Intergenerational Differences and their Impact on Quality of Work Life: Insights from Management Faculty in Higher Education

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Abstract— *Purpose*: The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of generational variations on quality of work life (QWL) views among management professors in Central India. The combination of three distinct generational cohorts—Generation X (1965-1980), Millennials (1981-1996), and Generation Z (1997-2010)—in academic institutions demands a comprehensive understanding of their diverse work values and quality of work life expectations for effective human resource management in higher education. ***Design/Methodology/Approach:*** 41 faculty members from AICTE-approved management schools in Nagpur District were selected at random using a structured questionnaire as part of a quantitative study design. Work-life integration, professional growth, work environment, compensation equity, institutional support, teaching autonomy, and emotional engagement are the seven primary determinants that the study used to operationalize QWL. Secondary sources, such as government papers, policy documents, and scholarly journals, were used to augment primary data collecting. One-way ANOVA was used in the statistical analysis to check for significant differences between the three generational cohorts in four important work-life balance variables. ***Findings***: The study demonstrated no statistically significant variations in QWL perceptions between the three generations, which is contrary to popular Western generational theories (all p-values > 0.05). Although Millennials showed the best resilience to emotional tiredness (3.47/5.0) and Generation Z reported the highest mean score for personal work-life balance (3.83/5.0), these differences were not statistically significant. Generational preconceived notions may be surpassed by institutional and individual factors, as seen by the high intra-generational variance, especially among Generation Z. Every cohort had similar challenges with work interference and mental exhaustion, and they all expressed a moderate level of satisfaction with institutional support (means: 3.3-3.5/5.0). ***Practical Implications***: According to the findings, QWL experiences may be normalized by institutional culture, regional dynamics, and standardized HR practices, expressing concern on the direct applicability of Western generational frameworks to Indian academic contexts. Instead of concentrating on generation-specific interventions, academic administrators should concentrate on general QWL improvement measures. Addressing mental weariness, decreasing work encroachment, and improving institutional support systems are important areas that need attention—problems that cut across generational lines. Instead of depending just on generational presumptions, the study promotes context-sensitive HR methods that take into account the requirements of individual faculty members as well as institutional circumstances. ***Originality/Value***: This study bridges a significant knowledge gap by conducting the first empirical investigation into generational disparities in QWL perceptions among management faculty in an emerging Indian educational hub. By showing that cultural, institutional, and geographical characteristics may have a greater impact on work experiences than generational identity, the study enriches theoretical knowledge as well as useful HR methods in Indian higher education. For academic policymakers and HR professionals establishing inclusive and fair institutional environments in the Indian context, the findings have significant ramifications.

Keywords: Work-Life Balance, Higher Education, Central India, Management Faculty, Generational Differences, Quality of Work Life.

INTRODUCTION

Today's higher education background represents a unique sociological phenomenon: for the first time in history, academic institutions are home to three different generational cohorts: Generation Z, Millennials (Generation Y), and Generation X. Because different

age groups bring a range of work ideals, technology skills, and career expectations to their professional surroundings, management faculties are a prime example of this multigenerational tapestry. In negotiating this generational variety, the idea of Quality of Work Life (QWL), which is defined as the favorable work circumstances and surroundings that foster employee satisfaction and organizational effectiveness, becomes crucial. In the face of growing competition and evolving workplace standards, management institutes in Central India, a rapidly developing educational hub, struggle to recruit and retain competent faculty.

Important insights into these dynamics can be gained from the generational outlook. According to recent studies, generational cohorts form unique employment preferences influenced by common socio-historical experiences during their formative years. According to research by (Syed, Singh, Paul, & Haider) there are notable differences in the factors that influence engagement between generations. For example, Millennials show greater organizational commitment than younger generations, and Generation Z exhibits higher cognitive engagement in gamified learning environments than Generation X (Glazer, Mahoney, & Randall, 2019). These variations have a direct effect on how QWL dimensions—from professional growth and work-life balance to autonomy and recognition—are perceived.

Academic executives who want to create institution-specific HR interventions that transcend generational expectations must have a thorough understanding of these complex viewpoints. By investigating how generational positioning affects QWL views, particularly among management faculties in Central India, this work fills a clear research vacuum and advances theoretical understanding as well as useful HR tactics in Indian higher education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptualizing Quality of Work Life (QWL) in Academia:

A multifaceted concept, quality of work life encompasses organizational structures and procedures that support workers' well-being, dignity, and career advancement. In the context of higher education, QWL goes beyond simple job satisfaction to incorporate markers of holistic well-being that together impact faculty members' work experiences. Seven fundamental features stand out as being especially pertinent to academic contexts based on empirical research conducted across professional domains:

Dimension	Components	Academic Context Manifestations
Work-Life Integration	Flexible scheduling, workload balance	Autonomy in teaching schedules, manageable marking periods
Professional Growth	Career advancement, skill development	Conference support, research grants, sabbatical opportunities
Work Environment	Physical resources, collegial relationships	Modern teaching technology, collaborative department culture
Compensation Equity	Salary adequacy, benefits, recognition	Competitive pay scales, performance-based incentives
Institutional Support	Administrative fairness, resource allocation	Transparent promotion policies, research infrastructure
Teaching Autonomy	Curricular control, pedagogical independence	Freedom in instructional design, course development
Emotional Engagement	Meaningful work, positive identification	Student mentorship impact, institutional pride

Table 1: Key Dimensions of QWL in Higher Education

Management faculties face particular QWL considerations because they are responsible for both theoretical instruction and industry-relevant skill development. They are exposed to industry standards due to their proximity to corporate ecosystems, which elevates expectations for modern teaching strategies and technological integration elements that dynamically interact with generational positioning.

Generational Cohort Theory and Work Values:

According to the generational cohort theory, people who are influenced by common sociocultural experiences during youth form unique value systems that they carry into their professional lives. Four cohorts are commonly used in contemporary labor analyses: Millennials (1981–1996), Generation Z (1997–2012), Baby Boomers (born 1946–1964), and Generation X (1965–1980). Multinational research have shown statistically significant differences in work values and engagement drivers between these groups. Importantly, rather than being inherent traits, these variations are a result of adaptation to various technical and economic environments.

According to research (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008)), intrinsic values (autonomy, meaning) exhibit cohort-specific variances, whereas extrinsic rewards (pay, job security) retain their significance over generations. As they enter adulthood, Generation X demonstrates greater preferences for flexible scheduling and work-life balance, ideals developed during

economic downturns and the rise of dual-career households. On the other hand, because of their experiences in unstable employment markets, Millennials and Generation Z place a higher value on quick career advancement and skill diversification. Interestingly, Generation Z's digital nativity raises expectations for smooth technological integration in educational settings, which is consistent with research showing that gamified learning environments improve cognitive engagement.

Cohort	Defining Events	Core Work Values	Academic Engagement Drivers
Baby Boomers	Post-war prosperity, institutional trust	Job security, hierarchical respect	Institutional loyalty, legacy building
Generation X	Economic uncertainty, dual-career homes	Autonomy, work-life boundaries	Flexible scheduling, clear expectations
Millennials	Digital revolution, globalization	Mentorship, purpose-driven work	Collaborative research, leadership pathways
Gen Z	Hyper-connectivity, pandemic disruption	Digital fluency, immediate feedback	Tech-enabled teaching, entrepreneurial opportunities

Table 2: Generational Characteristics Relevant to Academic QWL

Studies reveal notable variations in QWL characteristics among generations, with Millennials displaying unique inclinations in contrast to Gen X and Baby Boomers Boomers (Martinez-Buelvas & Jaramillo-Naranjo, 2019).

Nonetheless, a study conducted on university faculty members revealed no discernible variations in QWL amongst lecturers, associate professors, and professors (Lamichhane & Baburam, 2021).

The survey found that age-related stereotypes were still prevalent, especially when it came to work ethic, flexibility, and technology use. Notwithstanding these preconceptions, the results highlighted the necessity of intergenerational communication and a cooperative work environment to reduce conflict and enhance organizational unity in educational environments. (Hayes, Parks, McNeilly, & Johnson, 2018)

(Banerjee & Verma, 2022) examine how teachers' work-life balance has changed as a result of digitalization and changing teaching responsibilities. In order to manage stress and preserve wellbeing in the teaching profession, the study emphasizes the need for social and policy assistance, as well as the rising workload and blurring work-home boundaries.

Generational Differences in Work Preferences and Engagement:
Work Preferences and Engagement Variations by Generation: Research continuously shows that there are differences across generations in a number of work-related areas. Research examining course feedback responses in educational contexts found "marked differences in student grit, cognitive engagement, and emotional engagement between Generations X and Z," indicating that faculty cohorts probably differ from one another. These variations show up in a number of QWL domains:

- Work Arrangement Preferences: (Ojha, June-July 2024) Different generational preferences for flexible work arrangements (FWAs) are highlighted in this study. According to data from various cohorts, the study concludes that Generation X has the highest demand for schedule autonomy, which is consistent with their emphasis on work-life balance and caregiving duties. This could lead to management faculties favoring shortened work weeks or hybrid teaching models. On the other hand, Baby Boomers and Traditionalists favor compacted or regulated workweeks, while Millennials and Gen-Z want remote and hybrid models that emphasize autonomy and purpose.

- Engagement and Retention: There is a generational pattern in employee engagement levels, with younger generations showing larger intentions to leave when QWL assessments are negative and Baby Boomers displaying higher organizational commitment. For management schools where junior Gen Z teachers may make up the future leadership pipeline, this trend poses retention issues. According to research, there are generational differences in "student entrepreneurial intention" among cohorts, which may indicate that faculty members' motivation to innovate varies similarly.

- Technology Integration: Compared to prior cohorts, Generation Z's cognitive engagement reacts more favorably to environments enhanced by technology. This suggests that there may be generational conflict in management faculties over the use of AI-assisted pedagogy, virtual classrooms, and simulation tools—all of which are becoming more and more important in today's business education.

QWL in Higher Education: A Generational perspective:
Institutions of higher learning around the world are dealing with a generational complexity never seen before. International research cooperation, a crucial QWL element for academics, decreases with age, according to studies (Rorstad, Aksnes, & Piro, 2021). This drop is a result of both shifting receptivity to global involvement and network development patterns. Expectations for research production across faculty cohorts are directly impacted by this.

Additionally, the behavioral, cognitive, and emotional engagement dimensions found in gamified entrepreneurship courses (Syed, Singh, Paul, & Haider) show cohort-specific activation patterns, indicating that professional development programs need to be tailored to the needs of different generations in order to maximize their effectiveness.

These dynamics are emphasized in management education because of its applied character and industry contact. While addressing industry-academia remuneration discrepancies, faculty must strike a balance between theoretical care and practical relevance—a tension that varies depending on the generation. While junior colleagues frequently look for industry partnerships and skill-transfer possibilities that match with their career progression needs, senior faculty may place a higher priority on institutional prestige and intellectual legacy.

Central Indian Context:
More than 1.5 million faculty members from various generations work in India's higher education system, however there are still few empirical studies looking at how different generations perceive QWL. Despite the fact that work value statements are substantially mediated by culture variations, Western studies predominate in the literature. Economic liberalization (1991), the IT revolution, and the recent (Ministry of Education, 2020) implementation of the National Education Policy (2020) are some of India's unique generational markers that produce unique cohort experiences that are not adequately represented in current frameworks.

This study demonstrates the changing academic environment in Central India, including housing management schools connected to Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur University. According to preliminary data, workload increases, pressures to balance research and pedagogy, and compensation differences between industry and academia are some of the QWL issues that regional management faculties face. Nevertheless, no comprehensive study looks at the ways in which these difficulties intersect with generational positioning.

RESEARCH GAPS AND CONCEPTUAL INTEGRATION:
Three significant knowledge gaps are identified by the reviewed literature: (1) higher education faculty members' lack of attention to the generational dimensions of QWL, especially in management education; (2) the geographical imbalance favoring Western contexts despite culturally specific expressions of work values; and (3) the lack of empirical studies examining these dynamics in emerging Indian educational hubs in the central region. These dimensions are incorporated into the current study using the conceptual framework shown below:
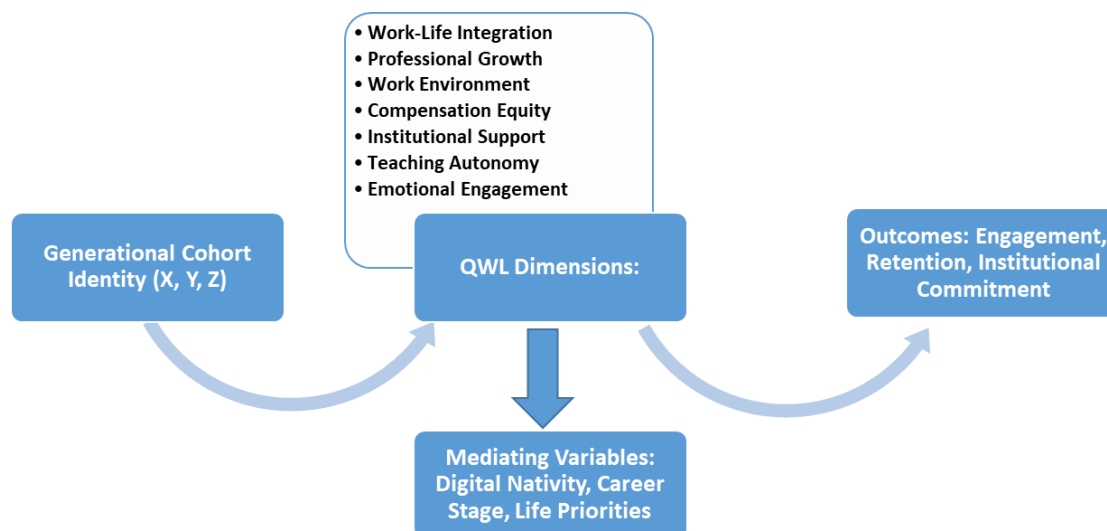

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework: Quality Work Life

According to this paradigm, QWL perceptions are systematically influenced by generational identity through cohort-specific value systems, which in turn affect institutional results. The study fills important theoretical and practical gaps and advances sustainable human resource strategies in India's vibrant higher education sector by testing this approach across Central India's management faculties.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:
Objectives:
- To examine generational differences in job satisfaction among employees.
- To assess the importance attributed to compensation across different generational cohorts.
- To analyze the relationship between employee retention and generational affiliation.
- To identify the key features that define Quality of Work Life (QWL).
- To explore whether perceptions of QWL vary based on gender.

Hypothesis:

H0: There is no difference between the perceptions of different generations towards work life balance.

RESEARCH METHOD:

To examine how different generations, see work-life balance and QWL dimensions, the study used a descriptive research methodology. Nevertheless, it had a number of limitations, such as the possibility of bias and prejudice in respondent inputs and the inclusion of merely self-reported data. The study's generalizability was limited by its geographic confinement to Central Indian management institutes. The study's breadth was further limited by time constraints, and the validity of the statistical methods used for analysis naturally affected how accurate the results were. The primary data used in this study was gathered by administering a standardized questionnaire to faculty members at different management institutes that have received AICTE approval. Primary data was gathered through a survey, and secondary data came from books, magazines, news items, and research papers. The study follows a simple random sampling method, targeting faculty members as the sample unit, with a broader population comprising faculty from management institutes across Central India. A total of 41 responses were received. To analyse the data and test hypotheses, the ANOVA statistical technique was applied.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

| Generation	Birth Year Range	Age Group (in 2025)	No. of Respondents	(%)	Interpretation
Gen X	1965–1980	45–60 years	16	39.00%	Likely in senior or leadership roles with extensive experience and institutional knowledge.
Millennials / Gen Y	1981–1996	29–44 years	19	46.30%	Mid-career professionals well-versed in both traditional and modern workplace practices.
Gen Z	1997–2010	15–28 years	6	14.60%	Newer entrants to the workforce, bringing fresh perspectives and adaptability to digital environments.
Total	—	—	41	100%	Reflects a multi-generational workforce influencing QWL perspectives.

Variable	Category	Frequency	(%)	Interpretation
Gender	Male	23	56.10%	Slight male majority; fairly balanced gender distribution.
	Female	18	43.90%	Reflects inclusive representation from both genders.
Marital Status	Married	~27	~65.9%	Majority are married, indicating presence of family responsibilities influencing work-life balance.
	Single/Widowed	~14	~34.1%	Minority are single/widowed; none are divorced.
	Divorced	0	0%	No divorced respondents.
Teaching Experience	Less than 5 years	11	26.80%	New/early-career professionals; fresh perspectives.
	5–10 years	8	19.50%	Early-career professionals with some institutional experience.
	11–20 years	18	43.90%	Majority are mid-career professionals; significant experience base.
	More than 20 years	4	9.80%	Few long-serving educators; represent institutional memory.
Generational Cohort	Generation X (1965–80)	16	39.00%	Senior educators aged 45–60 years in 2025.

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	Millennials (1981–96)	19	46.30%	Majority of respondents aged 29–44 years; mid-career professionals.
	Generation Z (1997–10)	6	14.60%	Youngest age group (15–28 years); new entrants to academia.

Years of Teaching Experience	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Less than 5 years	11	26.80%
5 – 10 years	8	19.50%
11 – 20 years	18	43.90%
More than 20 years	4	9.80%
Total	41	100%
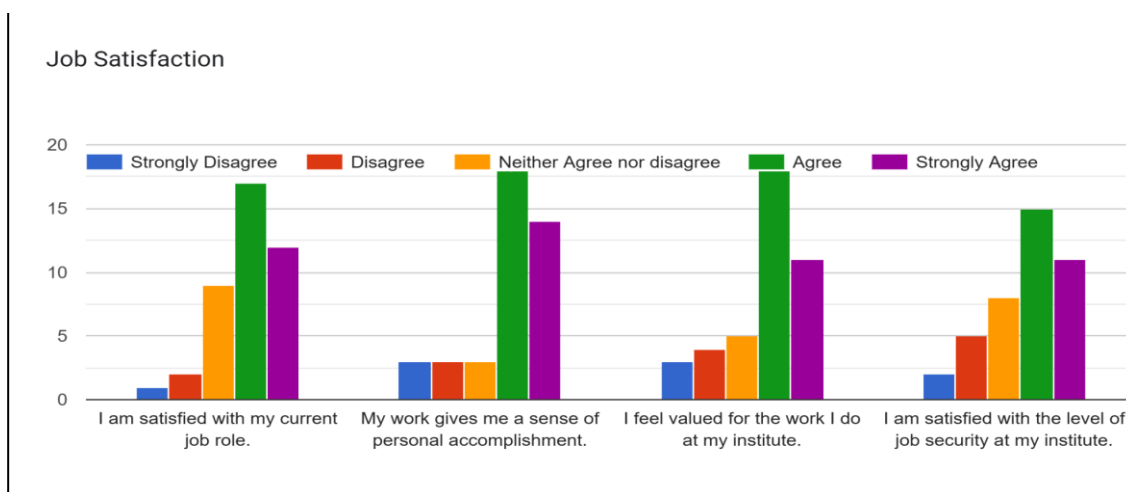
| Aspect	Key Findings	Overall Sentiment	Remarks
Satisfaction with Current Job Role	Majority Agree or Strongly Agree; very few dissatisfied	Positive	Respondents are generally content with their roles and responsibilities.
Sense of Personal Accomplishment	High levels of agreement; minimal disagreement	Strongly Positive	Indicates supportive environment for personal growth and fulfillment.
Feeling Valued at the Institute	Most feel appreciated; low disagreement	Positive	Reflects positive perceptions of recognition within the institution.
Satisfaction with Job Security	More Neutral and Disagree responses compared to other aspects	Moderately Positive / Mixed	Indicates room for improvement regarding job stability concerns.
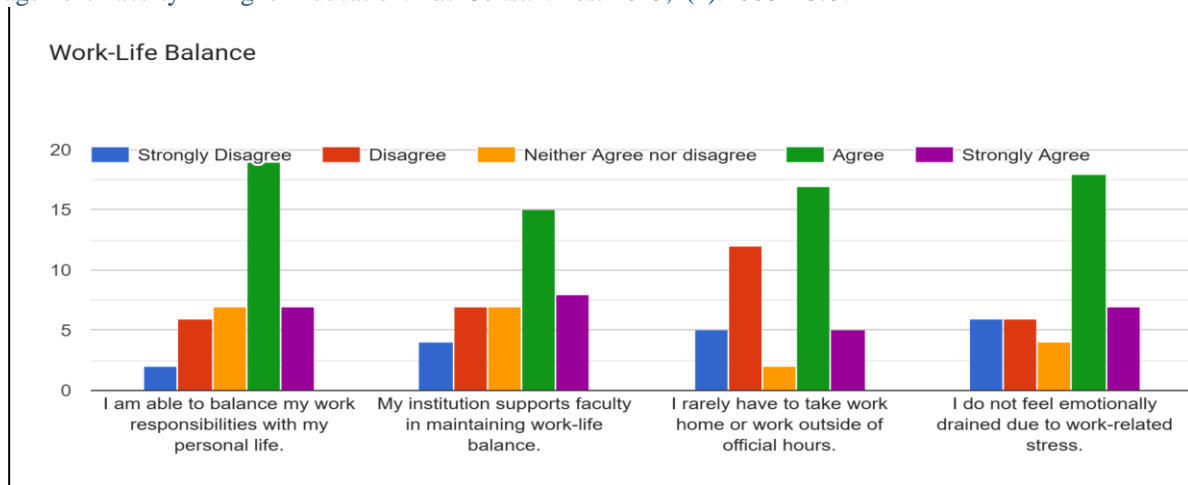
Work-Life Balance

| Work-Life Balance Aspect	Interpretation Summary	Implication
Balancing Work Responsibilities with Personal Life	Majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they are able to manage work and personal life.	Indicates positive self-management and balance by employees.
Institutional Support for Work-Life Balance	Mixed responses—some agree or strongly agree, while others remain neutral or disagree.	Suggests inconsistent experiences or communication regarding institutional support.
Working Beyond Official Hours	Most respondents agree they do not need to work beyond official hours, though a notable group disagrees.	Shows generally time-bound workload, but a significant number still experience workload spillover.
Emotional Drain Due to Work-Related Stress	Responses were spread across the scale; most agreed they were not emotionally drained, but a considerable portion expressed stress-related concerns.	Reflects varied stress levels; signals the need for targeted mental health support initiatives.
Overall	Majority of respondents report a healthy work-life balance. However, variation exists in institutional support and emotional well-being.	Institutions should strengthen clear communication and introduce wellness programs to ensure consistency.

Career development and growth
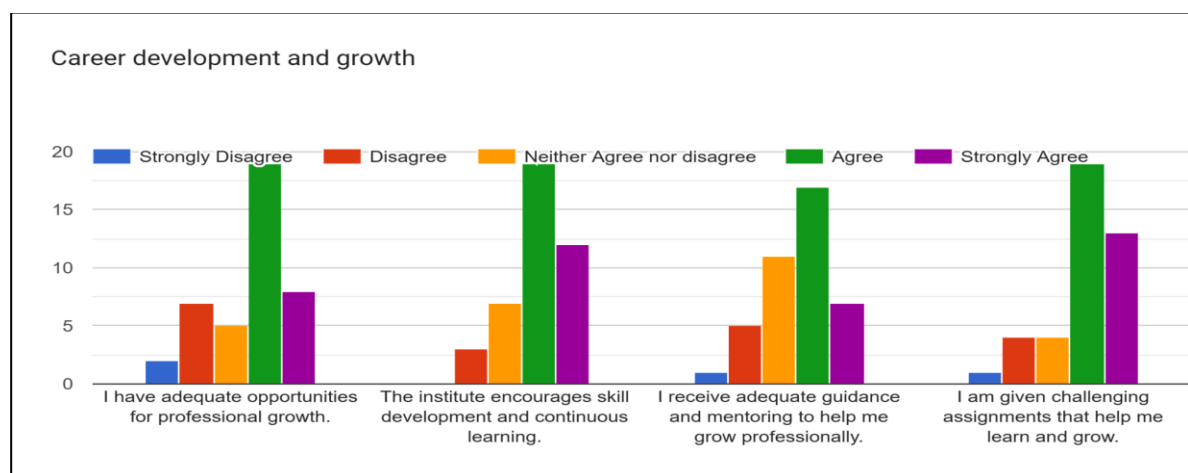
Aspect	Major Observations	Interpretation
Opportunities for Professional Growth	Majority selected Agree and Strongly Agree; very few selected Disagree or Neutral.	Indicates broad satisfaction with growth opportunities; employees perceive that their institution supports career advancement.
Support for Skill Development and Continuous Learning	Dominated by Agree and Strongly Agree responses. Very limited disagreement.	Suggests a strong institutional culture for learning and upskilling.

| Guidance and Mentoring	Mixed responses. While many agreed, a notable number were Neutral or Disagreed.	Reveals a gap in consistent mentoring support; signals the need for enhanced or tailored mentoring efforts.
Challenging Assignments that Foster Growth	Most participants Agreed that assignments are developmental; minimal disagreement observed.	Reflects
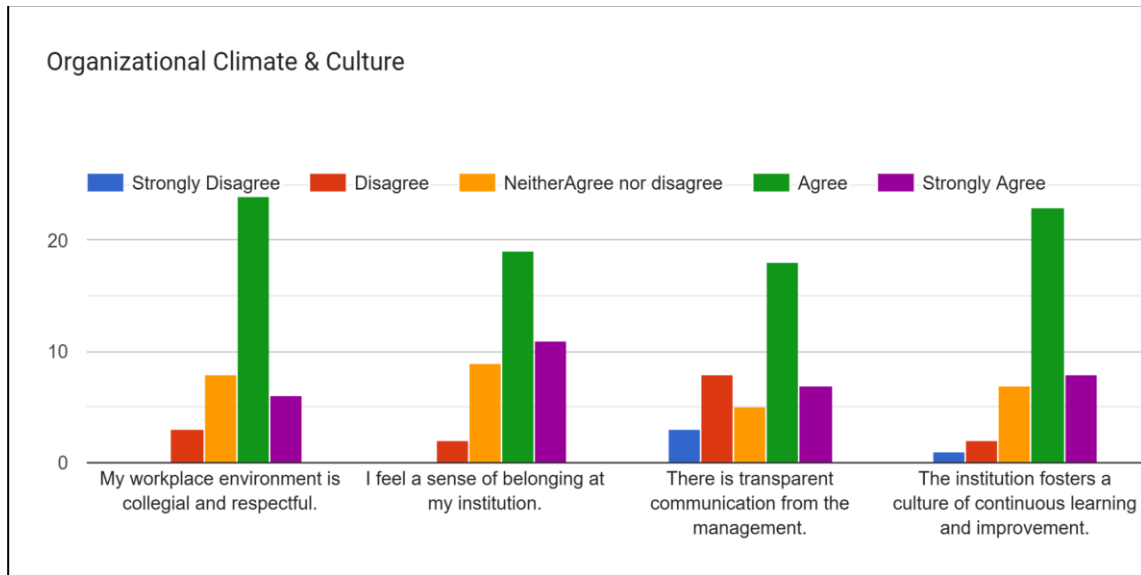
Dimension	Key Observation	Interpretation
Collegial and Respectful Workplace Environment	Majority (over 20 respondents) agree; few strongly agree; minimal disagreement.	Indicates a generally positive perception of mutual respect and collegiality in the organization.
Sense of Belonging	Most participants agree or strongly agree, with "Agree" being the most common.	Reflects a strong sense of inclusivity and emotional connection to the institution.
Transparent Communication from Management	Highest group agrees, but relatively more neutral and disagree responses than other dimensions.	Suggests transparency is acknowledged, but communication could still be improved.
Culture of Continuous Learning and Improvement	Strong majority agree or strongly agree.	Highlights organizational emphasis on professional growth and innovation.
Overall Insight	All dimensions show positive perceptions, with communication from management slightly lagging.	Organization is performing well on climate and culture, with room for improvement in management transparency.
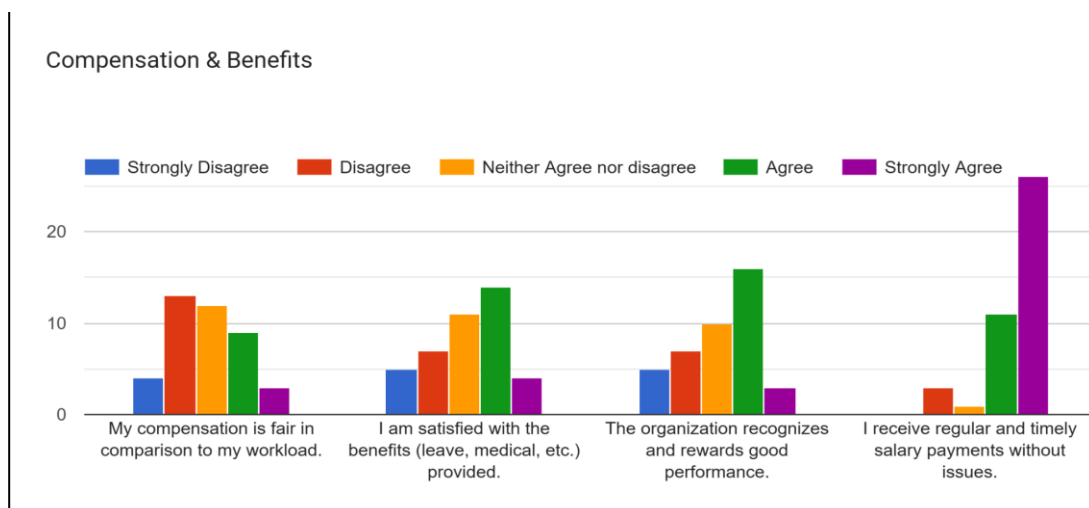
Aspect of Compensation & Benefits	Summary of Employee Feedback	Implications / Recommendations
Fairness of Compensation Relative to Workload	Many employees either disagree or are neutral regarding fairness of pay in relation to workload.	Indicates potential perceptions of being undercompensated; review salary structures or workload allocation.
Satisfaction with Benefits (Leave, Medical, etc.)	Responses are mixed—some employees are satisfied while others remain neutral or disagree.	Current benefits may need revision or clearer communication to meet expectations.
Recognition and Reward for Good Performance	Majority agree that good performance is acknowledged, though some neutral/disagree responses exist.	Overall positive view; however, improve consistency and transparency in reward and recognition practices.
Timeliness of Salary Payments	Most employees agree or strongly agree that salary is paid on time.	High organizational reliability and trust; maintain this standard as a strength in employee satisfaction.

General preferences
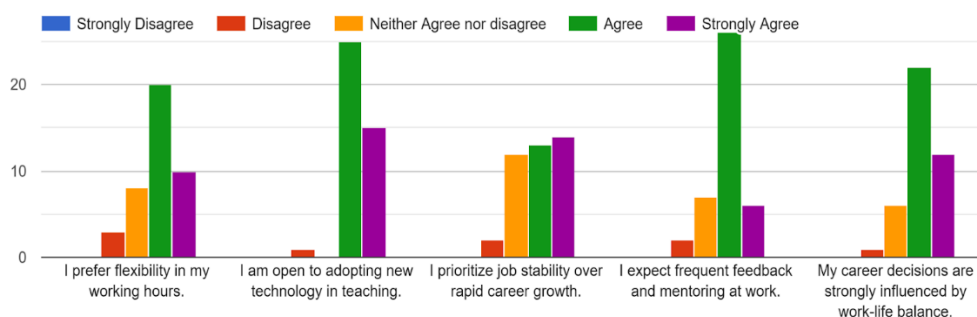
Professional Preference	Key Insight	Implication
Flexibility in Working Hours	Majority of respondents prefer flexible schedules.	Organizations should consider implementing or enhancing flexible work-hour policies.
Adoption of New Technology in Teaching	High agreement with adopting new teaching technologies.	Indicates readiness for digital transformation and training in ed-tech tools.
Job Stability vs. Career Growth	Preference leans toward job stability, though some respondents are neutral.	Suggests the need for balanced career paths offering both stability and growth opportunities.
Feedback and Mentorship Expectations	Strong preference for regular feedback and mentoring.	Highlights the importance of structured mentorship and performance feedback systems.
Impact of Work-Life Balance on Career Decisions	Most participants agree that work-life balance affects career choices.	Organizations should design roles that support personal well-being and career sustainability.

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

The ANOVA one factor test has been used to examine the aforementioned hypothesis. In this case, the sense of work-life balance is the dependent variable, while the several generations- generations X, Y, and Z are the independent variables. Each of the four questions we formulated for the sense of work-life balance was regarded as a dependent variable.

All generations are independent variables and work life balance perception (I am able to balance my work responsibilities with my personal life) is dependent variable.

Anova: Single Factor						
SUMMARY						
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
1965 - 1980 (Gen X)	16	58	3.625	0.783333		

1981-1996 (Millennials/Gen Y)	19	65	3.421053	1.590643		
1997-2010 (Gen Z)	6	23	3.833333	1.366667		
ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	0.882648695	2	0.441324	0.355191	0.703342	3.244818
Within Groups	47.21491228	38	1.242498			
Total	48.09756098	40				

Interpretation:

- The p-value (0.703) > 0.05 → Fail to reject H0.
- Conclusion: No significant generational differences in perceived ability to balance work and personal life. Gen Z reported the highest mean (3.83), but variance within cohorts (especially Millennials) suggests individual variability outweighs generational trends.

All generations are independent variable and work life balance perception (My institution supports faculty in maintaining work-life balance) is dependent variable.

Anova: Single Factor						
SUMMARY						
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
1965 - 1980 (Gen X)	16	56	3.5	0.933333		
1981-1996 (Millennials/Gen Y)	19	63	3.315789	1.783626		
1997-2010 (Gen Z)	6	20	3.333333	3.466667		
ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	0.317501	2	0.158751	0.095092	0.909505	3.244818
Within Groups	63.4386	38	1.669437			
Total	63.7561	40				

Interpretation:

- p-value (0.909) > 0.05 → Fail to reject H0.
- Conclusion: Generations perceive institutional support similarly. Gen X reported marginally higher satisfaction (3.50). High variance in Gen Z (3.47) indicates divergent experiences within this cohort, possibly due to small sample size (n=6).

All generations are independent variable and work life balance perception (I rarely have to take work home or work outside of official hours) is dependent variable.

Anova: Single Factor						
SUMMARY						
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
1965 - 1980 (Gen X)	16	48	3	1.466667		
1981-1996 (Millennials/Gen Y)	19	61	3.210526	1.619883		
1997-2010 (Gen Z)	6	19	3.166667	3.366667		
ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	0.399016	2	0.199508	0.111504	0.894779	3.244818
Within Groups	67.99123	38	1.789243			
Total	68.39024	40				

Interpretation:

- p-value (0.895) > 0.05 → Fail to reject H0.

Conclusion: No generational differences in experiences of work encroachment. Millennials reported the highest mean (3.21), but Gen Z's high variance (3.37) suggests inconsistent workloads or coping mechanisms within this group.

All generations are independent variable and work life balance perception (I do not feel emotionally drained due to work-related stress) is dependent variable.

Anova: Single Factor						
SUMMARY						

Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
1965 - 1980 (Gen X)	16	51	3.1875	1.495833		
1981-1996 (Millennials/Gen Y)	19	66	3.473684	2.040936		
1997-2010 (Gen Z)	6	20	3.333333	2.266667		
ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	0.711837	2	0.355918	0.191822	0.826248	3.244818
Within Groups	70.50768	38	1.855465			
Total	71.21951	40				

Interpretation:
- p-value (0.826) > 0.05 → Fail to reject H0.

Conclusion: Emotional drain perceptions are consistent across generations. Millennials reported the highest resilience (mean=3.47), though variances indicate stress experiences are highly individualized.

No Generational Differences:
All four ANOVA tests failed to reject H0, indicating no statistically significant differences in work-life balance perceptions across Gen X, Millennials, and Gen Z.

Findings
Results show that whereas mean values in areas like emotional stress and personal satisfaction vary among age cohorts, none of the changes were statistically significant. The null hypothesis was accepted since the p-values for each of the four investigated indicators—perceived ability to balance work and life, institutional support, overtime requirements, and emotional exhaustion—exceeded 0.05. This implies that faculty perceptions of work-life balance may not be influenced by generational identification. In terms of individual work-life balance, Generation Z had the highest mean score (3.83), although Millennials seemed to be the most resilient to emotional weariness. However, given the substantial intragenerational diversity, especially among Gen Z, generational stereotypes may be overshadowed by institutional and individual factors.

CONCLUSIONS
The study comes to the conclusion that in the Indian academic context, QWL experiences may be similar across generations due to institutional culture, regional dynamics, and standardized HR methods. In order to find more recent trends, the study also recommends using mixed-methods research designs, include Baby Boomers, and expanding sampling in further studies. Additionally, it suggests that academic administrators modify interventions to accommodate faculty needs and institutional realities in addition to generational expectations.

The study makes a substantial contribution to our understanding of faculty engagement and retention in Indian higher education by filling a major knowledge gap. It is a useful tool for academic policymakers and human resources professionals who want to create inclusive, equitable, and future-ready institutional settings. By finding no apparent variations in the work-life balance perceptions of Gen X, Millennials, and Gen Z in the Central Indian context, the study dispels common generational stereotypes and raises the possibility that institutional, cultural, and regional factors may be more important than global generational presumptions. Work encroachment and emotional tiredness are major QWL concerns for all age groups, and institutional support for work-life balance is only moderately appreciated (mean scores around 3.3–3.5/5). It's interesting to note that, while being underrepresented in the sample (n=6), Gen Z reported the most individualized experiences, with the lowest institutional trust and the highest personal work-life balance. In order to accurately represent generational differences in QWL beyond the limitations of the Likert scale, future research should use mixed-methods approaches, such as combining surveys and interviews. Representativeness will be improved by broadening the sample to include Baby Boomers and a larger Gen Z cohort. Regional or institutional differences can be revealed through comparative research between private universities and other regions of India, including Central India. Further understanding of how these characteristics affect QWL views across generations can also be gained by investigating mediating factors including gender, professional stage, and digital literacy.

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