

WORK VALUES AS PREDICTORS OF BOUNDARYLESS CAREER ATTITUDES OF GENERATION Y TURKISH HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS

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Abstract

As of 2015, business world is hosting Baby Boomers (born between 1945-1964), Generation X (born between 1965-1980), and Generation Y (born between 1981-2000) as employees, and managers. The latest generation, Generation Y follows different work values and career commitment anchors, compared to previous generations. Now, the focus is on how to capture Generation Y at a workplace for more than several years. Gen Y is known for their job mobility. They are not much interested in long term goals and plans, but rather love to live the moment, in the most desired work place of their own. If their job expectations are not met, they do not hesitate to leave and look for another job. Although they give importance to status, they reject hierarchy. They like to be motivated, do their tasks in an enjoyable environment, and prefer to be the part of the decision-making process, rather than unquestioned compliance with the existing system. They are impatient, have unrealistic self-esteem values, and high egos. They do not consider being permanent in a workplace, and thus considered as "unreliable" by their managers. These factors, together with many more, are enough to alert the business environment, especially HR managers, to look for peculiar ways to make Generation Y commit to their workplace which has been needed for Generation X. Since Generation Y is assumed to dominate the business environment in a decade, it is becoming more and more important to understand the reasons for their uncommitment. Thus, this study is designed for Generation Y Turkish higher education students, who are the prospective work force in a couple of years, to understand their work values and how this affects their career attitudes, which will be, to our knowledge, the first in the literature. This study used self-reported online survey methodology. The survey consists of three parts. The first part is about the demographics of the participants. The second part consists of 23 items of Work Values Inventory, and the third part measures the boundaryless career attitudes of the students. In the light of being the first study about the influence of work values on the boundaryless career commitment of the Turkish higher education students, this study revealed some intriguing results. Generation Y Turkish higher education students interest in instrumental work values (pay, hours of work, security, benefits, and work conditions) have little to no influence on their physical and psychological mobility. On the other hand, cognitive (responsibility, advancement, achievement, influence, interest, feedback, meaningful work, use of abilities, independence, company, status, and contribution to society) and affective work values (relations with supervisor, coworkers, recognition, esteem, and opportunity to interact with people) have direct influence on their psychological mobility, but has no effect on their physical mobility. In a decade, Gen Y will dominate the business world. There is no doubt that work values of Generation Y, together with the new emerging career orientations should be understood well, in order to maintain an effective work environment.

Keywords: Generation Y, Turkish higher education students, work values, boundaryless career attitude