)			Boomers (1946-1964)		Generation X (1965-1978)	Generation Y (1979-Present)
Zemke (2001)	Veterans (1922-1943)			Boomers (1944-1960)		X'ers (1960-1980)	Nexters (1980-Present)
Smola & Sutton (2002)	World War II'ers (1909-1933)		Swingers (1934-1945)	Boomers (1946-1964)		Generation X (1965-1978)	Millenials (1979-1994)
Cufaude (2000)	Matures (1909-1945)			Boomers (1946-1964)		Generation X (1965-1978)	Generation Y (1979-Present)

1910   1920   1930   1940   1950   1960   1970   1980   1990

The end of the Boomer cohort and the start of the next cohort appear to occur as the US began to dramatically escalate its commitment to Vietnam in the early 1960s. Termed Generation X (often referred to as Xers), the literature consistently suggests that this group of individuals was born between the years 1960 and 1980 (Zemke, 2001). Consistent with these dates, Meredith and Schewe (1994) defines the Generation X Cohort as the group born between 1966 and 1976 and Smola and Sutton (2002) define this generational group as those born between 1965 and 1978.

Finally, the newest generation born after 1979, the Millennials, often given the label Generation Y or Echo Boomers (Smith & Clurman, 1997), are still emerging in the workforce and continue to be redefined in the literature. The beginning of the Millennial generation is characterized by the economic strength of the Reagan and Clinton administrations, having never known a recession or life without computer technology. Howe and Strauss (2000) define the Millennials as the generation born between 1982 and 2000. The Millennial Cohort, as defined by Smola and Sutton (2002), were born between the years 1979 and 1994.

While many of the generational groups are active in today's workforce, this study will focus on the generations represented in today's Air Force. Therefore, the study will examine differences between Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials because the typical active duty member enters service at age 18 and serves generally no more than 30 years and the typical civil servant gains employment sometime between age 18 and serves until retirement age (Air Force Personnel Center, 2003). The average age of the officer force is 35 with an average total active federal military service of eleven years, the average age of the enlisted force is 29 with an average total active federal military service

of eight years, and the average age of the civilian employee is 46.3 years with an average length of service of 16.2 years (Air Force Personnel Center, 2003). The labels for each generation and the years associated with each were based on those used by Smola and Sutton (2002). While not a consensus (see Figure 1), these labels and year groupings are commonly found in the literature. Moreover, by using Smola and Sutton's definitions, it was possible to compare the results from this study with those of that study. In essence, this study replicates portions of Smola and Sutton's effort, expands it to include the Millennial generation, and includes other influential dimensions. Baby Boomers will be defined as born between the years 1946 and 1964. Generation X will be defined as born between the years 1965 and 1978 and the Millennials will be defined as born between the years 1979 and 1994. While the literature is not entirely in agreement on the labels that should be assigned to specific generations, the shared experiences and defining events are more consistent across the groups.

Defining Events

Shared experiences that are important enough to have lifelong social consequences, referred to as defining events, influence characteristics, stereotypes, foci, and concerns of generational groups. Table 1 provides a summary of the shared experiences of the three generational groups and the influences these defining events have had on the Baby Boomers, Generation X, and the Millennials (a more comprehensive list of influences is provided in Appendix A). The influences examined in Table 1 include characteristics, stereotypes, focus, concern, beliefs, attitudes, and values.

Baby Boomers (1946-1964)

Baby Boomers are a birth cohort whose impressions were formed by significant cultural events in the mid 1960's. These include the Vietnam War, the Kennedy family's rise to political prominence, Woodstock, the Civil Rights movement, Women's Liberation movement, the Space Race, the Watergate scandal, and emergence of television. The Baby Boomers share core characteristics because of such defining events while coming of age. Baby Boomers tend to be optimistic and driven; they seek personal growth and gratification and are health and wellness conscious (Zemke, 2001). According to Meredith, Schewe, and Karlovich (2002), Baby Boomers have some apparently inconsistent beliefs in that they are both individualistic and family oriented. Baby Boomers have been stereotyped as over-cautious, hierarchy-worshiping, and overly influenced by their parents who experienced the obscurity of the Depression (Jurkiewicz, 2000). Jurkiewicz (2000) also identified retirement issues and being more concerned with quality of life than with money as the major foci of the Baby Boomer generation.

Generation X (1965-1978)

Generation X defining events of the period include rising divorce, introduction of Music Television (MTV), the spread of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), escalation of world-wide competition, and the fall of the Berlin Wall (Smola & Sutton, 2002). Generation X shares common characteristics because of the influential shared experiences during adolescence and early adulthood. This generational cohort has been labeled skeptical by Lancaster and Stillman (2002) derived from a lack of trust in institutional and personal relationships. Lancaster and Stillman make this claim based on the many major American institutions called into question during this time, such as the

Table 1. Defining Events, Characteristics, & Focus/Concerns By Generational Group

	Baby Boomers	*Generation X*	*Millennials*
*Birth Years**	1946-1964	1965-1978	1979 - 1994
Defining Events	Vietnam War	Dual income families	Internet chat
	Civil Rights Riots	Single-parent homes (with increased divorce rate)	School violence
	Watergate scandal	Introduction of MTV	Proliferation of TV talk shows
	Cold War	AIDS epidemic	Multiculturalism
	Proliferation of television	World-wide competition	Girls' movement
		Latch-key kids	McGuire and Sosa
		Fall of the Berlin Wall	
Characteristics	Optimistic	Individualistic	Compartmentalized work and life
	Driven	Independence	Mindful of authority
	Idealistic	Desire for work autonomy (set own goals, deadlines, and hours)	Cautiously optimistic
	Individualistic	Creative	Enthusiasm for the future
	Lonely	Competitive	
	Cynical	Risk propensity	
	high expectations	Skeptical	
	Distrustful of government	Family orientation	
		Focused on job, not work hours	
Focus/Concerns	Retirement	Child care	Civic Duty
	Quality of life (over money)	Leisure time (over money)	Achievement
	Protected individualism		Sociability
	Family commitments		Morality
			Diversity
Citations	Cufaude (2000)	Jurkiewic (2000)	Zemke (2001)
	Jurkiewic (2000)	Smola & Sutton (2002)	Cufaude (2000)
	Meredith & Schewe (2002)	Zemke (2001)	Pekala (2001)
	Zemke (2001)		
	Smola & Sutton (2002)		

*Generational groups are defined based on Smola & Sutton (2002

presidency and corporate America. Many Xers grew up in single-parent homes due to rising divorce rates (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

In the workplace, Generation Xers are highly individualistic, competitive, and thrive upon a creative and chaotic work environment (Jurkiewicz, 2000). Zemke (2001) characterizes this generation as family-oriented and focused on the job not on work hours. Generation Xers are concerned with child care and are willing to trade high compensation for leisure time (Jurkiewicz, 2000). Based on some of these ideas, Generation X has been stereotyped as the "slacker" generation, and are perceived to be arrogant and disloyal (Tulgan, 1997).

Millennials (1979-1994)

The latest generation to enter the workforce, the Millennials, is characterized by such defining events of the period as introduction of the internet, rising school violence, increased threats of terrorism (i.e., Oklahoma City bombing), and the emergence of multiculturalism (Zemke, 2001). Having never known a recession during their formidable years, the Millennials' shared experiences characterize the generation as optimistic, technologically adept, and compartmentalized (Cufaude, 2000). Pekala (2001) characterizes the Millennials as mindful of authority with enthusiasm for the future and a high faith in the power of technology to deal with challenges. The Millennials are stereotyped as having a short attention span, not truly prepared for the workplace, and wanting opportunities handed to them (Pekala, 2001). The Millennials are concerned with diversity, achievement, morality, and civic duty (Zemke, 2001). Generational groups have different attitudes, values, and preferences because of shared

experiences during adolescence and early adulthood. These differences translate into differences in work attitudes and values.

Work Attitudes & Values

Overall, the generational differences that have been suggested influence the groups' values towards family, recreation, and work. While all of these areas of one's life are undoubtedly important, this inquiry was limited to issues related to workplace attitudes and perceptions. Moreover, the study attempted to replicate and extend the findings of previous studies (Cherrington, 1980; Smola & Sutton, 2002) that have explored intergenerational differences between older and younger workers. The differences that were explored were (a) general attitudes toward work; (b) attitudes toward the current job and organization; (c) attitudes toward the way work is done; and (d) attitudes toward organizational promises.

Second, there were a number of individual variables that could be investigated as part of this study; however, only a limited number could ultimately be included. Considering practical issues, the length of the questionnaire had to be limited such that practitioners would allow it to be administered in a field setting (i.e., many practitioners are apprehensive about administering questionnaires that are too long). Considering theoretical issues, variables were included only if there appeared to be literature that suggested differences between the generational groups. In addition, measures had to demonstrate some level of validity and reliability—a more basic theoretical concern.

At this point, it is worth noting that the literature makes the distinction between differences associated with age and those associated with unique generational experiences. Research examining the relationship between age and work values

associated with the traditional work ethic show that the correlation is not due to the effects of seniority, education, income, sex, and occupational status (Cherrington, Condie & England, 1979). According to Miller, Woehr, and Hudspeth (2002), the work ethic construct is characterized as multidimensional, pertaining to work and work-related activities. The work ethic is learned, related to attitudes and beliefs reflected in behaviors, and are secular but not tied to any one set of religious beliefs (Miller, Woehr, & Hudspeth, 2002). Overall to the manager, it is important to understand the relationship between shared generational experiences and the work ethic to better recruit, motivate, and retain a cross section of diverse employees.

Attitudes Toward Work Itself

Generational differences have been suggested to exist among workers' overall attitudes toward work. The general attitudes about work include feelings toward both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards of work, the recognition and enjoyment received from work, the importance and sense of obligation of work in one's life, and the amount of focus that the role of work should play in a worker's life. These attitudes and perceptions about work should provide some insight into today's workforce and the generations that make up that workforce.

Desirability Of Work Outcomes

The desire to attain certain outcomes from work has been expected to differ across generational groups. That is, some generations would be expected to value intrinsic rewards over extrinsic rewards (Cherrington, 1980). Cherrington (1980) studied this phenomenon among 3,053 American that represented three age groups (17-26, 27-40, and 41-65 years of age). Cherrington (1980) concluded that younger workers placed

greater emphasis on the importance of money, an extrinsic reward, when compared to their older counterparts. Smola and Sutton (2002), using the same 'desirability of work outcomes' scale, studied differences among Baby Boomers and Generation X. Smola and Sutton (2002) found that the Generation Xers reported a stronger desire to be promoted more quickly than the Baby Boomers. Given the empirical data and the stereotypes that suggest that younger workers are achievement oriented, Baby boomers would be expected to have a strong desirability for intrinsic rewards of work. However, when compared to Generation Xers and Millennials, the Baby boomers would not be expected to have as strong a desirability for both extrinsic rewards as these two younger generational groups.

Pride in Craftsmanship

Much like the preferences for rewards, the stereotypical generational groups would be expected to differ in their beliefs that work is inherently enjoyable and one should be recognized for doing a good job (Cherrington, 1980). Suggesting that these beliefs collectively reflect one's "pride in craftsmanship," Cherrington (1980) found significant differences across three age groups that were studied. Younger workers felt that "pride in craftsmanship" was less desirable, having leisure and free time was more desirable, and doing a poor job was more acceptable (Cherrington, 1980). In contrast, Smola and Sutton (2002) found no significant differences between Baby Boomers and Generation X in "pride in craftsmanship." Based on these most contemporary findings (Smola & Sutton, 2002), the generational characteristics concerning "pride in craftsmanship" would indicate no significant differences across the three generations.

Moral Importance of Work

Because younger generations are said to be less interested in work than older generations, many have suggested that younger workers' feelings toward their moral obligation to have an occupation and contribute some product or service to society differs significantly from older workers (Cherrington, 1980). Cherrington (1980) tested this hypothesis, finding younger workers were significantly less work-oriented than older workers. Moreover, younger workers did not believe that work should be one of the most important parts of a person's life as did the older workers (Cherrington, 1980). Replicating Cherrington's study, Smola and Sutton (2002) found significant differences between Baby Boomers and Generation X perceptions regarding the importance of work. Baby Boomers accepted the belief that work should be one of the most important parts of a person's life much more than Generation X. These findings would indicate would indicate that Baby Boomers have a high acceptance of work importance while Generation X and the Millennials would have a low acceptance of work importance.

Work Centrality

Clearly, the attitudes toward work that have been tapped at this point have been designed to explore the extent to which generations may differ with regards to their work ethic (i.e., pride in craftsmanship) and commitment toward work (i.e., moral importance of work). While an array of attitudes were measured, the work done by Cherrington (1980 and Smola and Sutton (2002) relied on single-item measures that were qualitatively grouped. Thus, constructs were not tapped and reliability estimates for the measures could not be estimated.

In an effort to redress these issues, a measure of work centrality was used to extend the findings presented by Cherrington (1980) and Smola and Sutton (2002). Work centrality represents an individuals' belief that work is a central life interest and incredibly an important factor in their lives (Hirshfeld & Feild, 2000). Hirshfeld and Feild's (2000) findings suggest that work centrality is associated with one's value system (i.e., work ethic) and self-identity. Generational differences would be expected to translate into differences in work ethics and values. Based on the relationship between work centrality and generational characteristics regarding the work ethic, Baby Boomers would be expected to have the strongest identification with work, and thus work centrality, due to characteristics and stereotypes found in the literature and summarized in Appendix A. Generation X and the Millennials are expected to have less loyalty to the work ethic and, therefore, have less of a work centrality focus.

Attitudes Toward Current Job And Organization

Different opinions and perceptions exist among today's workforce regarding the current job and organizational climate. The extent to which these differences are related to generational groups is not clearly understood. It is reasonable to expect the events and characteristics that have shaped the attitudes and perceptions of the generations should produce differences in attitudes toward a worker's current job and organization. For instance, an individual's perceptions of what happens at work and its relevance would be expected to influence the worker's satisfaction with the job. The differences should be detected in overall satisfaction and loyalty and should provide valuable insight into today's diverse workforce.

Satisfaction

Job Satisfaction. Job satisfaction reflects an overall affective feeling that one has towards his or her job (Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins, & Klesh, 1983). It arises from one's perceptions of his or her job and feelings of fit between the organization and individual. While there appears to be no studies that have explored the relationships between generational groups and satisfaction explicitly, studies have explored the relationships between age and satisfaction. These studies have suggested that satisfaction does differ as age differs, suggesting that satisfaction may differ across generational groups as well. Schwoerer and May (1996) found an empirical relationship between age and satisfaction where older workers tended to be more satisfied than younger workers.

Of course, generational groups do not change over time. That is, unlike an individual's age, a person's birth cohort does not vary and he or she remains in the same cohort throughout his or her life and career. Longitudinal studies would be needed to determine the extent to which the differences that age groups are satisfied with their jobs can be attributed to generational influences or evolve with maturity. Still, the findings that have investigated the age-satisfaction relationships coupled with the stereotypes that have been discussed give some insights into the differences that might be observed among generational groups. The generational characteristics concerning commitment and loyalty would indicate that Baby Boomers would be expected to score higher on the satisfaction scale than Generation X and the Millennials.

Perceived Organizational Support. The perceived organizational support is defined as individual's feeling that the organization values their contributions, treats them favorably, and cares about their well-being(Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa,

1986). Based on the relationship between loyalty, commitment, and generational characteristics, this study would expect to detect differences across the generational groups. The generational characteristics concerning commitment and loyalty would indicate that Baby Boomers would be expected to score higher on the perceived organizational support scale than Generation X and the Millennials.

Loyalty

Commitment. Commitment represents some level of loyalty to the organization. The extent to which commitment is related to generational categories is not clear. Feingold, Morhman, and Sprietzer (2002) found that individuals of all ages were committed to their firms if they felt that certain needs were being met. However, younger employees appeared less committed when needs were not met, indicating that they would be more willing to leave a company if dissatisfied with opportunities. When these findings are considered along with the common generational characteristics that have been discussed, it seemed appropriate to examine the extent to which generational groups differed in two types of organizational commitment, normative and affective. Allen and Meyer (1990) suggest that normative commitment refers to the individuals' sense obligation to remain with their organization while affective commitment refers to the individuals' emotional attachment to the organization. The generational characteristics concerning commitment and loyalty would indicate that Baby Boomers would be expected to express higher levels of commitment than Generation X and the Millennials.

Turnover Intentions. The turnover intentions scale measures whether workers have intentions to leave the organization with high scores indicating the intention to leave

and low scores indicating the intention to continue organizational membership (Blau, 1989). Based on the relationship between loyalty, commitment, and generational characteristics, this study would expect to detect differences across the generational groups. The generational characteristics concerning commitment and loyalty would indicate that Baby Boomers would be expected to score lower on the turnover intentions scale than Generation X and the Millennials.

Careerism. The careerism scale measures whether workers feel that the relationship with the organization is nothing more than a stepping stone in their career (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994). The generational characteristics concerning commitment and loyalty would indicate that Baby Boomers would be expected to score higher on the careerism scale than Generation X and the Millennials.

Attitudes Toward The Way Work Is Done

Defining events, characteristics, and concerns of a generation will shape attitudes towards the way work is done which includes an individual's outlook on personal independence, group productivity, and individualism. This research suggests that generational differences should produce differences in attitudes toward the way work is done. For example, an individual's preference to work alone would be expected to influence the worker's attitudes toward the way work is done (i.e., group productivity vs. individualism). These attitudes were shaped based on influences during late adolescence and early adult years and this research suggests they will differ across the different generations present in today's workforce.

Personal Independence

The personal independence scale measures whether workers prefer to work alone rather than in groups (Wagner, 1995). Low scores indicate a strong agreement with personal independence. Wagner (1995) concludes that individualism-collectivism has a direct effect: individualists who feel independent and self-reliant are less likely to value cooperative behavior, and collectivists who feel interdependent and reliant on groups are more likely to value group productivity. Based on the relationship between teamwork mentality and generational characteristics, this study would expect to detect differences across the generational groups. Generation X had been characterized as determined individualists and fiercely independent by Jurkiewicz (2000) and this study would expect the group to have a higher personal independence score indicating a weak agreement with teamwork. The generational characteristics concerning team-orientation would indicate that Baby Boomers and the Millennials would be expected to score low on personal independence measures indicating a strong agreement with teamwork.

Group Productivity

The group productivity scale measures workers' feelings towards individuals pursuing their own interests contribute to group effectiveness (Wagner, 1995). Low scores indicate a strong agreement with group productivity. Based on the relationship between teamwork mentality and generational characteristics, this study would expect to detect differences across the generational groups. Generation X had been characterized as determined individualists and fiercely independent by Jurkiewicz (2000) and this study would expect the group to have a lower group productivity score indicating a strong agreement with individuals pursuing their own interests contributing to group

effectiveness. The generational characteristics concerning team-orientation would indicate that Baby Boomers and the Millennials would be expected to score higher on group productivity measures indicating a strong agreement with teamwork.

Individualism

The individualism scale measures whether workers place greater importance on personal interests and desires (Wagner, 1995). High scores indicate a strong agreement with individualism. Based on the relationship between teamwork mentality and generational characteristics, this study would expect to detect differences across the generational groups. Generation X had been characterized as determined individualists and fiercely independent by Jurkiewicz (2000) and this study would expect the group to have a high individualism score indicating a strong agreement with the importance of personal interests and desires. The generational characteristics concerning team-orientation would indicate that Baby Boomers and the Millennials would be expected to score lower on individualism measures indicating a strong agreement with teamwork.

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Attitudes Toward Organizational Promises

</div>

Finally, the psychological contract violations scale measure perceived expectations between organizations and employees. The psychological contract violation scale measures the extent to which respondents believe some form of a promise has been made (between themselves and the organization) and that the terms and conditions of the contract have been accepted by both parties (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994). Psychological contracts differ from expectations in that the psychological contract demands a belief in what the employer must provide, based on perceived promises of a reciprocal exchange (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994). The longer and stronger the

employment relationship endures, the more the reciprocity grows. This relationship would suggest that if an individual feels mutual loyalty and optimism for an employer, the worker would not expect violations of the psychological contract. The generational characteristics concerning optimism and loyalty would indicate that Baby Boomers would be expected to score higher on the psychological contract, Millennials would be expected to have the second highest score, and Generation X would be expected to score the lowest.

Summary

Baby Boomers, Gen Xers, and Millennials are described extensively throughout the literature with each generation's shared experiences and defining events translating into common characteristics, foci, concerns, and, ultimately, work values and preferences. The generational differences that were explored were (a) general attitudes toward work; (b) attitudes toward the current job and organization; (c) attitudes toward the way work is done; and (d) attitudes toward organizational promises. Hypotheses were established based on the relationship between the appropriate characteristic and generational group. Table 2 provides a summary of all hypotheses presented.

Table 2. Hypotheses

	Baby Boomers	Generation X	Millennials
Birth Years	1946-1964	1965-1978	1979 - 1994
	(Smola and Sutton, 2002)	*(Smola and Sutton, 2002)*	*(Smola and Sutton, 2002)*

Attitudes Toward Work Itself

	Baby Boomers	Generation X	Millennials
Desirability of Work Outcomes	Stronger Desirability for Intrinsic Rewards	Stronger Desirability for Intrinsic/Extrinsic Rewards	Stronger Desirability for Extrinsic Rewards
Moral Importance of Work	High Acceptance	Low Acceptance	Low Acceptance
Pride in Craftsmanship	No Significant Differences	No Significant Differences	No Significant Differences
Work Centrality	Strongest Identification	Less Focus	Less Focus

Attitudes Toward Current Job & Organization

	Baby Boomers	Generation X	Millennials
Job Satisfaction	Higher Satisfaction	Lower Satisfaction	Lower Satisfaction
Perceived Organizational Support	Higher Score	Lower Score	Lower Score
Turnover Intentions	Lower Turnover Intentions	Higher Turnover Intentions	Higher Turnover Intentions
Careerism	Higher Careerism	Lower Careerism	Lower Careerism
Normative Commitment	Highest Score	Second Highest Score	Lowest Score
Affective Commitment	Higher Score	Lower Score	Lower Score

Attitudes Toward The Way Work Is Done

	Baby Boomers	Generation X	Millennials
Personal Independence	Strong Agreement with Teamwork	Weak Agreement with Teamwork	Strong Agreement with Teamwork
Group Productivity	High Score	Lower Score	High Score
Individualism	Lower Score	High Score	Lower Score

Attitudes Toward Organizational Promises

	Baby Boomers	Generation X	Millennials
Psychological Contract Violations	Highest Score	Second Highest Score	Lowest Score

Note: Hypotheses presented based on the relationship between appropriate characteristics and the generational group.

II. Methodology

In order to examine the effects of generational differences on work values, three groups were purposefully selected and invited to participate in the study such that comparisons could be made between each generational group. To ensure the ethical obligations were fulfilled, the researchers had the study reviewed and received prior approval to proceed in accordance with the EN Operating Instruction 40-1 and Human Subjects Regulations and Protocols defined by Title 45 Code of Federal Regulations Part 46 (45 CFR 46). Included in the review were the exemption letter, located at Appendix A, the protocol outline, located at Appendix B, the actual questionnaire, located at Appendix C, and the summary of study variables, located at Appendix D.

Sample

The participants were placed in the appropriate generational category based on their self-reported age that was collected with a single open-ended item (i.e., participants will identify their age in years). The first generational group is a sample of Millennials. The Millennials (often referred to as Nexters, Internet Generation, or Generation Y) were born in the years 1979 to 1994 based on a definition by Smola and Sutton (2002). The second generational group consists of a sample of Generation X'ers who were born between the years 1965 and 1978 (as defined by Smola & Sutton, 2002). Finally, the third generational group represented in the sample is Baby Boomers born between the years 1946 and 1964 (as defined by Smola & Sutton, 2002).

Other demographical information was collected to include the gender, occupation/job information, number of organizations (the Air Force is considered one

organization), number of jobs, years of service (if applicable), category of current job status (active duty or civilian), and category of race. Occupation/job information, number of different organizations worked for, number of different job titles, and years of service were collected with open-ended items. Gender was selected from two options: male or female. Category of current job status was selected from three options: Active duty, DoD Civilian, and Other. Race was selected from six options: White, African American, Hispanic, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian American/Pacific Islander, and Other.

In summary, 308 active duty military members of various grade levels and responsibilities completed the questionnaire. Some questionnaires were unable to be used due to missing information, particularly the birth year. We estimate approximately twenty questionnaires could not be used due to this error. The average age of the respondents was 40.2 years ($SD = 10.9$ years). Of the 308 respondents who indicated their gender, 29% were female and 71% were male. On average, the respondents had (a) worked for 2.5 organizations (considering the Air Force and government service as one organization), (b) held 2.9 different jobs (considering each the Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) and each government job family as one job), (c) worked for the Air Force for 14.3 years ($SD = 9.1$ years). The following is a break down of percentages of the 298 respondents that indicated their category of race: 85.2% White, 5.7% African American, 1.7% Hispanic, 0.7% American Indian/Alaskan Native, 3.7% Asian American/Pacific Islander, and 2.7% Other. Table 3 summarized these demographics as well as the demographic profile of the organization involved. In all, it appears that our sample generally reflected the demographic profile of the organization involved. For example,

the average age of an employee on the installation was 46.3 years and the average age of

the participants were 40.2 years ($SD = 10.9$).

<div align="center">Procedure</div>

The data were collected anonymously. A paper-and-pencil questionnaire was

administered to employees of a large Department of Defense organization that were

participating in a Diversity Awareness Training course. The training course was

directed by the organizations senior leadership. These leaders felt that today's

workforce required a better understanding of the ever-increasing global society of

different backgrounds, races and ethnic groups. To facilitate this understanding, all

organizational members, supervisors and their subordinates, needed some training

that emphasized the importance of tolerance when interacting with a diverse group of

co-workers, and staying within the legal boundaries (Right Brain, n.d.). Beyond

traditional, race, gender, or particular ethnic groups issues addressed in many of the

courses (Arai, Wanca-Thibault, and Shockley-Zalabak, 2001) the course spent time

discussing generational differences as well. Ultimately, this course was designed to

promote the policy of individual opportunity, and professional growth in an

environment free from discrimination and harassment, enhancing the overall

performance of the organization.

Prior to the questionnaire's administration, the purpose of the research was

explained to participants in a brief oral presentation. In addition, the written

instructions that were included with each questionnaire were read aloud to all

Table 3

Mean Numbers of Respondents Background Information and Organizational Profile

Variables	Sample		Organizational Profile
	M	SD	
Age	40.2	10.9	46.3
Job/Organizational Totals			
Number of Organizations	2.5	2.2	--
Number of Different jobs	2.9	2.1	--
Total time in Air Force or Government Service	14.3	9.1	--
Gender			
Male	71%		71 %
Female	29%		29 %
Sample Size			
Active Duty	100%		36.4 %
Race			
White	85.2%		84 %
African American	5.7%		12 %
Hispanic	1.7%		1.5 %
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.7%		--
Asian American/Pacific Islander	3.7%		--
Other	2.7%		3 %

Note. Organizational profile data were provided by the Human Resources Directorate of the organization. Some demographic information for the organization was not available.

participants. The oral review was closed with the instructor reminding the

participants that they should not include their name anywhere on the questionnaire.

As questionnaires were completed and returned to the instructor, participants were

given the researcher's contact information to ensure they can get in touch with the

researcher if they have future questions.

Measures

A questionnaire that includes 77 items was used to assess general work attitudes,

attitudes towards job and organization, and individual preferences toward work

processes. Unless otherwise noted, participants expressed their agreement with each item

by choosing one of the seven response options on a 7-point Likert scale (i.e., 1 = *Strongly*

Disagree, 2 = *Disagree*, 3 = *Slightly Disagree*, 4 = *Neither Agree nor Disagree*, 5 =

Slightly Agree, 6 = *Agree*, 7 = *Strongly Agree*). A copy of the questionnaire and a list of

items grouped according to the construct each taps is presented in Appendix C and D.

Attitudes Toward Work Itself
Desirability of Work Outcomes

Nine items developed by Cherrington (1980) were used to measure the

desirability of work outcomes. These nine items represented the extent to which

respondents feel value in intrinsic and extrinsic rewards of work. Participants responded

with the following options: 1 = *Extremely Undesirable*, 2 = *Undesirable*, 3 = *Somewhat*

Undesirable, 4 = *Neither Undesirable or Desirable*, 5 = *Somewhat Desirable*, 6 =

Desirable, or 7 = *Extremely Desirable*. One item asked, "Being recognized and gaining

the respect of other." Each of the items were reported individually; therefore, no

estimates of reliability were available. Cherrington (1980) and Smola and Sutton (2002) have used these items in previous studies that have explored generational differences.

Pride In Craftsmanship

Six items developed by Cherrington (1980) were used to measure pride in craftsmanship. These six items represented the extent to which respondents feel they should enjoy their work and receive recognition for doing a good job. For instance, one item asks, "A worker should do a decent job whether or not his supervisor is around." Again, there were no estimates of reliability; however, along with Cherrington (1980), Smola and Sutton (2002) have used these items in previous studies that explore generational differences.

Moral Importance of Work

Five items developed by Cherrington (1980) were used to measure the moral importance of work. These five items represented the extent to which respondents feel their moral obligation to have an occupation and contribute some product or service to society. For instance, one item asks, "I would quit my job if I inherited a lot of money." There were no estimates of reliability; however, along with Cherrington (1980), Smola and Sutton (2002) have used these items in previous studies that explore generational differences.

Work Centrality

In an effort to include more reliable scales along with those previously used in generational studies, twelve items developed by Paullay, Alliger, and Stone-Romero (1994) were used to measure work centrality. These twelve items represented the extent to which respondents feel work is an important factor in their lives. For instance, one

item asked, "Work should only be a small part of one's life. (reverse score)" The scale

appears reliable; for instance, Hirschfeld and Field (2000) reported an estimate of

reliability with an alpha of .76. The reliability coefficient of the scale utilized in this

study was .78.

Attitudes Towards Current Job and Organization

Satisfaction

   Job Satisfaction. Three items developed by Cammann, Fishman, Jenkins, and

Klesh (1983) were used to measure satisfaction. These three items represented the extent

to which respondents view their job positively. High scores indicated overall satisfaction

with the job. For instance, one item asks, "All in all, I am satisfied with my job."

Cammann et al. (1983) report an estimate of reliability of .77 (coefficient alpha). The

reliability coefficient of the scale utilized in this study was .87.

   Perceived Organizational Support. Six items developed by Eisenberger,

Huntington, Hutchison, and Sowa (1986) were used. These items represented the extent

to which respondents feel that the organization values their contributions, treats them

favorably, and cares about their well-being. High scores indicated that respondents feel

the organization is committed to them. For instance, one item asks, "The organization

shows very little concern for me. (reverse score)".

   In their original study, Eisenberger et al. (1986) used a 36-item instrument to

measure perceived organizational support, reporting a coefficient alpha of .97. Following

the lead of more recent research as who have measured perceived organizational support,

this research utilized an abbreviated scale composed of six items with the highest factor

loadings from Eisenberger et al.'s (1986) research. These more abbreviated scales have

demonstrated sufficient levels of reliability to warrant their use. Wayne, Shore, and Liden (1997), for instance, used a nine-item variation of Eisenberger et al.'s (1986) scale that produced a coefficient alpha of .93 in their study. The reliability coefficient of the scale utilized in this study was .88.

Loyalty

 Turnover Intentions. A five item scale was developed based on items from Blau (1989) and Cammann et al. (1983) to measure turnover intentions. These five items represented the extent to which respondents have intentions to leave the organization. High scores indicated the intention to leave while low scores indicate the intention to continue organizational membership. For instance, one item asked, "I am actively looking for a job outside of the Air Force." The estimates of reliability do not exist for the combined scale however, the estimate of reliability for the items developed by Blau (1989) was .82 and the estimate for the items from Cammann, et al. (1983) was .83. The reliability coefficient of the scale utilized in this study was .76.

 Careerism. Five items developed by Robinson and Rousseau (1994) were used to measure careerism. These five items represented the extent to which respondents feel that the relationship with the organization is nothing more than a stepping-stone in one's career. For instance, one item asks, "I took this job as a stepping stone to a better job with another organization." Robinson and Rousseau (1994) have estimated the reliability of the scales at .78. The reliability coefficient of the scale utilized in this study was .49. All methods to improve the scale's reliability were attempted and proved unsuccessful, therefore; the careerism scale will be removed from the study.

Normative Commitment. Five items developed by Allen and Meyer (1990) were used to measure normative commitment. These five items represented the extent to which respondents feel an obligation to remain with the organization. For instance, one item asked, "I think that people these days move from company to company too often." Allen and Meyer (1990) reported a reliability coefficient of .79. The reliability coefficient of the scale utilized in this study was .59. All methods to improve the scale's reliability were attempted and proved unsuccessful, therefore; the normative commitment scale will be removed from the study.

Affective Commitment. Eight items developed by Allen and Meyer (1990) were used to measure affective commitment. These eight items represented the extent to which respondents are emotionally attached to the organization. High scores indicated strong identification and involvement in the organization. For instance, one item asked, "I could be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization." Allen and Meyer (1990) reported a reliability coefficient of .87. The reliability coefficient of the scale utilized in this study was .80.

Attitudes Toward The Way Work is Done
Personal Independence

Three items developed by Wagner (1995) were used to measure team environment. These three items represented the extent to which respondents prefer to work alone rather than in groups. For instance, one item asked, "Given the choice, I would rather do a job where I can work alone rather than doing a job where I have to work with others in a group." Wagner (1995) reported a reliability coefficient of .83. The reliability coefficient of the scale utilized in this study was .80.

Group Productivity

Three items developed by Wagner (1995) were used to measure team environment. These three items represented the extent to which respondents feel that individuals pursuing their own interests contribute to group effectiveness. For instance, one item asks, "A group is more productive when its members do what *they* want to do rather than what the group wants to do." Wagner (1995) reported a reliability coefficient of .76. The reliability coefficient of the scale utilized in this study was .60. All methods to improve the scale's reliability were attempted and proved unsuccessful, therefore; the group productivity scale will be removed from the study.

Individualism

Four items developed by Wagner (1995) were used to measure team environment. These four items represented the extent to which respondents place greater importance on personal interests and desires. For instance, one item asks, "Only those who depend on themselves get ahead in life." Each of the items were group in different factor groupings, therefore, no estimates of reliability were available. The reliability coefficient of the scale utilized in this study was .47. All methods to improve the scale's reliability were attempted and proved unsuccessful, therefore; the individualism scale will be removed from the study.

Attitudes Toward Organizational Promises

Two items developed by Robinson and Rousseau (1994) was used to measure psychological contract violations. These two items represented the extent to which respondents believe that some form of a promise has been made (between themselves and

the organization) and both parties have accepted the terms and conditions of the contract. The first of these two items asked, "Please indicated how well, overall, your first employer has fulfilled the promised obligations that they owed you?" Participants will respond with the following options: 1 = very poorly fulfilled, 2 = poorly fulfilled, 3 = neutral, 4 = fulfilled, 5 = very well fulfilled. Participants also responded to a second item with the following options (yes or no) and open-ended if response is yes. The second item asked, "Please respond yes or no: Has or had your employer failed to meet the obligation(s) that were promised to you? If yes, please explain in the space below." Robinson and Rousseau (1994) reported a reliability coefficient of .78. In this study, only one item could be measured in the psychological contract violations scale; therefore, no estimates of reliability were available for this study.

Summary

In summary, the Smola and Sutton (2002) study identified differences between the three generations and found they had different expectations concerning their desirability of work outcomes, importance of work, along with their desire for promotion and additional responsibilities. These differences influence actions taken by managers and their subordinates in their daily interactions. To date, additional studies have been done in other areas such as work centrality, job satisfaction, and perceived organizational support; however, studies have not directly tied these areas to generational differences. This research identified four main areas of study along with their associated variables to determine if generational differences exist and evaluate each perspective within the active duty and civilian population. The next chapter will discuss the analytical procedures used

to explore the variables of the generational differences instrument utilized in this

research.

Descriptive Statistics

The purpose of this research was to study three generations currently in the workforce. Subsequent analysis is focused on Baby Boomers (n=56), Generation X (n=162), and the Millennials (n=90) within the sample (N=308).

Attitudes Toward Work Itself

Desirability of Work Outcomes

The sample was analyzed to detect generational differences in desirability of work outcomes among active duty military members. A significant difference was found between Baby Boomers, Gen Xers, and Millennials in an intrinsic work outcome with Baby Boomers reporting a stronger desire for feeling pride in craftsmanship in their work (F=6.06, p<0.05) (Table 3, Column 5). Another significant difference was found between the groups in another intrinsic work outcome with Baby Boomers reporting a stronger desire for feeling more worthwhile (F=3.41, p<0.05) (Table 3, Column 5).

Pride In Craftsmanship

The sample was analyzed to detect generational differences in pride in craftsmanship among active duty military members. A significant difference was found between Baby Boomers, Gen Xers, and Millennials in one of the pride in craftsmanship items with Baby Boomers reporting a stronger agreement with the statement that 'a worker should feel a sense of pride in his work' (F=3.27, p<0.05) (Table 3, Column 5).

Moral Importance of Work

The sample was analyzed to detect generational differences in moral importance of work among active duty military members. No significant difference was found

between Baby Boomers, Gen Xers, and Millennials on items measuring feelings toward the moral obligation to have an occupation and contribute some product or service to society (Table 3, Column 5).

Work Centrality

The sample was analyzed to detect generational differences in work centrality among active duty military members. A significant difference was found between Baby Boomers, Gen Xers, and Millennials on items measuring feelings toward the importance of work in one's life (F=3.68, p<0.05) (Table 4, Column 3) with Baby Boomers reporting a higher importance of work in their lives.

Attitudes Toward Current Job and Organization

Satisfaction

Job Satisfaction. The sample was analyzed to detect generational differences in job satisfaction among active duty military members. A significant difference was found between Baby Boomers, Gen Xers, and Millennials on items in the job satisfaction scale with Baby Boomers reporting more overall satisfaction with their job (F=6.98, p<0.01) (Table 4, Column 3).

Perceived Organizational Support. The sample was analyzed to detect generational differences in perceived organizational support among active duty military members. A significant difference was found between Baby Boomers, Gen Xers, and Millennials on items in the perceived organizational support scale with Baby Boomers reporting a stronger indication that the organization values their contributions, treats them favorably, and cares about their well-being (F=5.58, p<0.05) (Table 4, Column 3).

Loyalty

Turnover Intentions. The sample was analyzed to detect generational differences in perceived organizational support among active duty military members. A significant difference was found between Baby Boomers, Gen Xers, and Millennials on items in the turnover intentions scale with Millennials reporting a stronger indication to leave the organization ($F=6.74$, $p<0.01$) (Table 4, Column 5).

Affective Commitment. The sample was analyzed to detect generational differences in affective commitment among active duty military members. A significant difference was found between Baby Boomers, Gen Xers, and Millennials on items in the affective commitment scale with Baby Boomers reporting more overall identification with and involvement in the organization ($F=5.56$, $p<0.01$) (Table 4, Column 3).

Attitudes Toward the Way Work is Done

The sample was analyzed to detect generational differences in personal independence among active duty military members. No significant difference was found between Baby Boomers, Gen Xers, and Millennials on items measuring preferences to work alone rather than in groups (Table 4, Column 3).

Attitudes Toward Organizational Promises

The sample was analyzed to detect generational differences in attitudes towards psychological contract violations. A significant difference was found between Baby Boomers, Gen Xers, and Millennials on the item in the organizational promises scale with Baby Boomers reporting more overall belief that their first employer fulfilled the promised obligations ($F=4.09$, $p<0.05$) (Table 4, Column 3).

Table 4. Mean & Standard Deviation Comparison	Smola & Sutton (2002)		Study Sample (2003)					
2003 Survey Items	Boomers	Gen-X	Boomers		Gen-X		Millenials	
DESIRABILITY OF WORK OUTCOMES[a]			*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
39. Being recognized and gaining the respect of others	8.67	8.70	5.89	.934	5.91	.732	5.88	.086
40. Being of service to others	8.58	8.65	6.09	.769	5.97	.776	5.80	.824
41. Feeling more worthwhile	8.68	8.51	6.13	.662	5.84	.795	5.78	.933
42. Feeling pride in craftsmanship in your work	9.13	8.97	6.38	.620	6.27	.618	6.00	.874
43. Getting more money or a large pay increase	8.52	8.78	5.86	.841	5.72	.843	5.83	1.14
45. Having the flexibility to balance work and family[b]	-	-	5.71	.909	5.64	.846	5.83	1.26
46. Being promoted more quickly	7.78	8.13	5.61	.802	5.46	.926	5.54	1.20
47. Receiving more fringe benefits	8.13	8.24	5.77	.809	5.44	.870	5.62	1.12
48. Having your supervisor compliment you	8.17	8.23	6.11	.731	6.27	.779	6.00	1.05
44. Having leisure and free time	8.45	8.61	6.50	.572	6.54	.708	6.35	.925
PRIDE IN CRAFTSMANSHIP								
27. A worker should do a decent job whether or not his supervisor is around	6.42	6.48	6.45	.952	6.52	.689	6.40	.776
25. A worker should feel a sense of pride in his work	6.28	6.45	6.43	.535	6.27	.731	6.11	.845
37. An individual should enjoy his/her work	5.93	5.94	6.40	.683	6.23	.707	6.10	1.07
18. Getting recognition for my own work is important to me	5.55	5.78	5.23	1.28	5.26	1.30	5.30	1.31
1. There is nothing wrong with doing a poor job at work if a person can get away with it	6.55	6.39	6.93	.260	6.65	.917	6.66	.985
20. *In your job, if you work hard, how probable is it that:* You will feel more worthwhile and be a better person?	5.33	5.37	5.82	.945	5.44	.971	5.39	1.38
MORAL IMPORTANCE OF WORK								
19. I would quit my job if I inherited a lot of money	3.45	3.61	3.73	1.95	4.10	1.90	3.99	1.95

8. Working hard makes one a better person	5.29	5.66	5.14	1.47	5.35	1.26	5.42	1.19
21. A good indication of a man's worth is how well he does his job	6.01	4.91	4.98	1.30	4.79	1.28	4.83	1.33
30. Rich people should feel an obligation to work even if they do not need to	3.36	3.31	4.07	1.62	3.66	1.59	3.98	1.59
13. Work should be one of the most important parts of a person's life	4.33	3.86	4.11	1.64	3.85	1.53	3.78	1.47

Note: Numbers correspond to item number on questionnaire.

[a]Smola & Sutton (2002) measured these items on a 1 to 100 scale. [b]This item was added to the AFIT questionnaire.

Table 5. Study Sample Comparison of Means

	INDIVIDUAL SCORES	AFIT (2003)		
		Boomers (1946-1964)	Gen-X (1965-1977)	Millenials (1978-1995)
ATTITUDES TOWARD WORK ITSELF				
Work Centrality (α = .78)	3.61	3.79	3.50	3.71
ATTITUDS TOWARD CURRENT JOB & ORGANIZATION				
Job Satisfaction (α = .87)	5.47	5.70	5.61	5.06
Perceived Organizational Support(α = .88)	4.88	5.15	4.95	4.59
Turnover Intentions(α = .76)	2.54	2.60	2.35	2.87
Careerism(α = .49)	4.28	4.14	4.35	4.24
Normative Commitment (α = .59)	4.31	4.35	4.29	4.30
Affective Commitment (α = .80)	4.51	4.67	4.60	4.23
ATTITUDES TOWARD THE WAY WORK IS DONE				
Personal Independence (α = .80)	3.46	3.31	3.53	3.43
Group Productivity (α = .60)	2.54	2.46	2.50	2.65
Individualism (α = .47)	3.49	3.43	3.48	3.56
ATTITUDES TOWARD ORGANIZATIONAL PROMISES				
Psychological Contract Violations	3.67	3.85	3.72	3.47

Summary

The results of this study support the hypotheses presented in Table 2. As expected, Baby Boomers reported a stronger desire for intrinsic rewards of work than Gen Xers and Millennials. Boomers reported a stronger desire for feeling more worthwhile and reported a stronger agreement that a worker should feel a sense of pride in his work. Baby Boomers feel work is an important facet of life and reported a stronger indication that the organization values their work. Millennials reported a stronger desire to leave the organization and finally, Baby Boomers reported more organizational promises were fulfilled.

IV. Discussion

Conclusion

The primary objective of this research was to explore the extent to which generational differences exist. Specifically, differences in general work attitudes, attitudes towards job and organization, and individual preferences toward work processes were explored. While previous research has been done concerning generational differences, with the notable exception of the Smola and Sutton (2002) study, little empirical research has explored the extent to which these differences actually exist. Using the three variables from the original study done by Cherrington (1980), Smola and Sutton (2002) utilized the variables to measure the items of desirability of work outcomes, pride in craftsmanship, and moral importance of work; all of which attempted to measure differences in attitudes towards work itself. In addition to the Smola and Sutton (2002) study, eleven additional variables were measured. Work centrality, one of the additional variables, also attempted to measure attitudes towards work itself. Differences in attitudes toward current job and organization were measured using the following additional variables: job satisfaction, perceived organizational support, turnover intentions, careerism, normative commitment, and affective commitment. Personal independence, group productivity, and individualism attempted to measure differences in attitudes toward the way work is done. Lastly, psychological contract violations attempted to measure differences in attitudes toward organizational promises. A primary goal of this research was the application of a generational differences instrument that could serve as a tool for leaders and junior organizational members to

help increase the knowledge of work differences among the generations present in the work force.

To test the study's hypotheses, a comprehensive instrument was administered to employees of a large Department of Defense organization that were participating in a Diversity Awareness Training course. The hypotheses were created by investigating each of the generation's characteristics corresponding with the appropriate variable. The comparison of the three generational groups resulted in the final formulation of hypotheses (Table 2).

The results of this study support the hypotheses' that there are generational differences between Baby Boomers and Generation X; furthermore, the findings represent over half of all total measurements analyzed. In particular, Baby Boomers reported a stronger desire for intrinsic work outcomes. Boomers felt a stronger desire for feeling more worthwhile and had stronger agreement with the statement 'a worker should feel a sense of pride in his work'. Additionally, Baby Boomers reported a higher importance of work in their lives. Baby Boomers also declared a stronger feeling that the organization values their contributions, treats them favorably, and cares about their well-being. Millennials reported a stronger indication to leave the organization. Finally, a significant difference was found between the generational groups in attitudes toward organizational promises with Boomers reporting more belief that their first employer fulfilled the promised obligations.

All other hypotheses tested in this study detected no significant differences among the generations. For example, all variables measuring attitudes toward the way work is done detected no significant differences among the groups. Based on attitudes toward

teamwork and individualism, the study expected to find differences. However, no significant differences were found regarding the personal independence variable. Lastly, job satisfaction detected no significant differences among Baby Boomers, Generation X, and the Millennials.

While the results of this study support the idea that there are generational differences based on the groups' characteristics and stereotypes, it would appear that these differences can easily be explained using other factors. Age, for instance, can contribute to the significant findings. For example, Baby Boomers might have shown a stronger desire for intrinsic rewards due to the stage of life they are in. Boomers are more likely to be established and settled in their career and have adult children who are no longer financially dependent on them and, therefore, seek recognition and pride from their work rather then financial rewards. Being more established in their careers, Boomers view work more positively, place a higher importance on its role in life and, in return, believe the organization values their contributions. The next significant finding of stronger intentions to the leave the organization can also be attributed to an individual's age. Millennials are still seeking advancement in their careers and are more inclined to change organizations than the Baby Boomers who are more near retirement age.

Knowing these findings, if a leader or manager relies on generational stereotypes to establish human resource management policies and practices they will be incorrectly applying leadership at least half of the time. Instead of focusing on generational stereotypes, leaders should focus on an individual's current stage of life. An individual's stage of life will more accurately reflect their attitudes towards work, loyalty to the organization and job satisfaction.

Limitations

Clearly, there were a few limitations to the study. The limitations revolved around two principle issues, the research setting and the questionnaire. The research setting created the following limitations: insufficient sample size of Millennials and the population of the participants not representing a true random sample. The questionnaire limitations include: the overall design of the questionnaire and common method variance.

The mean age of active duty members, plus or minus two standard deviations, does not include any of the Millennial generation in the sample. Knowing this, it is unreasonable to expect a large number of Millennial participation in the study. Due to this limitation, the Millennial generation was the least represented generation in the sample.

Additionally, the questionnaire was administered over a limited period of time to employees of a large Department of Defense organization that were participating in a Diversity Awareness Training course that is on-going; therefore, the data collected were not necessarily representative of the population or a true random sample. Because of this, bias was introduced into the data and ultimately into the analysis.

Another limitation to the study was the overall design of the questionnaire. Specifically, participants overlooked items due to their location, which caused missing data. One particular item "Please indicate how well, overall, your first employer has fulfilled the promised obligations that they owed you." was singled out at the bottom of

the page and was the most overlooked question on the survey. Keeping items grouped by category on the page would help alleviate overlooked questions. Additionally, the most important question on the entire survey, which was "what year were you born", was located on the last page. This location caused participants to leave the question blank. Changing the survey to include this question on the first page would decrease the chance of participants overlooking the item. Approximately twenty surveys missing this one item (birth year) had to be removed from the data set.

Furthermore, the participant's frame of reference in their current career status was an additional limitation in this study. Depending on whether the participant was just starting out in their career, near retirement, or somewhere in between, heavily influenced their response to the turnover intentions items. An additional item could have been added to the questionnaire to determine their frame of reference in their current career status.

Finally, as with all research involving questionnaire items with self-report variables, there is the risk of common method variance. Common method variance may inflate the results of the items due to participants' responses being overly influenced by previous items on the questionnaire. In addition, each participant completed only one questionnaire eliminating the ability to compare responses. Although a seven-point Likert scale was used extensively throughout the questionnaire, the questionnaire items were randomly ordered to minimize the effects of common method variance.

Future research

There are a few potential areas in this field of study that can be made into future research projects. The most significant area involves sampling from different populations and analyzing the potential between them. For example, this study focused on analyzing

active duty members, but there are also large populations that can be analyzed in government service. Additionally, comparisons can be made between the civil servants/active duty and those out in the civilian work force. There are numerous companies and universities that can participate in the study to compare, not only the generational differences among today's work force, but a comparison between government employees (civil servants and active duty) and the civilian work force.

Summary

In summary, this study substantiates the idea that there are generational differences between Baby Boomers, Gen X-ers, and Millennials. The active duty population is an older generation of work force, the majority being Baby Boomers. Not only are Baby Boomers closer to retirement age than Gen X-ers and Millennials, research has shown that they are more satisfied with their current job and organization that Gen X-ers and Millennials and are less likely inclined to leave the organization. Research has also shown Baby Boomers are more loyal to their organization than Gen X-ers and Millennials, which once again solidifies the hypothesis that Gen X-ers and Millennials are inclined to have a higher turnover intention than Baby Boomers. Knowing this valuable information, the active duty work force can begin to prepare themselves for the retirement of the Baby Boomers and focus on the retention of Gen X-ers and recruitment of Millennial's.

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Appendix A

Generational Characteristics For

Analysis of Generational Differences

	Baby Boomers	Generation X	Millennials
Years	1946-1964 *(Smola and Sutton, 2002)*	1965-1978 *(Smola and Sutton, 2002)*	1979 - 1994 *(Smola and Sutton, 2002)*
Era	American High *(Howe and Strauss, 2000)*	Consciouness Revolution *(Howe and Strauss, 2000)*	Culture Wars & Roaring Nineties *(Howe and Strauss, 2000)*
Presidents	Truman to Kennedy *(Howe and Strauss, 2000)*	LBJ to Carter *(Howe and Strauss, 2000)*	Reagan to Clinton *(Howe and Strauss, 2000)*
Technology	Broadcast TV 78s and LPs 8mm film Vacuum tubes mainframes sedans and stationwagons electric ranges *(Howe and Strauss, 2000)*	cable TV cassettes and CDs VCRs transistors calculators Beetles and hatchbacks microwaves *(Howe and Strauss, 2000)*	interactive TV streaming and MP3s DVDs microchips personal computers minivans and SUVs delivered foods *(Howe and Strauss, 2000)*
Defining Events	Vietnam War Civil Rights Riots Kennedy's Watergate Woodstock *(Smola and Sutton, 2002)* Television Assassinations Cold War Women's Lib *(Zemke, 2001)* The Great Society Watergate Sex, drugs, and rock and roll *(Cufaude, 2000)* First man on the moon Fall of Vietnam Nixon's resignation Energy crisis Stock market tumble *(Meredith and Schewe, 2002)* Women in the workplace Sexual revolutions of the pill and AIDS *(Paul, 2001)*	Both parents working or one parent due to divorce Influenced by MTV AIDS World-wide competition Latch-key kids Fall of the Berlin Wall *(Smola and Sutton, 2002)* Watergate Single Parents Computers Challenger Glasnost Wall Street Frenzy *(Zemke, 2001)* Desert Storm Internet Divorce *(Cufaude, 2000)*	Internet Chat School Violence TV Talk shows Multiculturalism Girls' movement McGuire and Sosa *(Zemke, 2001)* Grown up in a multicultural country Have never known a recession Columbine War in Kosovo Oklahoma City bombing Princess Di's death Clinton impeachment trial O.J. Simpson trial Rodney King riots Lewinsky scandal Fall of Berlin Wall *(Howe and Strauss, 2000)* Challenger Free Agency and the Brand You *(Cufaude, 2000)* Good economic times Terrorist attack on World Trade Center and Pentagon *(Meredith and Schewe, 2002)* Lockerbie Germany reunited *(Paul, 2001)*

Characteristics			
	Optimism	Determined individualists	Team-oriented
	Teamwork	Fiercely independent	optimistic
	Driven	Wants to set their own goals, deadlines, and work hours	Poised for greatness on a global scale
	Willingness to "Go the extra mile" *(Zemke, 2001)*	Thrive upon a creative and chaotic environment	Embraces law and order, morality, diversity and problem solving
		Competitive	Technology planners
	idealism	Risk-taking *(Jurkiewicz, 2000)*	Community-shapers
	individualism		Institution-builders
	high expectations *(Cufaude, 2000)*	Diversity	*(Howe and Strauss, 2000)*
		Thinking Globally	Confidence
	Desires teamwork, relationships and bonding	Technoliteracy	Street Smart
	Loyal until the next job offer comes along *(Pekala, 2001)*	Informality	Tenacious
		Self-Reliance	*(Zemke, 2001)*
	Lonely individualism	Risk-Takers	
	Cynicism and distrust of government *(Meredith and Schewe, 2002)*	Skeptical	Mindful of Authority
		Family Oriented	Cautiously optimistic outlook
		Focused on Job, not work hours *(Zemke, 2001)*	Enthusiasm for the future *(Pekala, 2001)*
		Pragmatism	Tolerance and diversity
		Entrepreneurial spirit	Respect for institutions
		Savvyness *(Cufaude, 2000)*	*(Meredith and Schewe, 2002)*
		Distrustful of authority but respects mentors	
		Loyal to individuals, not companies	
		Very tech-savvy	
		Highly task oriented	
		Can be counted on to get the work done on time	
		Have high energy level	
		Need challenge *(Pekala, 2001)*	
		Free agency and independence	
		Street smart *(Meredith and Schewe, 2002)*	
		Powerful achievers	
		Eager to make lasting contributions	
		Voracious learners	
		Fierce individualism	
		Confidence	
		(Tulgan, 1996)	

| Focus/Concerns | Concerned with retirement issues
More concerned with quality of life than with money
(Jurkiewicz, 2000)

Health and Wellness
Personal Gratification
Personal Growth
(Zemke, 2001)

self-improvement

(Cufaude, 2000)

Personal and social expression

Protected individualism
Family commitments
(Meredith and Schewe, 2002) | Focused on child care
Willing to trade off high compensation for leisure time
(Jurkiewicz, 2000)

Balance
Fun
(Zemke, 2001)

Quality of Life
(Cufaude, 2000)

Value Flextime and balance
Demand interesting work, praise and recognition
Want financial stability without giving loyalty in return
(Pekala, 2001)

Friendships important
Pursuit of quality of life
(Meredith and Schewe, 2002)

Respect, support and honor
(Tulgan, 1996) | Civic Duty

Achievement
Sociability
Morality
Diversity
(Zemke, 2001)

Compartmentalized work and life
(Cufaude, 2000)

Expect to start at the top like their Gen-X counterpart
Mentoring is a top priority
Flexibility and personal priorities are very important

(Pekala, 2001)

Belonging to a global community
(Meredith and Schewe, 2002) |
| Beliefs, Attitudes & Values | "Let's have a meeting"
"Thank God it's Monday"
(Zemke, 2001)

Sacrifices everything for the job; believes in paying dues

(Pekala, 2001)

Conformity and being pro-business
"Don't rock the boat" work ethic
(Meredith and Schewe, 2002)

"Me Generation"
"I'm Ok - You're Ok"
(Schewe, Meredith, and Noble, 2001) | "It's only a job"
(Zemke, 2001)

Work until I get the job done.
I will work harder for time than money
Willing to quit a job with no other job in sight
View work simply as a means to support their leisure time

(Pekala, 2001)

"What's in it for me?"
(Schewe, Meredith, and Noble, 2001) | "It takes a village"
(Zemke, 2001)

Change is good

(Meredith and Schewe, 2002) |

Appendix B

Exemption Letter For

Analysis of Generational Differences

8 May 03

MEMORANDUM FOR AFIT/ENV
                                       AFIT/ENR
                                       AFRL/HEH
                                       IN TURN

FROM: AFIT/ENV/GCA

SUBJECT: Request for Exemption from Human Experimentation Requirements (AFI 40-402): Thesis Research, AFIT/ENV/GCA, Analysis of Generational Differences.

1. Request exemption from Human Experimentation Requirements of AFI 40-402 for the proposed Analysis of Generational Differences Questionnaire and Protocol to be conducted in conjunction with thesis research at the Air Force Institute of Technology (see attachment 1). Purpose of this study is to explore the extent to which differences exist among three generations of Air Force members and the affects these potential differences have on recruitment and retention strategies. The results of this study should be used to further understand younger workers and guide the development of programs that lead to the successful recruitment and retention of younger Air Force members.

2. This request is based on the Code of Federal Regulations, title 32, part 219, section 101, paragraph (b) (2); Research activities that involve human subjects will be exempt when the research involves the use of survey procedures provided (i) information obtained cannot be directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and (ii) disclosure of subjects' responses does not place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability, financial strain, employability or reputation ruin. Methodology used to collect information for generational differences research is based on questionnaire procedures. The following information is provided to show cause for exemption:

　　2.1. Equipment and facilities: No special equipment or facilities will be used.

　　2.2. Subjects: Subjects will be three purposefully selected groups. The first group will be those termed as Millennials born in the years 1979 to 1994. The second group will be those termed as Generation X'ers born in the years 1965 and 1978. The final group will be Baby Boomers born in the years 1946 and 1964.

　　2.3. Timeframe: Data will be collected in the months of June through March 2004.

　　2.4. Description of the survey: A questionnaire was developed to assess work values and desirable work environments. It will be distributed to select organizations for participation in printed and a web-based format. The

participants will be placed in the appropriate generational category based on their self-reported age that will be collected with a single open-ended item where they will identify their age in years.

2.5. Data collected: No identifying information is obtained through the survey. Data collected on individual subjects include: attitudes and general beliefs toward work, attitudes toward job and organization, and individual demographics and background (see attachments 2 & 3).

2.6. Informed consent: All subjects are self-selected to volunteer to participate in the survey. No adverse action is taken against those who choose not to participate. Subjects are made aware of the nature and purpose of the research, sponsors of the research, and disposition of the survey results. A copy of the Privacy Act Statement of 1974 is presented for their review.

2.7. Risks to Subjects: Individual responses the participants provide will not be disclosed. This eliminates any risks to the participants. There are no anticipated medical risks associated with this study.

3. If you have any questions about this request, please contact Lt Stephanie M. Skibo or Lt Stacey L. Williams - Phone 255-3636 ext 6344 or 6338, E-mail – stephanie.skibo@afit.edu or stacey.williams@afit.edu. Major Daniel T. Holt will serve as the Faculty Advisor (primary investigator) and can be contacted by phone 255-3636, ext. 4574 or E-mail – daniel.holt@afit.edu.

STEPHANIE M. SKIBO, 1Lt, USAF
Graduate Student, AFIT/ENV/GCA

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Assistant Professor of Management
Faculty Advisor, AFIT/ENV/GEM

Attachments:
1. Protocol
2. Item Summary
3. Questionnaire

Appendix C

Protocol Outline For

Analysis of Generational Differences

Protocol Outline
For
ANALYSIS OF GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES

1. Title: An analysis of generational differences and the influences on an individual's propensity for recruitment and retention.

2. Principal Investigator: Major Daniel T. Holt; AFIT/ENV; 255-3636, ext. 4574; daniel.holt@afit.edu.

3. Associate Investigator(s): Lt Stephanie M. Skibo, AFIT/ENV/GCA, Phone 255-3636 ext 6344, E-mail - stephanie.skibo@afit.edu or Lt Stacey L. Williams, AFIT/ENV/GCA, Phone 255-3636 ext 6338, E-mail –stacey.williams@afit.edu.

4. Medical Monitor: Not applicable.

5. Contractor and/or Facility: Not applicable.

6. Objective: To explore the extent to which differences exist among three generations of Air Force members and the affects these potential differences have on recruitment and retention strategies.

7. Background: There seems to be a wide held belief that different generations have different attitudes toward work, organizations, and co-workers. Indeed, Smola and Sutton (2002) studied differences between groups termed as Baby Boomers (born 1946 - 1964), Generation Xers (born 1965 - 1978), and Millennials (born 1979-1994). When comparing the generational groups to one another, they found that work is not the central focus in younger people's lives; yet, these same younger people hope to be promoted quickly through an organization's ranks. Clearly, these differences have implications for managers and leaders. Actions taken by leaders (who are often older) might be misunderstood by junior organizational members (who are often younger), leading to undesirable outcomes (i.e., turnover).

Considering that many generational groups are represented within the Air Force, there is a need to analyze and understand potential generational differences. However, with the notable exception of the Smola and Sutton (2002) study, little empirical research has explored the extent to which these differences actually exist and no studies appear to have looked at differences among military members. And, the influence these potential differences have on today's all volunteer force has not been explored.

8. Impact: As suggested in previous research, differences among generations are expected. Specifically, younger people are expected to be less committed to the organization, work, and their co-workers. These findings should be used to further understand younger workers and guide the development of programs that lead to the successful recruitment and retention of younger Air Force members.

9. Experimental Plan:

a. Equipment and facilities: None

b. Subjects: Subjects will be three purposefully selected groups such that comparisons can
be made. The first group (i.e., Group 1) will be Millenials born in the years 1979 to 1994 (as
defined by Smola & Sutton, 2002). The second group (i.e., Group 2) will be Generation X'ers
born between the years 1965 and 1978(as defined by Smola & Sutton, 2002). The final group
(Group 3) will be Baby Boomers born between the years 1946 and 1964 (as defined by Smola &
Sutton, 2002). The number of participants has yet to be determined and it will be gender
neutral. Additionally, there will be no additional screening or special tests required of the
participants.

c. Duration of the study: The questionnaire should take participants approximately
30 minutes to complete.

d. Description of experiment, data collection, and analysis: A questionnaire (see
attachment 3) was developed to assess work values and desirable work environments. It
will be distributed to select organizations for participation in either hard copy format or
web-based format. The participants will be placed in the appropriate generational
category based on their self-reported age that will be collected with a single open-ended
item where they will identify their age in years. Responses from the Values Scale
questionnaire will be analyzed using a statistical computer software program. The open-
ended questions at the end of the questionnaire will be reviewed by the researchers.

e. On-site monitoring: None. Each specific location will have a main point of contact that
we will be working closely with during the administration of the questionnaire.

10. Medical Risk Analysis: No anticipated medical risks associated with this research.

11. References:

Smola, K. W. & Sutton, C. D. (2002). Generational differences: Revisiting generational work values for the new millennium. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 23*, 363-382.

Appendix D

Generational Differences Questionnaire

Generational differences survey

Purpose: Our research team is investigating generational differences.

Participation. We would greatly appreciate your completing this survey. Your participation is COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY. However, your input is important for us to understand generational differences. Your decision to participate or withdraw will not jeopardize your relationship with the Air Force Institute of Technology, the Air Force, or the Department of Defense.

Confidentiality. ALL ANSWERS ARE ANONYMOUS. No one other than the research team will ever see your questionnaire. Findings will be reported at the group level only. We ask for some demographic information in order to interpret results more accurately. Reports summarizing trends in large groups may be published.

To ensure anonymity for the web-based version of the questionnaire, certain precautions have been built into the database to ensure that your anonymity is protected. First, the questionnaire and database are not stored on your organization's server; instead, the questionnaire and database will be stored on the Air Force Institute of Technology's secure server. This makes it impossible for your leaders to circumvent the researchers and try to access any identifiable data without their knowledge. Second, you will only have access to your responses. Finally, the database is protected by a password that is known only by the researchers making it impossible to access data. Still, if you don't feel comfortable completing the on-line version of the questionnaire you can print a paper version of the questionnaire, complete it, and return it directly to the researchers.

Contact information: If you have any questions or comments about the survey contact Capt Williams and Lt Skibo at the mailing addresses or e-mail addresses.

Capt Williams & 1Lt Skibo

AFIT/ENV BLDG 640 Box 4344 & 4338

2950 Hobson Way
Wright-Patterson AFB OH 45433-7765
Email: stacey.williams@afit.edu
stephanie.skibo@afit.edu

INSTRUCTIONS
- Base your answers on your own thoughts & experiences
- Please print your answers clearly when asked to write in a response or when providing comments
- Make dark marks when asked to use specific response options (feel free to use an ink pen)
- Avoid stray marks and if you make corrections erase marks completely or clearly indicate the errant response if you use an ink pen

MARKING EXAMPLES

Right	Wrong
●	⊗ ⊘ ⊙

Section I
GENERAL WORK ATTITUDES

We would like to understand how you generally feel about work. The following questions will help us do that. For each statement, please fill in the circle for the number that indicates the extent to which you agree the statement is true. Use the scale below for your responses.

① Strongly Disagree	② Disagree	③ Slightly Disagree	④ Neither Agree Nor Disagree	⑤ Slightly Agree	⑥ Agree	⑦ Strongly Agree

1. There is nothing wrong with doing a poor job at work if a person can get away with it. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

2. Working with a group is better than working alone. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

3. If (the) unemployment benefit was really high, I would still prefer to work. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

4. Life is worth living only when people get absorbed in work. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

5. I was taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to the organization. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

6. A group is most efficient when its members do what *they* think is best rather than doing what the group wants to do. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

7. The major satisfaction in my life comes from my work. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

8. Working hard makes one a better person. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

9. I think that people these days move from company to company too often. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

10. Only those who depend on themselves get ahead in life. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

11. The most important things that happen to me involve my work. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

12. People in a group should realize that they sometimes are going to have to make sacrifices for the sake of the group as a whole ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

13. Work should be one of the most important parts of a person's life. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

14. Work should only be a small part of one's life. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

15. A group is more productive when its members follow their own interests and concerns. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

16. Things were better in the days when people stayed with the organization for most of their careers. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

17. Given the choice, I would rather do a job where I can work alone rather than doing a job where I have to work with others in a group. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

18. Getting recognition for my own work is important to me. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

19. I would quit my job if I inherited a lot of money. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

① Strongly Disagree	② Disagree	③ Slightly Disagree	④ Neither Agree Nor Disagree	⑤ Slightly Agree	⑥ Agree		⑦ Strongly Agree

20. *In your job, if you work hard, how probable is it that:* You will feel more worthwhile and be a better person?	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦		
21. A good indication of a man's worth is how well he does his job.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦		
22. One of the major reasons I continue to work for the Air Force or in government service is that I believe that loyalty is important and therefore feel a sense of moral obligation to remain.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦		
23. Most things in life are more important than work.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦		
24. Winning is everything.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦		
25. A worker should feel a sense of pride in his work.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦		
26. Work should be considered central to life.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦		
27. A worker should do a decent job whether or not his supervisor is around.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦		
28. I prefer to work with others in a group rather than working alone.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦		
29. I feel that winning is important in both work and games.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦		
30. Rich people should feel an obligation to work even if they do not need to.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦		
31. Jumping from organization to organization does not seem at all unethical to me.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦		
32. A group is more productive when its members do what *they* want to do rather than what the group wants to do.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦		
33. Overall, I consider work to be very central to my existence.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦		
34. To me, my work is only a small part of who I am.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦		
35. In my view, an individual's personal life goals should be work oriented.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦		
36. I would probably keep working even if I didn't need the money.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦		
37. An individual should enjoy his/her work.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦		
38. I have other activities more important than my work.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦		

Please tell us how desirable and important you think these items are associated with your work (item 39 through 47).

① Extremely Undesirable	② Undesirable	③ Somewhat Undesirable	④ Neither Undesirable or Desirable	⑤ Somewhat Desirable	⑥ Desirable	⑦ Extremely Desirable

39. Being recognized and gaining the respect of others.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦

40. Being of service to others.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
41. Feeling more worthwhile.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
42. Feeling pride in craftsmanship in your work.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
43. Getting more money or a large pay increase.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
44. Having the flexibility to balance work and family	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
45. Being promoted more quickly.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
46. Receiving more fringe benefits.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
47. Having your supervisor compliment you.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
48. Having leisure and free time.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

Section II

ATTITUDES TOWARDS JOB & ORGANIZATION

We would like to understand how you feel about your current job, the Air Force or government service. The following questions will help us do that. For each statement, please fill in the circle for the number that indicates the extent to which you agree the statement is true. Use the scale below for your responses.

① Strongly Disagree	② Disagree	③ Slightly Disagree	④ Neither Agree or Disagree	⑤ Slightly Agree	⑥ Agree	⑦ Strongly Agree

49. If I could go into a different industry other than the Air Force or government service which paid the same I would probably do so.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
50. In general, I don't like my job.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
51. I am seriously thinking about leaving the Air Force or government service.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
52. I do not feel emotionally attached to this organization.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
53. There are many career opportunities I expect to explore after I leave my present employer.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
54. I could be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Slightly Disagree**	**Neither Agree or Disagree**	**Slightly Agree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**

55. The organization is willing to extend itself in order to help me perform my job to the best of my ability. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

56. I definitely want a career for myself in the Air Force or government service. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

57. All in all, I am satisfied with my job. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

58. I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

59. The organization shows very little concern for me. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

60. I do not expect to change organizations often during my career. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

61. I am actively looking for a job outside of the Air Force or government service. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

62. I took this job as a stepping stone to a better job with another organization. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

63. The organization takes pride in my accomplishments. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

64. This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

65. I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

66. Even if I did the best job possible, the organization would fail to notice me. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

67. I am disappointed that I ever entered the Air Force or government service. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

68. In general, I like working here. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

69. I do not feel like part of the family at my organization. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

70. The organization cares about my general satisfaction at work. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

71. I think that I could easily become as attached to another organization as I am to this one. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

72. I expect to work for a variety of different organizations in my career. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

73. The organization really cares about my well-being. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

74. I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

75. I am really looking for an organization to spend my entire career with. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

Use the scale printed below to select the response that most closely corresponds to your personal view about Item 75.

	①	②	③	④	⑤
76. Please indicate how well, overall, your first employer has fulfilled the promised obligations that they owed you?	**Very Poorly Fulfilled**	**Poorly Fulfilled**	**Neutral**	**Fulfilled**	**Very Well Fulfilled**

77. Please respond yes or no: Has or had your employer ever failed to meet the obligation(s) that were promised to you? If yes, please explain in the space below.	○ Yes	○ No

Section III

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This final section contains items regarding your personal characteristics. These items are very important for statistical purposes. Respond to each item by WRITING IN THE INFORMATION requested or CHECKING THE BOX ☑ that best describes you.

78. What year were you born?   **19_____**

79. What is your gender?

    Male   **Female**

80. Describe your primary career field or profession (e.g., programmer, personnel specialist, etc.)?

_____

81. How many organizations have you worked for (the Air Force is considered one organization and government service is considered one organization)? _____

82. How many different jobs have you had (each Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) held is considered one job and each government job family classification held is considered one job)? _____

83. How long have you been in the Air Force or in government service (if applicable)?
_____ years _____ months

84. Which category best describes you?

    Active Duty   **DoD Civilian**   **Other (Please specify)_____**

85. Which category best describes you?

    White
    African American
    Hispanic
    American Indian/Alaskan Native
    Asian American/Pacific Islander
    Other

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix E

Generational Differences Summary of Study Variables

WORK VALUES

DESIRABILITY OF WORK OUTCOMES. *Measures the extent to which respondents feel value in intrinsic and extrinsic rewards of work. (Cherrington, 1980)*

39	Being recognized and gaining the respect of others
40	Being of service to others
41	Feeling more worthwhile
42	Feeling pride in craftsmanship in your work
43	Getting more money or a large pay increase
44	Being promoted more quickly
45	Receiving more fringe benefits
46	Having your supervisor compliment you
47	Having leisure and free time

PRIDE IN CRAFTSMANSHIP. Measure the extent to which respondents feel they should enjoy their work and receive recognition for doing a good job. (Cherrington, 1980)

27	A worker should do a decent job whether or not his supervisor is around
25	A worker should feel a sense of pride in his work
37	An individual should enjoy his/her work
18	Getting recognition for my own work is important to me
1	There is nothing wrong with doing a poor job at work if a person can get away with it
20	*In your job, if you work hard, how probable is it that:* You will feel more worthwhile and be a better person?

MORAL IMPORTANCE OF WORK. Measures the extent to which respondents feel their moral obligation to have an occupation and contribute some product or service to society. (Cherrington, 1980)

19	I would quit my job if I inherited a lot of money
8	Working hard makes one a better person
21	A good indication of a man's worth is how well he does his job

30	Rich people should feel an obligation to work even if they do not need to
13	Work should be one of the most important parts of a person's life

WORK VALUES

WORK CENTRALITY. Measures the extent to which respondents feel work is an important factor in their lives. (Hirschfeld & Field, 2000)

14	Work should only be a small part of one's life. (reverse score)
35	In my view, an individual's personal life goals should be work oriented.
4	Life is worth living only when people get absorbed in work.
7	The major satisfaction in my life comes from my work.
11	The most important things that happen to me involve my work.
38	I have other activities more important than my work. (reverse score)
26	Work should be considered central to life.
36	I would probably keep working even if I didn't need the money.
34	To me, my work is only a small part of who I am. (reverse score)
23	Most things in life are more important than work. (reverse score)
3	If (the) unemployment benefit was really high, I would still prefer to work.
33	Overall, I consider work to be very central to my existence.

TEAM ENVIRONMENT. Measures the extent to which the respondents view their attitudes on team mentality. Low scores indicate strong agreement with teamwork. (Hunsaker & Robbins, 2000)

10	Only those who depend on themselves get ahead in life.
24	Winning is everything.
29	I feel that winning is important in both work and games.
28	I prefer to work with others in a group rather than working alone. (reverse score)
17	Given the choice, I would rather do a job where I can work alone rather than doing a job where I have to work with others in a group.
2	Working with a group is better than working alone. (reverse score)
12	People in a group should realize that they sometimes are going to have to make sacrifices for the sake of the group as a whole. (reverse score)
32	A group is more productive when its members do what *they* want to do rather than what the group wants to do.

6	A group is most efficient when its members do what *they* think is best rather than doing what the group wants to do.
15	A group is more productive when its members follow their own interests and concerns.

Summary of Study Variables

JOB ATTITUDES

SATISFACTION. Measures the extent to which respondents view their job positively. High scores indicate overall satisfaction with the job. (Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins, & Klesh, 1983)

56	All in all, I am satisfied with my job.
49	In general, I don't like my job. (reverse score)
67	In general, I like working here.

TURNOVER INTENTIONS. Measures the extent to which respondents have intentions to leave the organization. High scores indicate the intention to leave while low scores indicate the intention to continue organizational membership. (combination of items from Blau, 1989 and Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins, & Klesh, 1983)

60	I am actively looking for a job outside of the Air Force.
50	I am seriously thinking about leaving the Air Force.
48	If I could go into a different industry other than the Air Force which paid the same I would probably do so.
55	I definitely want a career for myself in the Air Force.
66	I am disappointed that I ever entered the Air Force.

CAREERISM. Measures the extent to which respondents feel that the relationship with the organization is nothing more than a stepping stone in one's career. (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994)

61	I took this job as a stepping stone to a better job with another organization
71	I expect to work for a variety of different organizations in my career
59	I do not expect to change organizations often during my career (reverse score).
52	There are many career opportunities I expect to explore after I leave my present employer.
74	I am really looking for an organization to spend my entire career with (reverse score).

WORK ENVIRONMENT

ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT. Measures the extent to which respondents feel that the organization values their contributions, treats them favorably, and cares about their well-being. High scores indicate that respondents feel the organization is committed to them. (Hutchison & Sowa, 1986)

58	The organization shows very little concern for me. (reverse score)
54	The organization is willing to extend itself in order to help me perform my job to the best of my ability.
65	Even if I did the best job possible, the organization would fail to notice me. (reverse score)
62	The organization takes pride in my accomplishments
69	The organization cares about my general satisfaction at work.
72	The organization really cares about my well-being.

AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT. Measures the extent to which respondents are emotionally attached to the organization. High scores indicate strong identification with and involvement in the organization. (Allen & Meyer, 1990)

53	I could be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.
64	I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.
68	I do not feel like part of the family at my organization. (reverse score)
51	I do not feel emotionally attached to this organization. (reverse score)
63	This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.
57	I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization. (reverse score)
73	I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it
70	I think that I could easily become as attached to another organization as I am to this one. (reverse score)

EXPECTATIONS

PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT VIOLATIONS. Measures the extent to which respondents believe that some form of a promise has been made (between themselves and the organization) and that the terms and conditions of the contract have been accepted by both parties. (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994)

75   Using the scale below, please indicate how well, overall, your *first* employer has fulfilled the promised obligations that they *owed you*?

76   Please respond yes or no: Has or had your employer ever failed to meet the obligation(s) that were promised to you? If yes, please explain…

NORMATIVE COMMITMENT. Measure the extent to which respondents feel obligation to remain with the organization. (Allen & Meyer, 1990)

9   I think that people these days move from company to company too often.

31   Jumping from organization to organization does not seem at all unethical to me (reverse score)

22   One of the major reasons I continue to work for the Air Force is that I believe that loyalty is important and therefore feel a sense of moral obligation to remain.

5   I was taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to the organization.

16   Things were better in the days when people stayed with the organization for most of their careers.

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14. ABSTRACT

There seems to be a wide held belief that different generations have different attitudes toward work, organizations, and co-workers. Clearly, these observed differences have implications for managers and leaders. Actions taken by leaders (who are often older) might be misunderstood by junior organizational members (who are often younger), leading to undesirable outcomes (i.e., turnover). Considering that many generational groups are represented within the Air Force, there is a need to analyze and understand potential generational differences. With the notable exception of the Smola and Sutton (2002) study, little empirical research has explored the extent to which these differences actually exist and whether differences exist among active duty members. This research explores the extent to which differences exist among three generations of active duty members and the affects these potential differences have on leadership strategies.

Hypotheses were developed based on generational characteristics and tested using a questionnaire that includes 77 items to assess general work attitudes, attitudes towards job and organization, and individual preferences toward work processes. The results of the study indicate that while generational differences were shown to exist, significant differences among the groups accounted for a small proportion of the variables tested. Ultimately, the study's significant findings could be explained by other factors such as age and frame of reference.
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