



Intergenerational Collaboration and Social Adaptation in the Digital Workplace Era

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Abstract

In this qualitative study, the author will explore the implications of changes in technology on social dynamics through an analysis of collaborative practices of the Millennial and Baby Boomer generation under the digital generation. In the environment of constant digitalization, modern organizations are starting to seek the services of multigenerational teams where members demonstrate different degrees of digital fluency, styles of communication, and values at work. Based on the results of extensive interviews with workers of various industries, this paper shows that technology is a mediator and a booster of intergenerational differences. The findings reveal that a majority of Millennials quickly learn how to use new and emerging digital technologies, although Baby Boomers tend to provide vital experiences of a lifetime and the foresight. However, existing collaboration is still affected by breaches of communication, a mismatch of expectations on the freedom of action, and power and competence issues in technological innovation. Four key dynamics are found in analysis, namely divergent perceptions of technological change, communication issues linked to digital fluency, adaptive learning strategies deployed both between and within generations, and negotiation of trust, respect, and role in teams. The above dynamics are not just behavioral ones, as they are engraved in generational identities based on historical context and organizational culture. The research finds that appropriate handling of intergenerational teams in the digital age needs to be approached as more than technical training, but rather through deliberate plans that promote trust in each other, inclusive learning experiences as well as the flexible redefinition of roles.

Introduction

The advent of digital age has significantly transformed the architecture of interhuman communication, manner in which individuals associate, interact and perform in either social, as well as organizational environments. The technological advancement has become an all-pervading force that defines generational relationships, role reversal and redistribution of roles within work places (Chen et al., 2021). The overlap between these patterns is the most obvious when it comes to the relationships between Millennials and Baby Boomers, two generations that are situated on the opposite sides of the spectrum of technological versatility. With organizations seeking to undergo digital change, the necessity to maintain collaborative efficacy and social unity across the generations also takes on its importance.

The Baby Boomers, who were born between 1946 and 1964, came into the workforce at a time when professional life was characterized by the use of an analog technology and the hierarchical basis of organizational cultures (Cohen, 2021). This generation normally attaches value on loyalty, face-to-face communication, and procedural-based methodologies (Charest,

2021). In comparison, Millennials, i.e., the people born between 1981 and 1996, grew up with the spread of the internet, personal computing, and mobile devices, and, thus, have a stronger tendency of preferring rapid, digital, and informal forms of interaction (Lissitsa & Kol, 2021). These differences cannot be reduced to personal preferences only, but are deeply rooted in the ways one builds their identity, approaches to solving problems, communicative style. As more and more Millennials become leaders and innovators and the Baby Boomers delay their retirement (Day, 2023), the analysis of the social interactions arising between the generations becomes not only timeliness but also complex.

Technology comprises an interpreting power that at the same time spurs or hampers intergenerational teamwork. Online communities, including Slack, Microsoft Teams and Zoom, provide opportunities to communicate in real time, run projects, and collaborate across functions (Simon, 2021). However, these platforms may also be an outlet of frustrations, misunderstandings, and disconnection in case of unequal digital literacy rates or so different assumptions of reaction time (Helsper, 2021). Empirical evidences demonstrate that the Baby Boomers demonstrate a sharper learning curve and more technological anxiety than Millennials, who tend to perceive digital tools as automatic extensions of their thought processes (Holman, 2021).

What is more important than the above factors is the social dynamics or the unobvious interrelation of power, trust, communication and cultural expectations the collaboration between these generations is based upon. Social dynamics in professional settings determine team work, conflict management, mentorship and the ability to innovate (Oyefusi, 2022). Such dynamics are even more pressured in the context of forced transitions to remote working and the introduction of technological change under the influence of COVID-19. In that case, the digital change will allow Millennials to get an informal leadership position to deliver assistance on technical issues and introduce efficiency-boosting workflows. On the other hand, Boomers can be resistant or make them feel alienated and take any such changes as a means to strip them of their authority which was based on experience (Chateau, 2022).

The digital age does not only reform the performance of activities but also the redefinition of building and upkeep of interpersonal relations. In organizations that are on the one hand adaptive, and on the other hand, inclusive generational differences can transform themselves into sources of complementarity rather than dispute. The Baby Boomer generation is an example of the benefit of historical framework and emotional intelligence, the Millennial generation to the agility, digital innovation, and collaborative core and networked approach (Martin & Roberts, 2021). This synergy, however, needs a conscious leadership and design, and, otherwise, following one, communication disjuncture's, stereotyping, and work behaviors that feature in silos can occur.

The results of numerous empirical studies prove that intergenerational conflict is hardly based on chronological age per se; instead, it is caused by different preferences as to the mode of communication and the use of technology (Costanza et al., 2023). As an example, Millennials often like to communicate quickly and in text form and have a flexible, decentralized decision-making structure, Baby Boomers, however, often like to have confirmation given verbally, decisions made hierarchically and communication conducted more formally. These contradictions lead to tensions that remain unspoken but influence the work of those involved not only in the performance of the task but also in emotional connections with each other, most often in the form of diminished cooperation, lack of involvement, or incongruence of expectations (Hou et al., 2023).

Also, a further layer of complication is created by negotiations of individual and collective identities in online environments. There is a slight chance that Baby Boomers would feel the

urgency to reassert relevance and competence to deal with digital acceleration and that Millennials often strain between expectations in the process of adapting their digital-native style into organizational customs. The power dynamics which ensue are hardly apparent and yet considerably determinant on who is in front, who is behind and who is transformed.

The research is located at the epicenter of generational diversity and technological change because it claims a qualitative attempt to explore the nature of collaboration existing between the Baby Boomers and the Millennials across digital workplace contexts. By means of in-depth case-study styles, the study sheds light on the subtle manner in which the technological change does not only impact efficiency but interpersonal relations, mutual respect, and inter-generational adjustive learning. Instead of treating such dynamics as simplistic stereotypes of generational relationships (as suggested, at any rate, by the tendency to speak of them in generational terms), the study puts into the foreground the fact that actual people are in the business of making sense, establishing trust, co-constructing the tools and strategies of successful collaboration in the context of hired workplace environments based on digitally mediated environments, and not the oversimplified generational type (Ramirez, 2022).

The knowledge of the given social mechanisms is essential to the way inclusive organizational strategies can be formed in order to support the processes of the digital transformation and the sustainability of the human connection. This research work will help to add to the general discussion about the future of work, cross-generational leadership, and the sociotechnical aspects of the workplace culture, researching the comparable part of lived experiences and collaborative nuances between generations (Pawlak et al., 2022).

Method

Research Design

The current research applies a qualitative case-study as a method of investigation and interpretation of social dynamics that arise out of intergenerational cooperation between Millennials and Baby Boomers in the context of work, occurring in the digital, mediated world. It was decided to use this design due to the proven ability to represent complex social processes and meanings in situ. Using the case-study approach will allow revision of a concrete organizational context in which the collaboration between generations and the digital reconfiguration can merge into a complex reality. Precisely, the qualitative nature of the study is based on constructivism a stance that is held in relation to epistemology as it anticipates that reality is co-constituted by socially constructed interactions and context. This kind of a framework will facilitate achieving the aim of the investigation, i.e., revealing subjective experiences, power negotiations, and adaptive strategies defining the collaborative aspect between the two generational cohorts.

Research Setting and Context

The research was undertaken in a medium size privately owned technology consultancy company that is located in Jakarta, Indonesia. The site was selected per its high level of commitment to the digital transformation programs, demographically diverse workforce with the representation of the four generations, and regular use of collaboration technologies (Slack, Trello, and Zoom) in the course of daily business. Due to the fact that it had not only the elder Baby Boomer consumers of labor services, but also younger Millennial workers, the company provided the best environment, in which the outcome of technological change on daily interactions in the office could be researched. In addition, the project-targeted nature of it allowed perform cross-functional collaboration, providing researchers with a de facto opportunity to monitor the interaction of the generational communication practices.

Participants and Sampling Strategy

The current study was based on the purposive sampling to ensure the inclusion of individuals whose answers would provide relevant, salient, and diverse opinions concerning the research question. A sample size of 14 participants, that it was thus identified as participants. The selection criteria included the involvement in digital collaborative effort at the moment, the willingness to have both in-depth interview and be sustained observed, and so-called time compatibility (there was a possibility to participate in the planned research). In order to provide the wide scope of opinions, a diverse sample of people was used in terms of working under different departments or even job position (managers, coordinators, IT specialists, and analysts) and academic ranks. Equality in gender was maintained in order to avoid dominance of single-sex attitudes. Anonymity was provided to each participant, and they gave an informed consent before data was recorded.

Data Collection Methods

A two-month period was given to the collection of data, and the three major qualitative methods used include semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and observation of documents. Triangulation was essential in terms of protecting credibility and developing a depth in understanding the researched phenomenon in abundance.

Semi-Structured Interviews

The participants were welcomed to take part in one semi-structured interview (60-90 minutes). Using a variable protocol, the interviews covered such important themes as views of technology, communication preferences, cooperation issues and adaptation strategies. There were also open-ended questions with the purpose to get detailed description of personal experience, emotional response and contextual apprehension. Informed consent was obtained and all the interviews were audio-taped and later transcribed verbatim to conduct the analysis.

Participant Observation

Besides interview-based evidence, the researcher hypothesized non-obtrusive observation of five meetings of intergenerational project activities. The use of field notes allowed recording real-time verbal and non-verbal interaction, communication cues, power dynamics, and technological engagement, thus providing an insight into collaboration on-site. In this way, such observations were more able to show subtle non-verbal behaviors as well as team dynamics which may not be evident without applying the structured interviews.

Document Analysis

Within the current research study, the records of internal communication, namely, the records of meetings, project reports, and Slack transcripts, were gathered and carefully analyzed in order to provide context to interview and observational data. These papers helped to understand the actual process of formal and informal interactions across generational divides and how digital collaborative technologies entered everyday working processes.

Data Analysis Procedure

In the current study, thematic analysis followed a 6-stages model proposed they are familiarization with data, generating a first-order codes, finding themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and writing a final report. The transcripts, field notes, and documents were uploaded to qualitative data analysis software NVivo 12 to help the organization of the data and create codes. The coding was performed inductively as well as directly: the emergent codes were generated through stories by the participants of the study

whereas some of them were based on the research focus of the study. Thereafter higher-level categorization of codes was enacted and competed with the existing literature on intergenerational cooperation and communication by use of digital discourse. To improve reliability, member checking was employed in which selected findings were shared with the participants to give a feedback and reaction to its validity. Also, to minimize researcher bias, peer debriefing was also used and audit trail was kept all round to ensure the research was transparent and traceable.

Result and Discussion

In the light of the present environment of a rapidly evolving digitalization process, the implementation of the emerging technologies is also reworking organizational operating models and transforming intra-workplace relationships. The existence of generational diversity, namely the intergenerational conflict between Millennials and Baby Boomers, has become one of the outstanding features of the present-day teams, creating a range of new challenges and opportunities in terms of communication, leadership, and knowledge sharing. Most of the previous research articles have often visualized the generational differences as a difference in digital skills or interest in workplace; the current research paper takes a broader approach and learns the social-cultural, emotional, and interpersonal aspect of collaboration. Based on systematically gathered qualitative interviews, the results illustrate that the ways in which technology is perceived, communicative behaviour, learning and role assignment differ systematically across age cohorts which either promotes or inhibits effective cooperation. With the context being provided by the lived experiences of the participants, the findings provide a sophisticated and practical understanding of how intergenerational change in the age of digital transformation is negotiated and achieved in practice, in the real-life organizational context.

Perception of Technological Change

The perception of technological change revealed significant generational contrasts, reflecting not only differences in digital fluency but also broader attitudes toward adaptation, relevance, and identity in the workplace. Both Baby Boomers and Millennials acknowledged the inevitability of technological advancement, yet their emotional responses and cognitive orientations toward these changes diverged markedly.

Among Baby Boomer participants, technological change was often perceived as both a challenge and a disruption. Several respondents expressed a sense of overwhelm due to the increasing speed and complexity of digital tools. One senior project manager, aged 62, remarked:

"I feel like every time I get comfortable with one system, a new one comes in. It's exhausting to always catch up."

This sentiment was echoed by others who emphasized the need for constant learning without sufficient organizational support. Another participant explained:

"In my time, we had structure. Now everything is fast-paced, paperless, and moving through apps I don't even know the names of."

These accounts reflect a feeling of technological displacement, in which Boomers feel their experience is being gradually devalued in favor of younger, tech-savvy employees.

Despite these challenges, some Baby Boomers displayed a measured willingness to adapt. They viewed technology not as inherently negative but as something that required intentional support. As one respondent shared:

"I'm not against learning. I just need more time and patience from the younger team members. I've adapted before, and I can do it again."

This statement illustrates a nuanced position where resistance to change is not purely generational, but often tied to the pace of change and the absence of mentoring or onboarding practices tailored to older professionals.

In contrast, Millennials generally perceived technological change as a natural and necessary progression in both life and work. Many interviewees described new platforms, apps, and tools as intuitive or even exciting. A 29-year-old UX designer noted:

"I grew up with this stuff. It's not really 'change' for me it's evolution. I expect things to keep getting better, faster, and easier."

For this generation, technology is not merely a tool but an extension of their identity and competence. A common theme in their responses was the view that embracing technology equates to professional relevance. As one respondent put it:

"If you're not evolving with tech, you're being left behind. And in this field, that's a risk."

However, while Millennials generally viewed technology positively, they also expressed frustration with organizational barriers that slowed down digital adoption. Several lamented outdated infrastructures, resistance from senior staff, or lack of decision-making autonomy. One participant expressed:

"Sometimes I feel like we're being held back. The tools are there, but management still wants everything emailed or signed in person."

This reveals a tension where younger employees see technology not just as efficient, but as central to productivity and innovation, while encountering structural resistance.

An interesting dynamic observed during the interviews was the perceived generational gap in technological trust. Boomers tended to associate digital tools with risk and uncertainty especially regarding data privacy or system failure. One participant voiced this concern clearly:

"If everything is digital and it goes down, then what? I trust paper it doesn't crash."

Millennials, on the other hand, expressed more trust in automation and cloud-based systems, often believing that digital systems provide greater efficiency and fewer human errors.

Despite these contrasts, both groups showed recognition of each other's struggles. Millennials acknowledged that rapid tech changes can be "alienating," while Boomers admired the agility and quick learning shown by their younger peers. One Millennial participant stated:

"I see how hard it is for my supervisor to keep up. I try to support, but sometimes the gap just feels wide."

This comment illustrates a growing awareness that technological change is not only technical but deeply social as it affects roles, respect, and the ability to contribute meaningfully.

Communication Gaps and Digital Fluency

The study revealed that communication gaps between Millennials and Baby Boomers are rooted not only in technological literacy but also in contrasting preferences for communication style, medium, and response expectations. These gaps frequently emerge in digital workplace environments, where collaboration is increasingly mediated through tools such as instant messaging, video conferencing, and shared project platforms. While both generations

recognize the value of these tools, their divergent levels of fluency and comfort in using them often lead to miscommunication, frustration, and delayed coordination.

Baby Boomer participants expressed a general preference for traditional, direct, and often face-to-face forms of communication, which they considered more personal, reliable, and conducive to building trust. A 59-year-old finance coordinator shared:

"When I need something done or want to clarify something, I prefer to just talk to the person. Sending too many messages back and forth can cause confusion."

Another Baby Boomer explained:

"Sometimes I miss important updates because they're buried in group chats or task boards. I just want a clear, simple email."

These remarks reflect a strong inclination toward clarity and formality features that are often absent in fast-paced, decentralized digital communications.

In contrast, Millennial respondents displayed a high degree of digital fluency and embraced informal, quick, and multi-modal communication tools. Many felt that synchronous communication like email was too slow for modern collaborative work. A 32-year-old marketing associate remarked:

"Slack is faster. You just send a message and keep going no need for long introductions or formalities."

Another Millennial commented:

"I rarely check email unless it's something official. Everything happens in real-time on chat or in the cloud folders."

These perspectives indicate a comfort with digital multitasking, informal tone, and decentralized decision-making.

However, the differences in expectations regarding response time and tone often led to unintended friction. Several Millennials noted that Baby Boomers were either slow to respond or did not engage with digital platforms consistently. As one participant expressed:

"We'd wait hours or even a day for feedback on Slack, then find out later they never even saw the message. It slows everything down."

Meanwhile, some Boomers felt that younger employees were too informal or abrupt, interpreting their communication as dismissive or lacking respect. A senior team leader said: *"Sometimes their tone on chat feels a bit too casual. It's not that I'm offended, but there's a certain professional tone that seems missing."*

One significant communication gap revolved around digital tool proficiency. Millennials generally moved fluidly between platforms project boards, shared drives, video calls while Boomers often needed more time or assistance navigating these tools. A 28-year-old IT analyst explained:

"I end up doing short tutorials during meetings to help my manager use the new task board. It's not their fault it just takes repetition."

Yet, this informal teaching dynamic sometimes created power asymmetries, where Boomers felt they were losing authority or relevance. One senior Boomer commented candidly:

"It's awkward when the younger team has to keep explaining things. I feel like I'm the one slowing them down."

Despite these tensions, the interviews also revealed efforts from both sides to bridge the communication divide. Millennials recognized the value of adjusting their style when working with older colleagues. A participant shared:

"With older teammates, I try to use email more and explain the steps clearly. I know Slack isn't always their thing."

Similarly, Boomers who were more tech-inclined took the initiative to upskill and integrate themselves into digital workflows. One remarked:

"I've started setting reminders to check Slack twice a day and learned how to tag people. It helps me stay in the loop."

Interestingly, participants from both groups agreed that hybrid communication strategies combining digital speed with occasional personal interactions were the most effective. For example, short weekly video check-ins were mentioned as helpful by several participants in reinforcing trust and clarifying digital tasks. A Millennial noted:

"Sometimes we just need five minutes on Zoom to clear up a whole thread of messages."

This balance of technological efficiency and human connection appears to be a key strategy in managing intergenerational collaboration.

Adaptive Strategies and Learning

Amid the generational gaps in digital fluency and communication styles, the study found encouraging patterns of adaptive strategies and reciprocal learning that served to bridge the divide between Millennials and Baby Boomers. Both generations, when placed in collaborative settings, engaged in conscious adjustments modifying their behaviors, learning new tools, and negotiating shared norms to maintain productivity and relational harmony. These strategies reflect a dynamic process of mutual accommodation rather than unilateral change.

For Baby Boomers, adapting to the digital environment required a significant shift in mindset and routine. Many participants described how they had to reframe their relationship with technology from one of passive resistance to active engagement. A 61-year-old operations manager shared:

"I used to dread new platforms, but now I make it a point to at least learn the basics. I've realized that staying updated is part of staying relevant."

Others mentioned that they had developed personal learning routines such as watching tutorials, asking questions more openly, or scheduling time to explore new tools without pressure. As one Boomer participant put it:

"I now treat learning tech like a weekly goal. I might not be fast, but I'm consistent."

On the other hand, Millennials adopted adaptive strategies that were more relational and empathetic, particularly in dealing with the learning curves experienced by their older colleagues. Several participants described a shift from impatience to mentorship, recognizing that collaboration would suffer if they did not slow down to support others. A 30-year-old digital strategist explained:

"At first, I'd get frustrated when someone didn't know how to use the software. But over time, I realized I could either complain or help. So now I offer to show them step-by-step, and they usually appreciate it."

This informal mentorship, often termed "reverse mentoring," emerged organically and was cited repeatedly as a valuable practice by both generations.

Interestingly, these acts of mutual support often evolved into reciprocal learning exchanges. While Millennials provided technical guidance, Baby Boomers offered strategic and interpersonal insights grounded in experience. A 58-year-old senior consultant reflected:

"The younger team members help me with the tools, and I help them with client communication and negotiation. We both have things to teach."

This sentiment was echoed by a 27-year-old participant who said:

"I didn't realize how much I could learn from my older teammates how they handle conflict, how they pace work, how they stay calm under pressure. It's not something you get from an app."

Another adaptive strategy involved the co-creation of shared work rhythms, especially in teams with recurring collaboration across projects. Participants reported that when communication styles clashed, they often developed custom norms to manage tasks more effectively. For instance, teams would agree on which platforms to use for different tasks (e.g., Slack for quick updates, email for formal requests), how often to check-in, and how to organize shared files in ways that accommodated all users. A participant explained:

"We created a simple rule: anything important has to be emailed and also posted in Slack. That way, no one misses it."

Such negotiated practices proved instrumental in reducing misunderstandings and building trust.

Adaptation also extended beyond tools to attitudes. Several Boomers spoke about cultivating humility and curiosity, acknowledging that learning from younger colleagues did not diminish their authority. One participant stated:

"There was a time I would feel embarrassed asking for help. Now, I see it as a strength. I'm not afraid to say, 'Can you show me that again?'"

Likewise, Millennials described efforts to temper their speed and multitasking habits to avoid overwhelming their older teammates. A 29-year-old developer reflected:

"I've learned to slow down and explain the 'why' behind tech changes, not just the 'how.' It helps them feel part of the process."

Organizational culture also played a role in enabling or inhibiting adaptive behavior. Teams with psychological safety and open communication were more likely to report successful learning across generations. In such settings, making mistakes while learning new technologies was normalized, and intergenerational differences were framed as assets rather than liabilities.

Trust, Respect, and Role Negotiation

The process of collaboration between Millennials and Baby Boomers in digitally mediated workspaces is not merely a technical or procedural interaction it is profoundly shaped by underlying issues of trust, mutual respect, and the negotiation of roles. As teams navigate the tensions brought about by generational differences in communication, digital fluency, and authority, their ability to build sustainable collaboration hinges on how these core interpersonal dynamics are handled. The findings indicate that when trust and respect are actively fostered, both generations can co-exist and co-lead effectively. However, where these elements are lacking, misunderstandings, role ambiguity, and subtle power struggles tend to emerge.

Among Baby Boomer participants, the issue of trust was often linked to how their experience and institutional knowledge were acknowledged within the team. While most Boomers expressed a willingness to adapt, they also emphasized the need to feel recognized and valued,

especially in a workplace culture increasingly dominated by digital competence. A 60-year-old senior advisor remarked:

"I know I'm not as fast with the technology, but I've seen how projects fail when strategy is rushed. What I want is for that experience to still count."

This comment reflects a subtle but significant concern about being sidelined or rendered obsolete by younger, more tech-savvy colleagues.

From the perspective of Millennials, trust was often framed in terms of autonomy and being taken seriously despite their age. Several participants described experiences where their ideas or proposals were met with skepticism by older colleagues, particularly when those ideas involved digital innovation or non-traditional work methods. A 31-year-old product designer shared:

"Sometimes it feels like you have to overprove yourself just to get your suggestions heard. It's like being young means you're automatically less credible."

This recurring theme points to a generational tension in how authority and competence are perceived, especially in decision-making spaces.

Despite these differences, both generations indicated that respect was earned and deepened through direct collaboration. As Boomers witnessed the initiative and technical skill of younger colleagues, and as Millennials recognized the strategic and relational depth of their older teammates, the foundations for trust began to form. One Millennial participant reflected:

"After working closely with my older colleague on a tough project, I really saw how much he brings to the table he notices risks I miss."

Similarly, a Baby Boomer noted:

"The young ones really impressed me during the crisis response. They moved fast and knew how to pull all the resources together online. I respect that hustle."

Another key finding was the active negotiation of roles within the teams. Rather than static hierarchies, roles were often fluid shifting based on context, task, and expertise. In many successful teams, participants reported a shared leadership model, where Millennials led on digital execution while Boomers guided strategic framing or external communication. A 28-year-old team lead explained:

"I might run the dashboards and tools, but I still look to my Boomer mentor when it comes to managing client expectations or board presentations."

This balance not only preserved the strengths of both generations but also facilitated a sense of complementarity, rather than competition.

However, in some cases, role negotiation was hindered by rigid mindsets or unspoken assumptions. Some Boomers struggled to cede control to younger colleagues, while some Millennials found it difficult to assert themselves without being perceived as disrespectful. A young systems analyst shared:

"There are times I hold back because I don't want to seem like I'm correcting someone older. Even if I know the tool better, it's sensitive."

This illustrates the need for explicit norms and open conversations around roles and authority to avoid power imbalances or silence.

Importantly, the findings showed that trust and respect were not automatic but developed over time through consistent, transparent interaction. Teams that regularly engaged in feedback sessions, joint planning, and informal check-ins reported a stronger sense of mutual respect.

Toward Relational and Adaptive Leadership in Multigenerational Digital Workplaces

The study is placed in the precarious intersection between technological change and organizational action, and responds to the remodeling of the multigenerational workforce at the digital workplace. It contributes to management knowledge base by posing questions to the ever-changing social forces that emerge as Millennials and the Baby Boomers engage in adaptive, relational, and strategic negotiations to meet the demands of associated rapid technological disruptive development. The results raise up the tensions and generative possibilities and managerial paradigms, the model of talent development and the engagement of the leadership design in the multigenerational organizations are quite remarkable.

First, the paper reveals a revolution in the building of trust within a team environment in the digital-mediated space. According to Pawlak et al. (2022), the traditional management theory has always considered that trust is a linear product of time, familiarity, or hierarchical power. In comparison, asynchronous communication, algorithmic instruments, and fast feedback on the processes of collaboration characterize hybrid or digital-first settings, in which trust should be co-constructed by engaging earnestly in the practice of dialogs. According to our results, we have found that both generations perceive trust less as reliability in the first and more as epistemic recognition: Boomers are concerning an order of verification of their legacy experience, whereas Millennials are concerning order of legitimacy of the digital fluent exercise. The redefinition finds an echo in the most recent work by Turton (2021). The authors assert that redefining modern trust-buildings as no longer simple behavioral constructs launched full-blown cognitive and symbolical relationships.

The second one of the key implications focuses on emergent structure of shared meaning and collective cognition. Existing premises are likely to assume commensuration of the meanings to come up through protracted interaction (Apostol et al., 2023). However, the new collaborative role of cognition is needed in the hybrid digital-first environments where the proliferation of work-related User Generated Content, asynchronous co-creation, and multiples of professional communities thrive. Our data proves that the two generations are involved in an active negotiation of several, concurrent layers of meaning, the Boomers relying on their professional legacy, and the Millennials on their digital aptitude to create a superposition of common repertoire to their collaborative understanding. The given direction can also be traced in Coetzee et al. (2023), who notice that meaning in digital workplaces is contingent, constructed, and layered.

Overall, what the current study brings to the fore is the evolving sociotechnical environment where intergenerational collaboration takes place. In as much as its results demonstrate the continuity of tensions, it also portrays new possibilities. All together, they indicate the necessity to redesign managerial paradigm, talent development models and leadership design in multigenerational organizations urgently.

Past management literature has customarily categorized digital fluency as an ability that is universally general, but the current research shows that digital fluency is inextricably linked with generation positions and political statuses. This is made explicit in the existing research literature where digital skill deficit is positioned as technical weakness that can be addressed through training (Morgan et al., 2022). The latter framing, however, does not take into consideration the socio-emotional resistance, status anxiety, and identity renegotiation, which technical change, in many cases, evokes especially amongst older workers. By evidencing that

Boomers do not feel digital disruption as a simple coming of age but in terms of existential marginalization, the current results fit those of critical approaches urging the adoption of technology implementation models based on dialogue and co-creation as opposed to technocrats.

On the other hand, to romanticize Millennial fluency with digital to be an intrinsic prequalification to managerial suitability, is equally outlandish. Such researchers as Leonelli (2023) have warned against the reification and overgeneralization of technological skills in the younger generation without proper scaffolding leadership. The given research bears out a similar observation, demonstrating that Millennials, in spite of the greater operational skills rate, often lack any sense of strategy and struggle to stand their ground in a high-stakes setting. This trend goes in line with studies by Bungau et al. (2022), suggesting that generational gains are situational and could not be converted into sustained performance unless the system has comprehensive mentoring systems. Based on this, management structures should do away with stereotyping generations and favor situational ability-building which balances leadership throughout generations.

The current research challenges the singularity of the unitary view of organizational roles that the traditional management realms have always rested their hierarchical structure on, using the clarity and tenure of the role as the main hierarchical basis. The real estate practice refers to the experiences of the respondents, i.e., workspaces are becoming more dynamic involving role negotiation where the authority based on seniority or formal job titles may not be the sole determinant in the digital workplace but rather situational competency, team spirit, and flexibility. The finding can be harmonized with the emergent organization research on role fluidity (Cross & Swart, 2021), where roles and identities in knowledge work are theorized to be socially constructed and a product of recursive actions as opposed to being assigned. In line with this, managers are also required to develop more flexible organizational forms that would allow intergeneration teams to alternate leadership based on digital, strategic or interpersonal requirements imposed by discrete jobs.

It is also worthy to note how the findings challenge the unrealistic frames used in the study of diversity management literature. Although the successful implementation of the intergenerational collaboration can often be promoted with references to diversity and maximization of a human capital (Moreno et al., 2022), a variety of micro-conflicts, guarding control flow processes, and psychological losses attendant on everyday cooperation remain hidden behind the resplendent proclamations of the benefits of the collaborative work. It is seen in that the self-censorship of Millennial respondents against depictions of disrespect and the overweight of the unwillingness to contribute to the fast-paced technological spaces by the Boomers respondents. These trends reflect those of Ferrante et al. (2022) in terms of status-based threats of identity, as well as those of Manunta et al. (2022) regarding the conflict when related to diversity within the largely deployment of the inclusion regime. The verdict leaves no doubts: inclusion without psychological safety is negligence on the part of the management presented as a step forward.

The need to restructure learning and development (L&D) strategies can present the necessary imperative to urgent managerial intervention. The orthodox L&D structures usually follow a curricular, top-down upskilling agenda which does not play the role of a non-technical competence due to the disproportionate alignment with the currently-current technological paradigm - the time when it was originally developed to cater to Millennial learners. Contrastingly, the research can be characterized by the promotion of bilateral learning processes, which allow the two generations to learn soft-skill skills, cultural sensitivities, strategic rules simultaneously. Peer-learning networks are even more powerful but currently

underutilized as forms of encouraging cross-generational knowledge transfer. These structures both improve speech translation and re-establish both dignity and recognition to distinctive rifts and efforts possessed by the two groups.

What is even more vital is that management systems should be able to deal effectively with emotional labor, as well as with the maintenance of relationships in the context of digital transformation. The mainstream management language continues to associate productivity with the main consequence of digital transformation thus pushing to the periphery all forms of emotional and symbolic work that keeps the intergenerational collaboration alive. Efficient organizational life, in turn, is conditioned upon the daily process of the control, balancing of affective experience (Rothbard et al., 2021; De Vaujany et al., 2021). As demonstrated in the current research, Millennials are the generation that is mostly burdened with the emotional "burdens" of being polite and validated and Boomers are characteristically under the representational burden of being resilient and not tired. The next managerial practice should objectify the relational metrics, such as empathy within the team, fairness of communications, satisfaction with roles, among other divisions alongside the common technical ones.

The results of this investigation show that the modern design of organizational leadership requires to be greatly updated. Unidirectional leadership model is becoming dysfunctional in the digital workplace and it should be replaced with networked leadership ecologies where leaders are contextually emergent and laterally ascendant, and the age, position and role become irrelevant (Bresciani, et al., 2021; Wegelius, 2021). Based on that, the leadership-development programmed should be de-coupled with seniority and restructured as a co-creation, interdependence and system awareness processes. According to the study, collaboration is successful not in hierarchical institutions but in environments where there is trust, reciprocity and epistemic humility. The management must, thus, transform itself--not through artificial coherence but through adaptive complexity (Zhou & Dai, 2023; Costumato 2021).

Conclusion

This study shows that intergenerational cooperation in the digital age should be viewed as a multidimensional task of management that is located in changing social environments but not as a purely technical problem connected to the age factor and/or technological availability. The article demonstrates that, despite the fact that Millennials, as a rule, are the most digitally fluent generation, and Baby Boomers tend to contribute to the team with significant experience and institutional knowledge, both the effectiveness of interactions and the overall success of collaboration depend more on the level of development of trustful relations, a healthy attitude towards others, and the successful negotiation of roles within teams. As such, the study is opposed to existing managerial knowledge frameworks that perceive technological change as unproblematic and technical but rather show the digital transformation to be a highly social and cultural activity that alters the relationship of power, legitimacy, and identity within the working environment. There are practical implications such as the advice on how to build the inclusive organization that uses the generational diversity as a resource, as well as the need to make efforts to encourage cross-generational learning without entrenching generational hierarchy and isolating talented individuals. The results also promote the management paradigm shift, the stagnant theories of leadership and management hierarchy to dynamic interaction models that are dialogical and not so rigid to fit the workplace relationships. In order to manage the intricacy of digital transformation, managers have been encouraged to embrace strategies that will instill intergenerational trust, co-learning and role sharing that is flexible.

Focusing on social negotiation as opposed to the linear heuristics about age, the study adds to management scholarship about workforce diversity and digital adaptation and offers a progressive model of developing resilient creative organizations in the era of sweeping change.

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