

Generational Differences in Work Values Between Gen X and Y Public School Teachers

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Abstract. This study examined the generational differences in work values between Gen X and Gen Y public school teachers in the Schools Division Office of Isabela, Legislative District VI. The research aims to examine whether these generational differences influence teaching behaviors and professional collaboration. A quantitative approach was employed, utilizing a structured survey based on Schwartz's value theory to measure work values across six dimensions: power, achievement, benevolence and universalism, conformity and tradition, self-direction and stimulation, hedonism, and security. The study involved 106 teachers, including 46 from Gen X (born 1965-1980) and 60 from Gen Y (born 1981-1996). The findings show that while there were some differences in the emphasis placed on specific work values—Gen Y teachers placed greater importance on benevolence and security—there were no significant overall generational differences. Both generations shared a high level of commitment to job security, professional development, and respect for colleagues. The study concludes that while generational traits influence specific work value priorities, they do not significantly affect overall work values, highlighting the importance of focusing on common professional goals in educational settings.

Keywords: Gen X; Gen Y; Generational differences; Public school teachers; Work values.

1.0 Introduction

Employees bring unique work values to the workplace, shaped by various factors including culture, upbringing, and personal experiences. From a global perspective, work values are shaped by historical, social, and cultural contexts, and these differences are increasingly recognized as critical issues in both organizational and educational settings. In the Philippines, Filipino workers exhibit distinct work values influenced by the country's socio-economic and cultural contexts (Par, 2021). The education sector, in particular, is shaped by these unique values, which play a crucial role in the professional environment. Teachers are expected not only to fulfill their educational responsibilities but also to embody values that are ethically and morally sound. The Code of Ethics for Professional Teachers under the Board for Professional Teachers, under RA 7836, outlines guidelines for teachers to maintain these values, ensuring they serve as role models in both the school community and society. This moral framework highlights the significance of work values in the educational setting, contributing to the achievement of inclusive, equitable, and high-quality education for all.

Generational differences in work values, particularly among teachers, have become a growing area of interest. According to Stiglbauer et al. (2022), individuals born in the same historical and socio-cultural period share similar formative experiences, which shape their attitudes and beliefs, including those related to work. These generational

differences can present challenges in the workplace, especially in education, where teachers from different generations must collaborate and adapt to evolving demands. Understanding the work values guiding teachers' behavior is essential, as they influence both professional responsibilities and workplace dynamics. This has become particularly pertinent as generational diversity in the workforce has increased.

While generational differences in work values have been extensively explored in industries outside the education sector, there has been limited attention given to this issue among public school teachers. Romero-Tena et al. (2020) highlight the generational shift within the teaching workforce and the lack of studies examining how these shifts influence educators' work values. Similarly, Ali Alferjany and Alias (2021) highlight the lack of empirical research on how generational values influence attitudes and behaviors in the workplace. Dasalla and Guevara (2024) further emphasize the importance of investigating work values among high school teachers to understand generational dynamics within the profession better. However, existing studies have identified shared priorities among generations, such as job security, respect for colleagues, and opportunities for professional development. (Costello, 2020; Hall et al., 2018) found that there is limited research on how these values may differ in emphasis between Gen X and Gen Y teachers, and how these differences manifest in their professional interactions and collaborative practices (Tran, 2020).

The demographic profile of public school teachers in the Philippines reveals significant diversity in terms of age, educational background, and experience levels. De la Fuente (2021) reports that a large portion of public school teachers hold the academic rank of Teacher I, with the majority of secondary teachers being under 40 years old (Javier, 2020). Esman et al. (2023) reveal a balanced age distribution in the workforce, with younger teachers (36 years and below) having the same frequency as their older counterparts (37 years and above). Public school teachers are predominantly married, with some holding a bachelor's degree while others pursue higher studies (Olua, 2022; Giray, 2021). These demographic factors indicate a diverse teaching workforce, contributing to variations in work values, attitudes, and behaviors.

Understanding the work values of these different generational cohorts is crucial in the context of public education. Teachers from Gen X (born between 1965 and 1980) and Gen Y (born between 1981 and 1996) bring unique perspectives to the classroom, shaped by their respective life experiences. Hecht (2020) characterizes Gen X as resourceful and independent, while Gen Y is often seen as collaborative and technology-driven. These generational differences can influence how teachers approach their professional duties and interact with students, potentially leading to differences in teaching methods, communication styles, and work priorities (Okros, 2020; Bulut, 2021).

The gap in the literature concerning generational differences in the work values of public school teachers remains substantial. This study aims to fill that gap by exploring the differences in work values between Gen X and Gen Y teachers in public schools. Despite the growing diversity of generational cohorts in the teaching profession, there has been little research on how these differences affect teacher behavior and collaboration in the educational environment. As new generations enter the workforce, their distinct values may shape workplace dynamics, creating opportunities for collaboration or potential conflicts. Understanding these generational differences is particularly important in light of the evolving expectations within the education sector, which demand more complex roles and competencies from teachers (Zhang, 2021; Liu et al., 2020). In this context, there remains a critical need to explore the generational work values among public school teachers in the Philippines to address potential differences that affect teaching effectiveness and professional relationships.

In response to this need, the study focuses on determining the differences in work values between Gen X and Gen Y teachers in the Legislative District VI (LD6) under the Schools Division Office of Isabela (SDO Isabela). Given the researcher's current role as a public school teacher in LD6, the chosen locale offers both practical relevance and direct applicability to the educational context. The decision to focus on this legislative district is grounded in the intent to examine generational dynamics in a setting where the researcher has firsthand knowledge of the organizational culture and professional landscape. By examining the generational gap in work values, the study seeks to offer insights that can enhance collaboration among teachers and improve the educational environment. This research will also contribute to the ongoing efforts to understand generational shifts within the workforce and their impact on organizational culture, creating a more effective and harmonious multi-generational teaching community. Ultimately, this study seeks to support the broader goals of inclusive and quality education. Ultimately, this study aims to support the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, specifically Goals 3

(good health and well-being) and 4 (quality education).

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research design, which is most appropriate for determining the differences in work values between Gen X and Y teachers in the public school setting. The quantitative approach allows for the collection and analysis of numerical data, which can be statistically measured to compare the work ethics and values of the two generations. The research design employed a descriptive comparative approach, involving the collection of numerical data through structured survey questionnaires. The purpose of this design is to identify and quantify the differences between the two generations based on various work values subscales, including power achievement, benevolence, conformity, tradition, self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, and security.

2.2 Participants and Sampling Technique

The study involved public secondary school teachers from three schools within Legislative District VI (LD6) of the Schools Division Office of Isabela: San Isidro National High School, Echague National High School, and San Guillermo Vocational and Industrial High School. They were categorized according to their generational classification: Gen X (born 1965–1980) and Gen Y (born 1981–1996). Due to the relatively small number of Gen X teachers ($n = 46$), purposive sampling was used to include all members of this generation in the study. Meanwhile, stratified random sampling was applied to the larger Gen Y teacher population, with 50% of the population randomly selected to ensure proportional representation. This sampling approach allowed for meaningful comparisons between the two generations while accounting for population size differences.

2.3 Research Instrument

This study utilized a quantitative instrument to collect data on the work values of Gen X and Gen Y public school teachers. The researcher adopted the Work Values Questionnaire (WVQ) developed by Luisa (2010). The WVQ was designed to assess various work values, including intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, job satisfaction, and commitment to professional development. The WVQ is grounded in Schwartz's value structure, which identifies ten universal values that guide individual actions and preferences. These values—power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, self-direction, universalism, benevolence, tradition, conformity, and security—serve as a basis for understanding work-related values across different cultures and work environments. The instrument applied Schwartz's framework specifically to the context of work values, aiming to explore how these values influence work-related decisions and actions in an organizational setting.

The questionnaire consists of 30 items, with ten value dimensions based on Schwartz's typology. For analytical clarity, these ten values were grouped into six broader dimensions based on thematic similarities. This grouping followed the adaptation by Luisa (2010), who merged values such as "power" and "achievement" into a single dimension due to their thematic overlap. Similarly, "benevolence" and "universalism" were combined, and other values with thematic connections were grouped accordingly. Participants were asked to rate how closely they identify with each item using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 ("Not at all like me") to 5 ("Very much like me"). Higher ratings indicated a more substantial alignment with the value represented in each item. The WVQ has demonstrated strong reliability, with reported Cronbach's alpha values from Luisa (2010) as follows: 0.860 for power-achievement, 0.780 for benevolence-universalism, 0.770 for conformity-tradition, 0.830 for self-direction-stimulation, 0.740 for hedonism, and 0.690 for security. These values suggest the instrument's strong internal consistency for measuring the work values of teachers.

2.4 Data Gathering Procedure and Analysis

The research data was collected by first identifying the number of Gen X and Gen Y public school teachers in selected public high schools under Legislative District VI (LD6) of the Schools Division Office of Isabela (SDO Isabela), which helped determine the eligible respondents. The researcher adapted a work values scale for the research instrument and sent a formal letter seeking approval from relevant authorities. Survey questionnaires were distributed to teachers at their convenience, either in person or through Google Forms, depending on availability. Data collection continued until the desired sample size was reached. For data analysis, descriptive statistics were employed, including frequency distributions to describe the number of observations for each variable and percentage distributions to present the spread of values, particularly for the teachers' profiles. The weighted mean was calculated to summarize the data on work values. Since the data did not meet the assumptions

of normality, non-parametric tests (Kruskal-Wallis and Mann-Whitney U) were used to assess significant differences.

2.5 Ethical Considerations

To ensure the protection of participants in this study, several ethical protocols were followed. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before the commencement of data collection. The informed consent letters outlined the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, and the participants' rights, including the right to withdraw at any time without penalty or consequence. Data confidentiality was strictly maintained throughout the research process. All personal information was kept anonymous, and responses were stored securely. The data were only accessible to the researcher and were used solely for this study. No identifying information was included in the final report or any presentations of the findings. These ethical measures ensured that participants' rights were respected and their privacy protected throughout the research process.

3.0 Results and Discussion

3.1 Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the respondents, highlighting key characteristics such as age, civil status, educational attainment, academic rank, years of service, and performance ratings. Out of the 106 respondents, 60 (56.60%) belong to Gen Y, born between 1981 and 1996, while 46 (43.40%) belong to Generation X, born between 1965 and 1980. In terms of civil status, the majority, 84 (79.2%), are married, followed by 18 (17.0%) who are single, and 4 (3.8%) who are widowed. Regarding educational attainment, 46 (43.40%) of the respondents hold a master's degree, 44 (41.51%) hold a bachelor's degree, and 16 (15.09%) hold a doctoral degree.

The academic rank of the respondents is mostly Teacher III (68, 64.15%), followed by Teacher II (19, 17.92%), Teacher I (14, 13.21%), Master Teacher I (4, 3.77%), and Head Teacher III (1, 0.94%). Regarding years of service, 48 (45.28%) have been teaching for 10 years or more, while 26 (24.53%) have been teaching for 7 to 9 years. A smaller percentage, 17 (16.04%), have been teaching for 4 to 6 years, and 15 (14.15%) have been teaching for 0 to 3 years. In terms of performance ratings, 100 (94.34%) have an outstanding rating, while 6 (5.66%) have a very satisfactory rating.

Table 1. *Demographic Profile of the Respondents (n = 106)*

		Frequency	Percentage
Age/Generation	X (Born year 1965 to 1980)	46	43.40
	Y (Born year 1981 to 1996)	60	56.60
Civil Status	Single	18	17.00
	Married	84	79.20
	Widow/Widower	4	3.80
Educational Attainment	Bachelor's degree	44	41.51
	Master's degree	46	43.40
	Doctoral degree	16	15.09
Academic Rank	Teacher I	14	13.21
	Teacher II	19	17.92
	Teacher III	68	64.15
	Master Teacher I	4	3.77
	Head Teacher III	1	0.94
Years of Service in Teaching	0 to 3 years	15	14.15
	4 to 6 Years	17	16.04
	7 to 9 Years	26	24.53
	10 Years and Above	48	45.28
Performance Rating	Very Satisfactory	6	5.66
	Outstanding	100	94.34

These findings indicate that the public school teachers in the study have diverse demographic characteristics, with a larger proportion belonging to Generation Y. The majority are married, hold a master's degree, and are in the Teacher III rank. Most have 10 or more years of teaching experience and have received an outstanding performance rating. These results align with similar studies, such as the one by Javier (2020), which suggests that

most public high school teachers are between 21 and 40 years old (Gen Y), and only a small number are in the Gen X category. Furthermore, the educational attainment and academic rank in this study were similar to those found in Olua's (2022) study, where the majority of respondents held a master's degree and were either Teacher I or Teacher III. The demographic profile suggests that the majority of teachers are from Generation Y, which may require customized policies and professional development programs. With a high percentage holding advanced degrees and considerable teaching experience, there is an opportunity to enhance career advancement further and prevent burnout, while maintaining support for their ongoing professional growth.

3.2 The Level of Work Values among Gene X And Y Teachers

Table 2 presents a notable distribution of work values among Gen X and Y teachers in terms of power achievement, benevolence, universalism, conformity, tradition, self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, and security. The table reflects the varying degrees of importance these teachers place on different work values, which can inform how these values shape their workplace behavior and motivation.

Table 2. *The Level of Work Values Among Gen X And Y Teachers*

No.	Indicators	Gen X (M)	Gen Y (M)	Overall Mean	Interpretation
Power achievement					
1	To assume a leadership position and have decision-making authority	2.74	3.25	3.03	Satisfactory
2	To be the person in charge and tell others what to do	2.78	3.08	2.95	Satisfactory
3	Get ahead in the working world and succeed more than others	3.22	3.13	3.17	Satisfactory
4	To have ambition and be career oriented	3.72	4.08	3.92	Good
5	To organize others' work	2.59	3.18	2.92	Satisfactory
6	To be successful at work	4.37	4.48	4.43	Excellent
Benevolence Universalism					
1	To be attentive to colleagues' needs and emotional states	4.04	4.18	4.12	Good
2	To respect colleagues' work and make an effort to understand their point of view even if he/she does not share it.	4.24	4.43	4.35	Excellent
3	To dedicate attention to and listen to colleagues he/she does not esteem very much.	3.89	4.07	3.99	Good
4	To be available when colleagues require his/her help	4.15	4.22	4.19	Good
6	To be open to forgiving a colleague who behaved incorrectly towards him/her	4.02	4.15	4.09	Good
6	To be loyal to colleagues	4.22	4.13	4.17	Good
Conformity Tradition					
1	To do things in a traditional manner and use the customs learned	3.72	3.78	3.75	Good
2	To respect customs, rather than express his/her ideas	3.80	3.68	3.74	Good
3	To avoid expressing one's ideas if his/her boss or colleagues might criticize them	3.43	3.25	3.33	Satisfactory
4	To adapt oneself to organizational requests, even if they go against his/her principals	3.07	3.13	3.10	Satisfactory
5	Do not contradict his/her head or older colleagues	3.22	3.30	3.26	Satisfactory
6	To work while remaining loyal to traditions and without adhering to continuous changes.	3.37	3.38	3.38	Satisfactory
Self-Direction Stimulation					
1	To have stimulating work activities even if unexpected organizational changes are involved.	3.98	3.93	3.95	Good
2	To know how to manage repetitive changes at work	3.96	3.98	3.97	Good
3	To be interested in his/her work, be curious and attempt to more deeply understand every situation.	4.20	4.23	4.22	Excellent
4	To learn different aspects of his/her work and acquire new competences.	4.24	4.18	4.21	Excellent
5	To propose new ideas and express one's creativity within the workplace.	4.17	4.00	4.08	Good
6	To seek out challenging objectives at work.	4.00	3.98	3.99	Good
Hedonism					
1	To select a job which consents one to enjoy him/herself and life.	3.61	4.00	3.83	Good
2	To have a job which is fun and makes him/her feel good.	3.87	4.13	4.02	Good
3	To find pleasant and entertaining occasions within the workplace.	3.50	3.87	3.71	Good
Security					
1	To have a guaranteed and stable work position.	4.59	4.68	4.64	Excellent
2	To work for an organization where employees' rights are protected.	4.59	4.63	4.61	Excellent
3	To know that on-the-job site, safety norms and regulations concerning the prevention of accidents are respected.	4.52	4.68	4.61	Excellent

Legend: 1.00-1.80= Poor, 1.81-2.60= Fair, 2.61-3.40= Satisfactory, 3.41-4.20= Good, 4.21-5.00= Excellent.

In the Power Achievement category, teachers highly value success in their work (M = 4.43) but show a neutral stance on organizing others (M = 2.92). This suggests a strong drive for personal success, but a lesser interest in leadership roles that involve directing others. For Benevolence Universalism, the highest score (M = 4.35) reflects teachers' commitment to respecting and understanding their colleagues. They exhibit a high level of empathy,

although they find it more challenging to dedicate attention to colleagues they do not esteem ($M = 3.99$). Regarding the Conformity Tradition, teachers adhere to traditional methods ($M = 3.75$) but are neutral about adapting to organizational requests that conflict with their principles ($M = 3.10$). This suggests a preference for tradition, while remaining open to change, albeit cautiously. In Self-Direction Stimulation, teachers highly value professional development and learning ($M = 4.22$), but occasionally face challenges due to unexpected changes ($M = 3.95$).

Teachers also report high satisfaction with their work in the Hedonism category ($M = 4.02$), although finding pleasant moments at work can sometimes be challenging ($M = 3.71$). Finally, Security is of utmost importance to them, with very high ratings for job stability and protection of rights ($M = 4.64$, $M = 4.61$). The results suggest that Gen X and Y teachers are driven by success, empathy, and job security, while also valuing traditional methods, professional growth, and work satisfaction. These findings have significant implications for shaping educational policies and leadership strategies. Schools should focus on offering professional growth opportunities and ensuring job stability, while also promoting a collaborative and respectful work environment.

Summary Table of Work Values

As shown in Table 3, the work values of Gen X and Y teachers are primarily aligned with high levels of security, benevolence, universalism, and stimulation of self-direction. The highest mean ($M = 4.62$) reflects the importance placed on job security, followed by benevolence universalism ($M = 4.15$) and self-direction stimulation ($M = 4.07$), suggesting that teachers value stability, personal growth, and the well-being of their colleagues. Hedonism ($M = 3.85$), conformity tradition ($M = 3.43$), and power achievement ($M = 3.41$) are lower but still indicate a high level of importance. Overall, teachers report a high level of work values ($M = 3.92$), with job security standing out as the most crucial factor.

Table 3. Summary Table of Work Values

Dimensions	Mean	Interpretation
Power achievement	3.41	High
Benevolence Universalism	4.15	High
Conformity Tradition	3.43	High
Self-Direction Stimulation	4.07	High
Hedonism	3.85	High
Security	4.62	Very High
Overall Work Values	3.92	High

Legend: 1.00-1.80= Very Low, 1.81-2.60= Low, 2.61-3.40= Neutral, 3.41-4.20= High, 4.21-5.00= Very High.

This result is consistent with existing literature, as Angelista (2018) highlights the importance of work principles in a teacher's professional effectiveness. The values teachers uphold, such as empathy and professional growth, are central to their ability to adapt and thrive in their roles (Zhang, 2021). Moreover, values are key to shaping their attitudes and actions, significantly influencing their career trajectory and job satisfaction (Hall, Yip, & Doiron, 2018). The work values of Gen X and Y teachers play a vital role in how they navigate their work environment and interact with their students, as noted by Olua (2022).

3.3 The Significant Difference on Work Values of Teachers When Grouped According to Their Generation

As shown in Table 4, the results indicate that, overall, there are minimal significant differences in value orientations between Generation X (born 1965-1980) and Generation Y (born 1981-1996). Most values-including power achievement, benevolence, universalism, conformity, tradition, self-direction, and security-did not differ significantly between the two generations (all p -values $> .05$). The only value showing a statistically significant difference was hedonism ($p = .047$), with Gen Y ($M = 4.00$) scoring higher than Gen X ($M = 3.66$).

Table 4. The Significant Difference in Work Values of Teachers When Grouped According to their Generation

Dimensions	Gen X (M)	Gen Y (M)	Z	P-value	Remarks
Power achievement	3.24	3.54	1.89	0.058	Not Significant
Benevolence Universalism	4.09	4.20	0.87	0.385	Not Significant
Conformity Tradition	3.43	3.42	0.18	0.855	Not Significant
Self-Direction Stimulation	4.09	4.05	0.46	0.646	Not Significant
Hedonism	3.66	4.00	1.99	0.047	Significant
Security	4.57	4.67	0.54	0.589	Not Significant
Overall	3.85	3.98	1.34	0.181	Not Significant

These findings support the results of Ali Alferjany and Alias (2021), who found insufficient evidence that different generations (Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, and Gen Z) hold markedly different values and attitudes in the workplace. This reinforces the notion that while generational labels may imply differences, many values remain consistent across age groups.

The general similarity in work values across generations implies that school policies on teacher engagement, motivation, and development can largely adopt a uniform approach. However, the statistically significant difference in hedonism suggests the need for differentiated motivational strategies. Specifically, to retain and inspire younger teachers (Gen Y), school administrators and HR departments may consider implementing initiatives that promote job satisfaction, work-life balance, and opportunities for enjoyment and creativity at work. These could include recognition programs, wellness initiatives, flexible scheduling, and professional autonomy. Understanding even minimal generational nuances can improve staff morale and effectiveness in educational settings.

4.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, the study revealed a slight generational difference in work values between Gen X and Gen Y teachers; however, this difference does not significantly impact their overall work values. Both generations highly value job security, professional development, and respect for colleagues, showing a shared commitment to the teaching profession. While there were some differences in the emphasis placed on specific work values, such as Gen Y's focus on benevolence and Gen X's emphasis on self-direction, these differences did not result in statistically significant variations. This suggests that teachers, regardless of their generational background, prioritize intrinsic values that align with the goals of the education system.

Given the findings, educational institutions can create a supportive environment that promotes professional growth, security, and respect among all teachers, regardless of generation. This study emphasizes the significance of acknowledging the shared work values that underpin effective teaching practices. Future research could investigate how specific generational traits impact teaching methods and workplace dynamics, offering further insights into creating a collaborative and harmonious teaching environment that spans generations. A qualitative study exploring work values and other related aspects, such as ethics, personal values, and job attitudes, among Gen Z and Gen Y teachers can provide in-depth and comprehensive insights into how these two generations differ in their approach to work, ethics, and attitudes toward their teaching profession.

5.0 Contribution of Authors

Author 1: conceptualization, proposal writing, data gathering, data analysis.
Author 2: data analysis, data gathering.

6.0 Funding

This study received no external funding.

7.0 Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest related to this study.

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