

GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES IN WORK VALUES – IMPRESSION OR REALITY? THE CASE OF CZECH GENERATIONS X AND Y

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Abstract:

This article follows the extensive discussion on the existence of inter-generational differences in work values and attempts to fill the gaps in research that has to date been lacking. Generally, research on this topic in the Czech Republic has not been based on relevant data sources or methodological approaches. Most studies are either cross-sectional, do not have a generational perspective, or do not use the concept of work values in their analyses. Using the ISSP 2005 data (N = 323) and 2015 (N = 195), combined with Palmore's design, we address all these issues more comprehensively. Our findings suggest that the lower importance in perceiving job security for Generation Y compared to that of Generation X in 2005 was in fact a small effect of age, since the differences between these generations all but disappeared by 2015. Nevertheless, this effect is particularly present among the unemployed and can be caused by longer-term unemployment. Further results suggest that the importance of having an interesting job in 2015 is slightly higher compared to that of 2005. In the case of the whole sample of respondents, it is not certain whether this is an effect of the period and/or generation; however, for the employed, these differences can be attributed to a period effect. By contrast, for the unemployed, there has been a moderate increase in the importance of flexible hours between 2005 and 2015 due to aging. In other dimensions, such as external values (e.g. money), the value of free time (autonomy) and altruistic values, no statistically significant differences are identified.

Key words:

Generations X and Y, work values, identification problem, effect of age, period and cohort

JEL: J81

1 Introduction

Many studies focusing on generational differences in work values and their impact on work life have been published in the past decades. Considering the number of meta-analyses that aim to summarize these studies, one might assume that enough has been said on this topic. However, similar to Lyons et al (2015), the authors of this paper do not want to throw the baby out with the bathwater. Firstly, the results of these studies are often ambiguous and contradictory, either due to the use of different definitions of generational age ranges, neglecting various cultural and organizational aspects, or following different methodological procedures in designing such research. Secondly, the overwhelming majority of studies (Woodward et al, 2015) use cross-sectional design, which makes it impossible to separate the generational effect from the effect of history and the effect of aging. Thirdly, there is no academic publication on this topic in the Czech Republic to date. Finally, the authors of this paper are not willing to accept the possible self-fulfilling prophecies of a number of popular authors who suggest that generation Y is somehow "special". We agree that, in addition to quantitative and descriptive studies, it is necessary to examine the issue qualitatively and explanatively, which is useful

in countries and contexts where a number of quantitative studies have already been carried out. In the case of the Czech Republic, however, we consider it important to start from identifying generational differences in work values as such.

2 The concept of generations

In this paper, we use the definition of generation proposed by Mannheim, who was at the birth of the sociology of generations. He describes the generation not only as a mere proximity to the birth dates of individuals, but as the intersection of several social characteristics: the life cycle, the spatial location and the historical setting (Mannheim, 1952).

All members of one generation are born in a certain time in a geographically defined place. People born in the same time experience events that occur at both the same historical stage and the same specific biographical stage. "For example, people born in Germany in 1940 experienced World War II in their early childhood, whereas individuals born ten years later experienced a childhood of renewal and returning prosperity" (Corsten, 2007, p. 49). People born in the same time period similarly experience the same historical events during their own lives. Mannheim also proposes that generations might interpret the same events similarly. In this way, the members of one generation define their situation in a similar way and develop similar ways of responding to the problems of their generation (e.g. the hippies movement) (Corsten, 2007).

Both academic authors and managers focusing on the relationship between generational differences and their implications for working life usually distinguish among these: the Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y and Generation Z. With the aging of the members of the post-war generation and their retirement, three generations of workers now dominate the current labor market – the Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y. However, one can assume that Generations X and Y will be the most represented in terms of the present and near future, which is why these two are the focus of this article.

3 The importance of intergenerational differences

There are at least three reasons why it is important to focus on intergenerational differences between workers. Firstly, revealing differences between generations can help us understand the needs of different groups of workers. The existence of differences in the expectations and demands of work between different groups of workers can lead to conflict at the workplace. For example, according to Burke's research (2005), 58% of HR managers register workplace conflicts between younger and older workers, mainly due to differences in their demands for a balanced work and personal life. Secondly, understanding the values that individual generations advocate helps companies remain competitive in recruiting and maintaining (stabilizing) their employees. In the Czech Republic, given the generally low birth rate, low unemployment level and the lack of highly qualified workers, it is difficult for employers to find or retain talented candidates. The role of working conditions, benefits, and other factors is therefore crucial for recruiting and stabilizing quality workers. Some managers already report that "we do not interview them (job seekers), but rather they interview us" (Kyle 2009). With changing labor market structure, it is therefore crucial for companies to be attractive to employees. Thirdly, it is necessary for employers to know the factors that positively affect the internal motivation of workers. Internal motivation is directly related to behavior, performance, and a sense of well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000). By contrast, money can only have a limited effect in motivating employees. From the employer's point of view, it is necessary to ensure consistency between the company's motivation tools and the motivation profile of the employee.

4 Generation X

Generation X includes people born generally between the late 1960s and the early 1980s. Giancola (2006) and O'Bannon (2001) work with the range of 1961-1981; others consider the key years

to be 1960-1980, but other definitions are mentioned (Costanza et al., 2012). The name "Generation X" was first used in the Hamblett and Deverson book in 1965, which dealt with teenagers with socially unacceptable morals who did not follow conservative values (Costanza et al., 2012). Those of Generation X were affected by a number of negative factors including financial, family and social uncertainty (Smola & Sutton, 2002). About 40% of this generation come from divorced families. Between 1965 and 1977, the divorce rate doubled. Since the 1970s, the average age of the first marriage has increased by four years (O'Bannon, 2001).

This period can be characterized by increasing individualism (Sirias, Karp & Brotherton, 2007). Compared to Baby Boomers, Generation X places less importance on loyalty to employers (O'Bannon, 2001). Similarly, they prefer autonomy and independence, balanced work and family life, and avoiding taking the position of a leader (Jorgensen, 2003). The members of this generation believe that they will be better off in their personal lives than their parents both financially and professionally, as well as in personal relationships and the overall quality of life. Nevertheless, they define themselves as cynical and pessimistic. They also recognize that a university diploma does not guarantee a satisfactory and fulfilling job (Arnett, 2000). This generation is much more technologically advanced than older generations because they grew up in the environment of emerging electronic devices and information technology (Benson & Brown, 2011). This generation is open to diversity, change, competition and is used to receiving rapid feedback (O'Bannon, 2001).

5 Generation Y

Individuals born between the early 1980s and mid-1990s are considered to be members of Generation Y. However, the time ranges of generations vary among publications. For example, Smola and Sutton (2002) use 1979-1994, Jorgensen (2003) 1977-1988; and other authors work with 1982-2001, 1982-2000 or 1983-2001 (Kruntorádová, 2013). According to Kopecký (2013), the term "Generation Y" was firstly used in the magazine Advertising Age in 1993. This generation, often also labelled as "Millennials" or "Nexters", grew up in a period of rapid technological progress and strong globalization. It is the first generation who were born surrounded by a variety of digital media and intense electronic communication. Generation Y are also the first to experience the process of gradual transformation from traditional family architecture, characterized by the arrangement where the father has the role of breadwinner and mother takes care of the household. Instead, there are more single mothers and fathers, free partnerships, etc. (Kopecký, 2013).

Generation Y is currently facing relatively high youth unemployment in Europe, which in some countries reaches up to 40%. Although the university-educated population has been growing in recent years, graduates of high and middle schools are among the most vulnerable groups in the labor market. It is assumed that this generation will represent the majority of the workforce in 2025 – up to 75% (Šnýdrová, 2014). Bibby (2001) interviewed more than 10,000 youth respondents and asked them to describe what a good job would mean for them. The results of the study show that an interesting job (86%), success (76%) and friendly work environment (63%) are more important characteristics of a job compared to salary (66%) and work stability (57%). According to other authors, the Millennials "want everything and want it right now", especially in relation to good salary, balanced work and personal life, interesting and stimulating work, and making a positive contribution to society (Ng, Schweitzer & Lyons, 2010).

As the Millennials want more than just money, they require their work to be fulfilling and meaningful; as such the values and vision of the organization play a crucial role here. Members of Generation Y perceive social responsibility as an important factor in the attractiveness of the employer. A total of 88% of employees want to work for employers whose work values correspond to their personal values (Singh, Bhandarker & Rai, 2012). Other studies have also found a link between companies' abilities to attract young talents and socially responsible activities (Ng et al., 2010). According to the findings of Ng et al (2010), Generation Y find opportunities for career development as the most desirable attribute of work. They have realistic expectations about their first job and salary, but

are looking for a quick career path and the fast development of their skills. Similarly, a study of Lub et al (2015) indicates that Generation Y are motivated in particular by the content of work and career.

From the leadership perspective, Generation Y prefer a liberal style of leadership with emphasis on coaching and mentoring (Singh et al., 2012). Generation Y emphasize the social aspect of work, such as friendly colleagues and stimulating environments. At the same time, a meaningful and satisfying life besides work is also important (Ng et al, 2010). According to international research by Murphy et al (2004), the Millennials do not spend less time at work compared to Traditionalists or Baby Boomers.

6 Measuring Czech generations

One of the key issues that needs to be considered is how generations can be defined in the Czech Republic, since most publications on generation differences are focused on Western societies, especially the US. The social conditions that have contributed to the formation of generations in the Czech context are different from many Western societies. For example, the members of Generation X experienced their formative period at the time of so-called socialist normalization, characterized by limited freedom of expression and opportunity (e.g. travelling). The early years of Generation Y were influenced by the fall of the communist regime, and members of this generation experienced their early childhood in a new political system (Kubátová & Kukulková, 2013). After 1989, the division of Czechoslovakia, the transformation of the economy and the accession to the European Union took place.

Mannheim's (1952) theory assumes that generations are formed within a certain socio-historical context. In that case, it might be inaccurate to apply the same time pattern between generations across national boundaries, because it would not reflect the specific context of each country. On the other hand, other authors (Edmunds & Turner, 2005) state that factors like technology, communication, or the globalization of the economy could have global impact. Therefore, the same time range could be applied across different countries.

Despite the different socio-historical processes that could influence the formation of generations, Czech authors usually use the conceptualizations of generations defined by Western authors. Similarly, Julie Cugin (2012) compares generational differences in America, Australia, China, Singapore, and Germany. For all of these countries, Cugin uses a unified time range for each generation. In this way, the study of Kubátová and Kukulková (2013), focusing on cultural differences in the motivation of Generation Y workers, does not distinguish the different time classifications of generations in the surveyed countries (including the Czech Republic). In the context of the Czech environment, only Šnýdrová (2014, p. 19) draws attention to the terminological inaccuracy mentioned earlier – in the Czech environment, it is not best to name the post-war generation as Baby Boomers because "the baby boom in the Czech Republic took place much later – in the 1970s". However, according to the US definition, this time period would include Generation X.

While most authors agree on how the generations can be labelled, there is less agreement on the time range that could define the generations. For the Baby Boomers, the lower limit of the year of birth is usually defined as 1943-1946; the upper limit as 1960- 1969. The upper and lower ranges of Generation X are 1961-1965 and 1975-1981 (Costanza et al., 2012); Generation Y as 1976-1982 and 1995-2001 (Kruntorádová, 2013).

Taking the above into consideration and overcoming the confusion over the definition of the various time ranges, this article uses an approach similar to Cugin (2012), who excluded all the individuals who were born at the border of the years that could be common to two generations. Thus, we indicate Generation X as those cohorts born in 1966-1976 and Generation Y as those born in 1978-1994, inclusive.

7 Generational differences – are they just an impression?

Some authors argue that intergenerational differences do not actually exist and usually use the following arguments to support their opinions.

Firstly, the authors question the existence of generational differences by claiming that differences in values and attitudes can be explained by the process of aging (the age effect). Individual generations are in different stages of life and career (Smola & Sutton, 2002; Jorgensen, 2003). Some publications propose that the values of adolescents vary from high school, through college to work (Walsh et al., 1996). Hnilica (2007) states that some changes could be explained by the natural inclination toward conservatism among most old people. Elderly people are generally mentally more rigid and more resistant to change than younger people. Similarly, Rhodes (1983) points to a change in attitudes, values, and satisfaction during various phases of the careers of workers.

Secondly, in addition to a different stage of life or career, an individual may also be in different time-specific conditions. This phenomenon, sometimes called "the period effect", refers to the specific conditions taking place when the research is being conducted (Schaie, 1965). For example, we can imagine a situation where research is being carried out on work attitudes during an economic crisis. In this scenario, it is possible that people will rank job stability as a more important aspect of work than other aspects (e.g. friendly work atmosphere, work autonomy). However, if the same measurement took place before the outbreak of the crisis, the results could be completely different, as workers at this time would not feel any danger of losing their jobs.

Thirdly, another problematic issue is that part of the literature on generational differences is based on intuition rather than on empirical research. Many authors work with non-representative and subjective data that only allow the examination of one particular moment in time, and do not use long-term observations. Another methodological error stems from different definitions of the time-ranges of the generations. On the one hand, many studies define the generations differently, which may be a source of distortion. In addition, only few studies take into account the fact that people born at the end or beginning of one generational wave can be different from those who are born in the middle of this cohort – a sub-section called "cohort centrism" (Giancola, 2006; Hagenaars, 1990). The discussion around the topic of generational differences involving a number of distractions and methodological mistakes may lead to the assumption that the whole issue lacks a firm foundation.

The last factor to be mentioned is the existence of important micro-variables at the individual level, which many studies do not control. Some authors fail to keep in mind the fact that attitudes are influenced by the current situation of the individual. In this way, Payne and Jones (1987) describe a change in the attitudes of individuals resulting from long-term unemployment. They found that different aspects of employment (e.g. job security, salary) play a more important role for these people after being long-term unemployed. Moreover, part of the studies do not distinguish the culture of different societies as an important factor that can influence the generational differences. For example, the generation of Baby Boomers, who grew up in post-war Germany, grew up in completely different conditions than the post-war Baby Boomers in the USA (Cogin, 2012). Most research on generation gaps focuses only on Western societies, especially the United States.

8 Work values

Values generally define what people believe is good or bad, and they are also a source of attitudes and motivations of an individual. Schwartz (1992) defines values as "a desirable state, object, goal or behavior that goes beyond a specific situation and acts as a normative standard for assessing and evaluating alternative behaviors". Values can be perceived either as general values or specific values, relating to certain areas of life, such as work values. Most authors assume that work values stem from general values, but not much attention has been paid to the explanation of causality in this relationship. Since the 1980s, a number of large-scale studies have focused on the differences in the perception of the importance and meaning of work. Most studies have worked with the assumption that work values stem from the general values of an individual (Roe & Ester, 1999).

Work values are important because they affect the work behavior of an individual through work attitudes. Roe and Ester (1999) point out that it is necessary to distinguish values from attitudes. While values are shaped by wider formative processes in the early stages of life (Mannheim 1952), attitudes

are the result of the emotional and cognitive evaluation of a specific context (Locke, 1976). According to Vávra (2006), attitudes are learned as emotional assessment of certain objects or actions that influence/organize actions regarding these objects. Attitudes are connected to the perception of specific objects or situations, while values are more general. Values are considered to be relatively stable and less prone to change than attitudes (Roe & Ester, 1999). In academic texts, we can find a discussion on how exactly values, attitudes and behavior affect each other. According to Homer and Kahle (1988), the hierarchy proceeds from values to attitudes to manifestations of behavior (values → attitudes → behavior). Values, therefore, do not affect human activity directly, but rather indirectly through attitudes (Roe & Ester, 1999).

Most of the studies on work values usually focus on specific work characteristics and work outcomes. These typically include salary, work conditions, autonomy, and prestige (Lyons & Kuron, 2014). For example, Surynek (2007) describes various aspects of work and their importance according to respondents in the Czech Republic. According to his findings, the most important aspects include economic factors (e.g. salary, fair remuneration, job security). These are followed in importance by social aspects (e.g. work environment, employment without discrimination). The less important aspects then include personal development and career advancement.

In this paper, we conceptualize work values similarly to the majority of publications (Twenge 2010; Woodward, 2015) as intrinsic values (interesting work), extrinsic values (money, advancement opportunity), altruistic values (job that helps other people, job useful for society), autonomy (decide their times or days of work, work independently) and job security.

9 Research on generational differences in work values around the world

9.1 Intrinsic values

Internally motivating work is conceptualized as work that is interesting, diverse, provides challenges, allows one to see results and has impact on others (Twenge et al., 2010). Some texts suggest that Generation Y, with increasing individualisation and self-confidence, consider the meaning of work to be more important than previous generations. In contrast to this assumption, Twenge (2010) shows that Generation Y consider internal values to be less important than Generation X. A meta-analysis of Woodward et al (2015) concludes that most studies (apart from Twenge, 2010) do not find any of these differences between the members of Generations X and Y.

9.2 Altruistic values

Twenge (in Constanza et al., 2012) suggests that when compared to Generation X, Generation Y show more individualism, narcissism and cynicism, which would point to a weak altruistic orientation. The same author (Twenge, 2010) later discovers that there is no difference between the generations in terms of altruistic orientation. This finding is confirmed by Woodward et al. (2015), who note that the differences in altruistic values between Generations X and Y have not been found in any study.

9.3 Work autonomy

The rise of individualism and work autonomy started with Generation X (Sirias et al., 2007; Yrle, Hartman & Payne, 2005), who, compared to previous generations, are more competitive, self-sufficient and prefer to work independently rather than in a team. Generation Y are often described as even more individualistic than Generation X. For example, Lub et al (2015) examine the generational differences in the perception of different aspects of the psychological agreement between the worker and the employer. Generation X are found to be more motivated by the social atmosphere of the workplace than Generation Y. According to the authors, the results correspond with earlier findings that members of Generation Y show a higher level of narcissism, individualism and lower need for social acceptance.

However, individualism and work autonomy in the workplace may not only be related to the generation effect but rather to the effect of age. Earlier research shows that as people get older, they

become more conservative and collectivist; less open to change and less individualistic (Erikson & Erikson, 1997). Individualism may also be the result of wider social processes. In this sense, Blok (1998) describes an inter-generational shift towards individualism, which is part of wider social trends of individualization.

9.4 Extrinsic values: advancement opportunity

Smola and Sutton (2002) show that members of Generation X think it important to be quickly promoted. The older the respondent is, the smaller desire to be promoted he or she has. Furthermore, Sverko (1999) focused on cohorts of high school students for over a decade. The results of his study suggest that later in the decade, cohorts put more emphasis on utilitarian values such as work conditions, salary, career opportunities, prestige, and authority. Similarly, they also place more importance on individualistic values than the cohort of the earlier part of the decade. Although Sverko does not focus explicitly on generations, his research describes the transformation in the perception of the importance of progress in work over time. According to Lub et al (2015), Generation Y can respond particularly well to career development options such as promotions, training, coaching and broad professional development. Generation X respond better if the organization or managers set clear and fair work conditions. Similarly, research findings by Ng et al (2010) show that Generation Y consider career opportunities as their top priority. The findings also confirm the thesis that Generation Y require, in addition to rapid promotion, a quick increase in wages. As Inglehart (1997) puts it, generations that grow up in relative economic wealth tend to be more focused on personal development and self-improvement.

9.5 Extrinsic values: High income

Earlier research by Appelbaum and Shapiro (2004) shows that salary level is one of the most important motivational factors for Generation X. Generally, they are described as those who often seek great challenges and require a high salary (Wong, Gardiner, Lang & Coulon, 2008). Generation Y can be expected to be more demanding in terms of financial needs and flexible working conditions than previous generations (Jennings, 2000). Similarly, the results of Lub et al (2015) suggest that rewards may be a more important factor for Generation Y than for other generations. On the contrary, Twenge (2010) shows that for Generation Y, money is somewhat less important compared to Generation X.

9.6 Job security

Stability and job security is often associated with the quality of work life, and is generally considered to be one of the most important characteristics of work (Clark, 2005). Studies focusing on work security suggest that there are differences in the perceptions of job security between generations. Generation X grew up at a time of massive technological and social changes leading to financial and social instability. Members of this generation enter the labor market without any expectation of job security (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008). Further research (Appelbaum & Shapiro, 2004), on the contrary, shows that job security actually is important for Generation X. Members of Generation Y are perceived as individuals who like changes, and value work security less than other characteristics of work (Hart, 2006). Similar research was carried out by Wong et al (2008), showing no significant differences in the perceptions to job security.

10 Past research on generational differences in work values in the Czech Republic

Despite the generally high popularity of inter-generational research, there is a lack of systematic research exploring this topic in the Czech environment, especially when it comes to generational differences and their impact on human resources management. Šnýdrová (2014) focuses on changes in the structure of the labor market in the Czech Republic due to the entry of Generation Y. Kruntorádová (2013) examines new management methods in adapting and stabilizing young workers. However,

neither of these papers uses long-term or systematic research, or research design that would be suitable for exploring the issue of inter-generational change.

We can find some studies that focus on changes of values in Czech society; however, these do not explicitly focus on generations. For example, Rabušic and Hamanová (2008), based on data from European Values Study (EVS), describe the development of values in the Czech Republic over two decades. These changes in work values and attitudes in Czech society are also examined by Večerník (2006) and Banovcová (2015). Similarly, Mareš and Katrňák (2010) focus on the value of work and changes in the perception of the individual characteristics of the work; however, they ignore the generational perspective. To sum up, it is clear that the Czech Republic is experiencing changes in values and attitudes related to work, but it is not clear whether and how these values and attitudes differ between generations.

11 Methodology

Most of the results of inter-generational differences use only cross-sectional or, rarely, time-lag data. The authors of the time-lag studies usually refer to the general empirical idea that the period effect is the weakest of all three effects; therefore, they tend to ignore it. Hagenars (1990) argues that it is possible to do so on a theoretical basis, but only if there is a strong reason to assume the effect plays only a marginal role. In our case, however, we cannot ignore this effect for two reasons: 1) there is a sufficiently long period of 10 years between the studies carried out in 2005 and 2015, so the effect has a potentially long time to become manifested; 2) there was an economic recession between the two measurements, which could influence the perceived importance of certain work values (e.g. job security).

That is why we use a mix of cross-sectional, longitudinal and time-lag designs developed by Palmore. This method allows us to evaluate all three effects without any need to ignore any of them. Palmore works on three analytically related levels: 1) the level of three structural differences (longitudinal, cross-sectional and time-lag), the level of three effects (time, age and generation), and the cause of these effects. Since each structural difference relates to only two of the effects, it is impossible to identify the generational effect using a single design. To illustrate, the longitudinal difference is caused by the effects of age and time; the cross-sectional difference is related to the age and cohort effects; and the time-lag difference is caused by the period and cohort effects. Based on the number of differences, four possible scenarios can be identified. If there is no significant difference, we assume that none of the effects is present. When two significant differences are found, it is likely that only one effect is present. In this case, the interpretation scheme is as follows: 1) Longitudinal difference + Cross-sectional difference = Age effect (since effects of time and cohorts are zero due to the absence of time-lag difference); 2) Longitudinal difference + Time-lag difference = Age effect (since age and cohort effects are zero due to the absence of cross-sectional difference); and 3) Cross-sectional difference + Time-lag difference = Cohort effect (since effects of age and time are zero due to the absence of longitudinal difference). It should be pointed out that one or three significant differences means an ambiguous result. In this case, without the use of the additional assumption that any of the effects is equal to zero, the effects cannot be separated and thus their values cannot be determined. After separating the effects of age, cohorts and time, it is possible to focus on the third level of analysis. This level aims to reveal what possible factors can explain the cause of these effects. The third level is not the subject of this article.

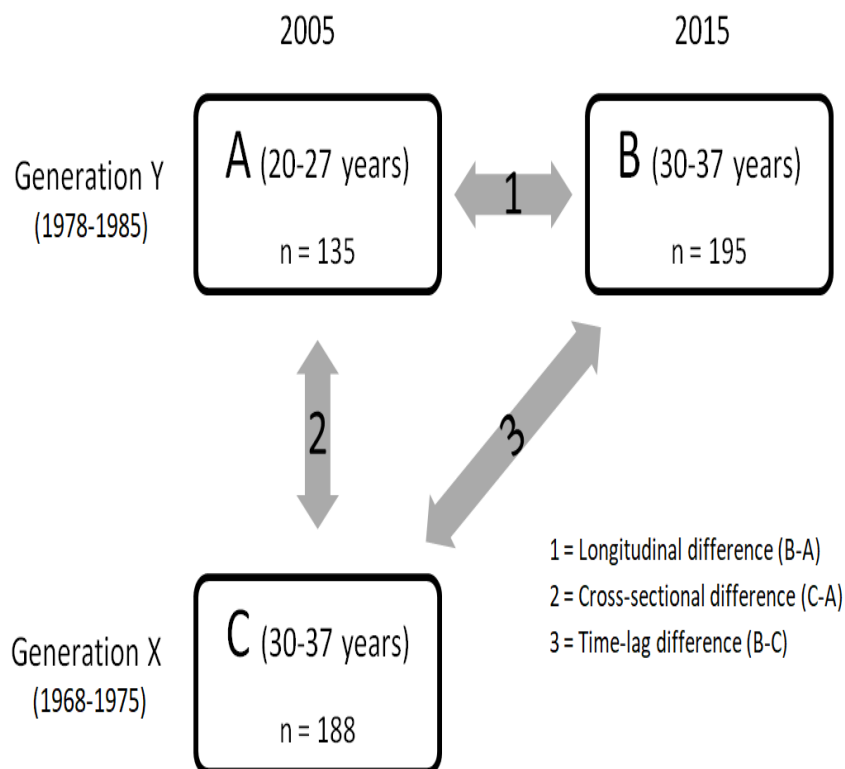
To find out the differences on the first level of analysis, we use t-tests for independent samples. Since the dependent variable is not normally distributed, we also verify the results through a non-parametric alternative, the Mann-Whitney U test. In the case of matching results, only the t-tests are presented for their greater statistical strength.

12 Data Description

Our research uses ISSP (International Social Survey Program) data from 2005 and 2015 that focus on values. These data have been merged and modified in accordance with our definitions of Generations X and Y. The research works with dependent variables Q3 (in the 2005 wave) and Q2 (in the 2015 wave) that ask: "For each of the following, please tick one box to show how important you personally think the point is in a job". Respondents assess different work values on a five-step Likert scale with a neutral midpoint ranging from 1=very important to 5=not important at all. The validity of our indicators with respect to constructs (e.g. work autonomy, extrinsic and altruistic values) was confirmed by factor analysis; nevertheless, in the analysis, we worked on the indicator level of particular variables. The constructs and corresponding variables are as follows: work autonomy – (1) 'How important is a job that allows someone to decide their times or days of work?' and (2) 'How important is a job that allows someone to work independently?'; extrinsic values – (3) 'How important are good opportunities for advancement?' and (4) 'How important is high income?'; job security – (5) 'How important is job security?'; intrinsic values – (6) 'How important is an interesting job?'; and altruistic values – (7) 'How important is a job that allows someone to help other people?' and (8) 'How important is a job that is useful to society?'. Results should be interpreted on the level of the indicators rather than the constructs, as the variables do not exhaust our constructs completely.

In order to control the effect of age in the time-lag difference to follow Palmore's assumptions, we have slightly modified our earlier definition of Generation X as 1968-1975 and Generation Y as 1978-1985. This definition thus covers the maximum period within the data limits. Finally, we worked with N = 323 in the 2005 wave and with N = 195 in the 2015 wave. The resulting design is presented in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1. The research design



Source: adapted from Palmore (1978)

With this design, we achieve a high internal validity by separating the effect of the generation from the effects of age and period. Moreover, we also gain high external validity by using large age intervals to reduce the risk of age and cohort centrism (Hagenaars, 1990).

13 Results

13.1 Work autonomy

The generational difference in the perception of the importance of work autonomy has been tested with two variables, "possibility to work independently" and "decide their times or days of work."

Table 1. Generational differences in "Possibility to work independently"

	2005	2015
Generation Y	2.21	2.14
Generation X	2.29	X
Longitudinal difference = age effect + period effect = -0.07 (t326 = 0.61, p = 0.53)		
Time-lag difference = period effect – cohort effect = -0.15 (t378 = 1.5, p = 0.13)		
Cross-sectional difference = age effect + cohort effect = 0.08 (t318 = - 0.74, p = 0.45)		

* = statistically significant at 5% level

Table 2. Generational differences in "decide their times or days of work"

	2005	2015
Generation Y	2.46	2.25
Generation X	2.35	X
Longitudinal difference = age effect + period effect = -0.21 (t326= 1.78, p=0.075)		
Time-lag difference = period effect – cohort effect = -0.10 (t377=1, p=0.31)		
Cross-sectional difference = age effect + cohort effect = -0.11 (t317=0.93, p=0.35)		

In both cases, mean values differed only slightly, and these findings are not statistically significant at a level of 0.05. Thus, the analysis of these two items shows that Generations X and Y do not differ in the perception of the importance of work autonomy.

13.2 Extrinsic values

Based on earlier findings (Lub et al, 2015; Smola & Sutton, 2002; Sverko, 1999; Appelbaum & Shapiro, 2004), one could suspect that there are differences in the perceived importance of extrinsic values between generations due to the generation effect. Tables 3 and 4 describe the results of the t- tests of the variable "opportunity for advancement" and "high income".

Table 3. Generational differences in “opportunity for advancement”

	2005	2015
Generation Y	2.36	2.30
Generation X	2.47	X
Longitudinal difference = age effect + period effect = -0.06 (t326=0.6, p=0.55) Time-lag difference = period effect – cohort effect = -0.17 (t379=1.73, p=0.084) Cross-sectional difference = age effect + cohort effect = 0.11 (t317=-0.93, p=0.35)		

Table 4. Generational differences in “high income”

	2005	2015
Generation Y	1.80	1.88
Generation X	1.89	X
Longitudinal difference = age effect + period effect = 0.08 (t266=-1, p=0.32) Time-lag difference = period effect – cohort effect = -0.01 (t379=0.06, p=0.95) Cross-sectional difference = age effect + cohort effect = 0.09 (t318=-0.96, p=0.34)		

As in the case of work autonomy, we can conclude that there are no differences between Generations X and Y in the perception of the importance of extrinsic values as represented by the importance of high income and opportunity for advancement.

13.3 Job security

In the case of job security, the t-test results confirm the existence of a longitudinal and cross-sectional difference of -0.21. Therefore, an age effect of -0.21 can be assumed (with C.I.95 = ca. -0.05 to -0.37).

Table 5. Generational differences in “job security”

	2005	2015
Generation Y	1.69	1.48
Generation X	1.48	X
Longitudinal difference* = age effect (-0.21) + period effect (0) = -0.21 (t327 = 2.58, p = 0.01) Time-lag difference = period effect (0) – cohort effect (0) = 0 Cross-sectional difference * = age effect (-0.21) + cohort effect (0) = -0.21 (t232 = 2.58, p = 0.01)		

In this case, the utility/usefulness of the design used is evident. Although the longitudinal comparison and the knowledge of the economic context at that time may suggest that a slight increase in the perception of the importance of job security has occurred as a result of the economic recession, it is, in fact, a small aging effect. It can also be related to the hypothesis presented in Hart (2006) claiming that job security is less important for Generation Y compared to Generation X. This hypothesis seems to be based only on a cross-sectional comparison of both generations at the same time, but in their different stages of life.

13.4 Intrinsic values

Table 6. Generational differences in “interesting job”

	2005	2015
Generation Y	1.81	1.7
Generation X	1.87	X
Longitudinal difference = age effect + period effect = 0.12 (t327=1.3, p=0.19)		
Time-lag difference* = period effect – cohort effect = -0.17 (t377=2.1, p=0.037)		
Cross-sectional difference = age effect + cohort effect = 0.6 (t316=-0.62, p=0.54)		

13.5 Altruistic values

Table 7. Generational differences in “a job that allows someone to help other people”

	2005	2015
Generation Y	2.33	2.23
Generation X	2.2	X
Longitudinal difference = age effect + period effect = 0.1 (t326=1.04, p=0.3)		
Time-lag difference = period effect – cohort effect = -0.03 (t374=-0.3, p=0.77)		
Cross-sectional difference = age effect + cohort effect = 0.13 (t317=1.44, p=0.15)		

Table 8. Generational differences in “a job that is useful to society”

	2005	2015
Generation Y	2.24	2.19
Generation X	2.3	X
Longitudinal difference = age effect + period effect = 0.05 (t325=0.47, p=0.64)		
Time-lag difference = period effect – cohort effect = 0.11 (t378=1.11, p=0.27)		
Cross-sectional difference = age effect + cohort effect = -0.06 (t317=-0.55, p=0.58)		

As for the generational difference in the perception of the importance of altruistic values, in particular help to other people and usefulness for society, there are no statistically significant differences between Generations X and Y. This finding is in congruence with the findings of other authors (Twenge, 2010; Woodward et al, 2015).

14 Results for the employed and unemployed (split sample)

This section presents the results of the analysis applied to employed and unemployed people. The analysis of these segments, based on employment status, rests on the assumption that the actual situation of the respondent in the labor market can influence his or her work values. For example, employees who experience strong disillusionment in terms of their job tasks can perceive their job differently before entering the labor market. On the contrary, the unemployed who fail to find a job can feel that work stability is more important in comparison to how the employed perceive this work value. In this part of the study, we will only present statistically significant differences, due to the scope of the research. All the work values from the previous section will be analysed. If the selected work value does

not appear, it means that there are no differences between Generations X and Y in perceiving the importance of this work value, whether among the employed or unemployed.

Table 9. Generational differences in “interesting job” (employed only)

	2005	2015
Generation Y	1.87	1.65
Generation X	1.85	X
* Longitudinal difference = age effect + period effect = 0.22 (t226=2.04, p=0.04)		
* Time-lag difference = period effect – cohort effect = 0.2 (t284=2.16, p=0.03)		
Cross-sectional difference = age effect + cohort effect = -0.02 (t214=-0.17, p=0.86)		

The analysis of the differences between the employed X and employed Y in terms of the importance of an interesting job suggests that the results do not significantly differ from the previous analysis. However, a stronger longitudinal difference suggests the effect of the period. This means that in 2015, the importance of having an interesting job increased compared to 2005, although the confidence intervals for these variations dispute the difference (CI95 = 0.02 to 0.39, 0.01 to 0.44). Thus, we can say that there is no difference between Generations X and Y in the perception of the importance of interesting work, regardless of the current employment status.

Table 10. Generational differences in “flexible hours” (unemployed only)

	2005	2015
Generation Y	2.64	1.91
Generation X	2.24	X
* Longitudinal difference = age effect + period effect = 0.72 (t99=3.49, p=0.001)		
Time-lag difference = period effect – cohort effect = 0.33 (t90=1.83, p=0.07)		
* Cross-sectional difference = age effect + cohort effect = 0.4 (t95=2.08, p=0.04)		

In terms of flexible hours for unemployed respondents, some interesting results were found; however, the ability to interpret the meaning of the findings is limited. In contrast to the previous analysis, the reduced sample had a significant increase in the importance of this work value in 2015. The identified longitudinal and cross-sectional differences suggest the presence of an age effect. The longitudinal difference is large enough to maintain the confidence interval at a safe distance from zero (C.I.95 = 0.31-1.14). We can therefore argue that the increase in the importance of flexible hours between 2005 and 2015 for the unemployed is due to aging; however, we do not provide a more causal theory.

Table 11. Generational differences in “job security” (unemployed only)

	2005	2015
Generation Y	1.78	1.48
Generation X	1.38	X
* Longitudinal difference = age effect + period effect = 0.3 (t99 = 1.94, p = 0.056)		
Time-lag difference = period effect – cohort effect = -0.1 (t91=-0.77, p=0.45)		
* Cross-sectional difference = age effect + cohort effect = 0.4 (t100 = 2.83, p = 0.01)		

The age effect found in the analysis is present also in the segment of the unemployed respondents (C.I.95 for cross-sectional difference = 0.12-0.68, for the longitudinal difference at the confidence interval = -0.01 to 0.61). Since there is no difference in the perception of the importance of job security for employed respondents, it is necessary to interpret the effect of aging in the context of other factors. Aging generally leads to a slight increase in the importance of job security. The importance increases slightly when a person is unemployed, whereas in the case of employed individuals, the aging effect is not present – the human need for security is satisfied/saturated by his or her actual employment. This finding is also consistent with the findings of Payne and Jones (1987), who highlight the possible effect of long-term unemployment on work attitudes.

15 Research limits

As far as the research limits are concerned, the problem of the time range of individual generations certainly needs to be mentioned. Since most generational research comes from the US, this paper also works with definitions that were created by US authors. However, it is necessary to keep in mind that the social conditions that precipitated the formation of generations in the Czech context may be different. For example, in the 1980s when there was growing consumerism in the US, by contrast, the normalization process was taking place in Czechoslovakia. This and many other social, economic and political factors can have a major impact on how the individual generations are shaped and defined.

This research has focused on the separation of the effects of age, time and generation in determining the importance of individual aspects of work, while controlling for employment status. It should be noted, however, that this is not the final list of effects that generational research could involve. It is appropriate to take into account further possible explanations of intergenerational variation and to see whether the results found are different in the context of other variables, such as education, social class, and gender. In this respect, Benson and Brown (2011) work with seven control variables in their model, including job position, emotional state and work motivation of the respondent.

As to the method used, Palmore's 'triangle' design is also limiting, as its worthiness depends on the actual results (number of significant differences found).

16 Conclusion and discussion

This article focused on whether the importance of individual work values differs between Generations X and Y in the Czech Republic using the period waves of 2005 and 2015 of ISSP data. For this purpose, Palmore's model (1978) was used to separate the effects of generation, age and period. The results of the t-tests showed that there are no significant differences in the perception of work values between Generations X and Y that would be attributable to cohort effect in the Czech environment. There are significant but small longitudinal and cross-sectional differences in the perception of the importance of job security between generations, identified as a tiny age effect. There is also a significant but similarly small time-lag difference in the perception of the importance of the interest level of the work. However, due to the insignificance of the other two differences, it is not certain whether this is a period or generation effect.

If we limit the analysis to employed respondents only, the importance of interest in work between 2005 and 2015 increased slightly, with the effect of the period. Unemployed respondents between 2005 and 2015 experienced an increase in the importance of flexible hours due to their aging. However, there is no closer causal theory offered. The analysis of the unemployed also suggests the presence of a weak age effect in the case of the perception of the increased importance of job security while aging. Since this effect was not found among the employed, the overall results are in line with Payne and Jones (1987), who attribute the possible change in work values to long-term unemployment.

Generally, these findings correspond with the claims of some authors of non-Czech research, who, for various reasons, consider generational differences as trivial. For the needs of HR managers, this means that if there are some differences between Generations X and Y in terms of work values,

they are not stable differences caused by generational membership, but rather by the process of aging, or related to living in a different period.

To summarize, if there are some slight differences between present employees of the two generations, HR managers can use certain personnel tools to address them. For future times, however, the HR manager can expect that workers from Generation Y will be similar to the values of their forerunners from Generation X, and that the values of new future employees will be determined by their actual age rather than by generational membership.

This research has also shown the importance of the inclusion of other employment-related (sector, part-time/full-time) and demographic (education, number of children, etc.) micro-level variables that can show more differences in values than the generational membership variable, of course bearing in mind the increasing demand for sample size in research. In addition, related topics like quality of work life and work satisfaction would be worth addressing in future research, as well as how these differ by the sector of employment (e.g. non-governmental, public or private sector).

Finally, the methodological challenges of generational research need to be reflected, as they are mostly caused by different cultural and social factors. This is why the theme of research on generation differences deserves more attention, especially in the Czech context.

17 References

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