

Study of Work Values of Generation Y And Generation Z With Special Reference to IT & ITES In India

Shilpi Arora¹ and Dr Sandeep Vyas²

¹Faculty-Symbiosis International University, Pune

Email: Reach2shilpiarora@gmail.com

²Associate Professor, International School of Informatics and Management, Jaipur

E-mail: sandyv3075@gmail.com

Received:
10/08/2025
Revised:
20/09/2025
Accepted:
04/10/2025
Published:
13/10/2025

ABSTRACT

This secondary research study explores and compares the work values of Generation Y and Generation Z employees in India's IT and ITes sector, one of the most human-capital-intensive industries globally. Drawing upon an extensive review of academic journals, industry reports, and contemporary research, this study synthesizes existing literature to identify the evolving patterns of work-related beliefs, motivations, and preferences among these generational cohorts. The objective is to understand how differences in value systems, career orientations, and learning behaviors influence organizational practices, engagement, and retention strategies in the technology-driven workplace. The literature review reveals that while Generation Y emphasizes career growth, job stability, and structured development, Generation Z demonstrates stronger preferences for flexibility, autonomy, continuous learning, and purpose-driven work. The study also identifies post-pandemic shifts in priorities, particularly around well-being, hybrid work, and ethical leadership highlighting the growing importance of learning agility, inclusivity, and digital fluency as core work values. The findings conclude that these generational distinctions are redefining human resource management practices in India's IT and ITes sector, compelling organizations to adopt adaptive, AI-enabled, and values-driven approaches to engagement and rewards. The study underscores the need for further empirical research to assess the intersection of generational identity, technology, and workplace culture within India's rapidly evolving digital economy.

Keywords Generation Y, Generation Z, Generational cohorts, Work Values, Human resources management, IT, ITES



© 2025 by the authors; licensee Advances in Consumer Research. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY-NC-ND) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

INTRODUCTION

Today's work environment is the most diverse and heterogeneous it has ever been, shaped by multiple forms of diversity, with generational diversity emerging as a key factor influencing organizational dynamics. India, with one of the youngest populations globally, is witnessing a massive demographic shift. As of 2025, over 65% of the workforce comprises Generation Y and Generation Z, creating a multi-generational workforce where several cohorts work side by side (NASSCOM, 2025).

Generations are defined as "a group of people or cohorts that share birth years, age, location, and significant life events and experiences at critical developmental stages in life" (Kupperschmidt, 2000, p.66). In essence, generational cohorts share outlooks shaped by common

life experiences (Edmunds & Turner, 2005; Ryder, 1965). These experiences, often stable over time, serve as distinguishing elements that differentiate one generation from another (Smola & Sutton, 2002).

In recent decades, geopolitical, economic, and technological changes have compressed the intervals traditionally used to define generational cohorts. What was once a range of decades is now often reduced to five to ten years, reflecting the accelerated pace of social and technological transformation. However, some researchers argue that generational differences are best understood through longitudinal, time-lag studies that examine individuals of the same age at different points in history, capturing the evolution of values, attitudes, and life experiences (Twenge, 2010; Twenge & Campbell, 2010).

Based on widely accepted classifications, this study considers five generational cohorts:

Cohort Name	Baby Boomer	Gen X	Gen Y	Gen Z	Alpha Kids
Economic Factors	Labour unrest, strikes	Oil embargo, energy crisis	Economic liberalization, Dot-Com bubble	Global financial slowdown	Protectionism, trade wars
Technological Factors	Industrial Revolution	Desktops, telephones, stereo systems	Walkmans, laptops, mobile phones, emails	iPhones, tablets, social networking	Data supremacy, AI integration
Socio-Cultural Factors	Communist movements	Cold War, Vietnam War	Fall of Soviet Union	Terrorism, global conflicts	Diversity & inclusivity movements
Characteristic	Conservation	Self-reliant	Risk-takers, entrepreneurial	Digital natives	Born digital

This study seeks to review and synthesize existing literature on newer generation cohorts, particularly Gen Y and Gen Z, to understand their value systems, work preferences, and behavioral orientations. It also examines the implications of these generational work values on organizational effectiveness, highlighting the need for adaptive strategies in workforce management, learning and development, and career growth planning.

AIM OF THE CURRENT RESEARCH

(a) To determine the work value dimensions of Generation Y employees and compare them with Generation Z values in India's IT and ITES sector using secondary research.

THEORETICAL BASIS

Over the past decade, research on the characteristics of the new-generation workforce has accelerated, primarily driven by rapid technological advancement, digital transformation, and evolving work models. Exposure to technology has shaped the expectations, behaviors, and career orientations of younger employees, particularly in India's IT and ITES sector, which now employs over 5.8 million professionals, a majority of whom belong to Generation Y and Generation Z (NASSCOM, 2025). Scholars and practitioners alike emphasize that different generational cohorts require tailored management approaches to optimize engagement, productivity, and retention in technology-driven workplaces.

WORK VALUES AND VALUE SYSTEM

Literature defines "Values" as understanding by human beings towards specific conduct which are socially and morally preferable. Values differ in terms of importance as guiding principles for an individual's life, about what is good, right and appropriate in terms of leading one's life (Rokeach, 1973). Rokeach (1973) outlines values as key beliefs that shape individual perceptions about the world and their attitudes and behavioral conduct towards society at large. It gives an understanding of what is right" and wrong outlining acceptable modes of conduct which are preferable and acceptable over socially unacceptable modes of conduct. Value system as identified in this study thus refers to a hierarchy of values that is categorized on priority levels set by individuals which may vary according to the societal and environmental learning experiences. The concept of "Values" as deep beliefs or strong convictions which are relatively stable was furthered in this study by classification of values as Instrumental values (personal conviction about desired modes of conduct) and Terminal values (personal conviction about desirable lifelong goals). Most researchers tend to agree that values are basically certain standard criteria's which help guiding an individual's life or in the process of choosing his/her goals for life, remaining relatively stable and enduring over time (Kilmann, 1971; Kluckhohn, 1951; Rokeach 1968, 1973; Dose, 1997).

Studies related to understanding the environment related to work were evolved as "Work Values" which tried to link individual preferences for work or work environment as critical factors for his/her continuity in the job (Super, 1973). Early researchers like Herzberg et al., (1956) linked work values to motivational aspects, i.e. hygiene factors and motivators; later studies linked the aspect of personal convictions and impact of societal learning process to the work context relating it to certain outcomes of the work itself (Elizur, 1984).

Elizur (1984) analyzed two basic facets of work values: -

Modality of outcomes

- Instrumental: Values that define work outcomes of materialistic nature like pay, hours of work etc.
- Cognitive: Values related to desired behavioral modes of work outcomes like achievement, job challenges, responsibility etc.
- Affective: Values related to aspects of relationship which affect individuals like recognition, acceptance, esteem etc.

How to cite: Shilpi Arora and Sandeep Vyas, Study of Work Values of Generation Y and Generation Z with special reference to IT & ITES in India. *Adv Consum Res.* 2025;2(4):5160–5166.

b) System performance contingency Values that relate to contingencies of the work performance that may be essential for organizations to motivate individuals in the context of job performance like work environment, benefits, transportation etc.

Dose (1997) through an extensive and critical study of values and work values literature summarized that there remain extensive differences in defining the content and structure of work values, attributing it to varying parameters adapted by theorists related to work domain, work knowledge and its allied relationships. She proposed a framework that encompassed all conceptualizations and research related to the construct of work values with considerations for values as standards and also being classified according to various properties. Dose (1997) proposed and defined the following: Work values are the evaluative standards relating to work or the work environment by which individuals discern what is right or assess the importance of preferences. She further proposed two dimensions of work values, namely a) whether the value held exhibits a moral element and b) the degree of social consensus regarding the degree or desirability of the particular value.

Research done on Personal values looked at developing measurement related to work needs and values for employees. Prominent among them have been Porter's (1961) Need Satisfaction questionnaire, Super's (1962) Work Values Inventory, the Work Aspects Preference Schedule (WAPS), Pryor (1979) and Manhardt's (1972) 25 item Work Values Inventory. The studies have overlapping concepts as identified by Macnab and Fitzsimmons (1987), wherein aspects of authority, creativity, independence, altruism etc, come under the common trait of need. This is in line with earlier studies done linking individual needs to job characteristics that outline how individual needs impact perception of work values and its strong impact on job satisfaction for an individual employee.

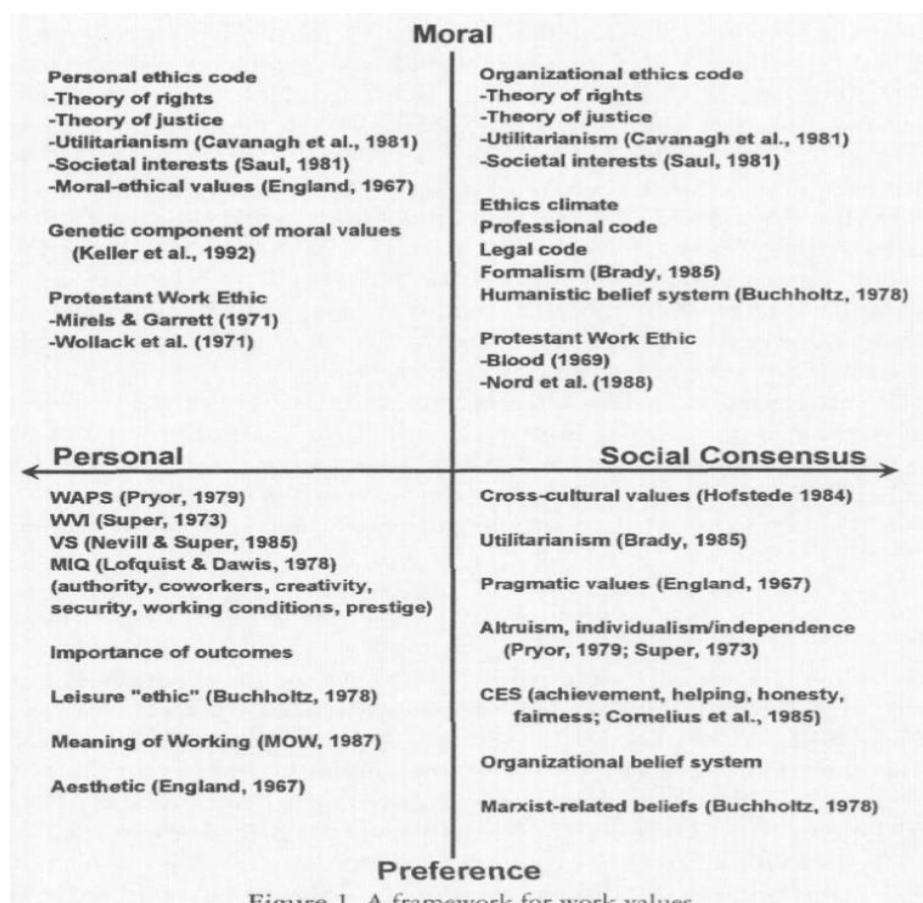


Figure 1. A framework for work values.

Source: Dose, J.J. (1997). Work values: An integrative framework and illustrative application to organizational socialization, *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 70(3), p219-240

GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCE IN WORK VALUES

Substantial amount of research over the years have been increasingly focusing on the aspect of changing work

values and its impact on the organizational environment. These studies have been necessitated from the fact that with changing employee values and related preferences their affect is bound to be felt in the organizational

How to cite: Shilpi Arora and Sandeep Vyas, Study of Work Values of Generation Y and Generation Z with special reference to IT & ITES in India. *Adv Consum Res.* 2025;2(4):5160–5166.

environment wherein employees are associated at both physiological and psychological levels. Previous studies on the factor of age impacting work values have tried to understand whether this factor varies with generational differences or does simply affect the maturity level of an individual leading to changes in his/her work values or value systems over a time period. Rhodes (1983) in his study tried to understand the impact of career stages on work attitude, values and satisfaction wherein it was found that this aspect of career change at varying age levels does have an impact on the above factors inclusive of work values. However research conducted around the same time period by Furham (1982) on PWE (Protestant Work Ethics) and age found no such significant correlation, making him state that there are other factors than age that may affect one's beliefs and that it is possible that beliefs in PWE could attain significant relationship with age at the older stages of one's life.

This debate on whether generations do make a difference in one's work values has fuelled many studies. Parker and Cusmir (1990) through their generational study on belief systems and value scores, found Boomers to being more humanistic/moralistic while pre-boomers were more traditional and pragmatic. This study strengthened the line of thought that highlights differences in generational values and its possible impact/affect in the organizational environment. Subsequent studies by (Judge and Bertz, 1992) related to impact on organizational culture, (Jurkiewicz and Brown, 1998 and Jurkiewicz, 2000) related to impact on human resource management processes, and (Dose, 1997) related to impact on ethical aspects outlines that generational differences in work values do tend to have an impact on organizational processes and its related environmental factors.

A major study in this direction was conducted by Smola and Sutton (2002) on a valid sample size of 335 American national who were understood to be full time employees at organizations. The study sought to understand if Generational differences in work values still existed amongst employees in the new millennia, specifically with relation to Boomers and Gen X-ers. They found that significant difference existed in two major values constructs, „Desirability of work outcomes and Moral importance of work. While older employees had less desire for promotion or growth, the younger generation had strong desire to move ahead in life. Similarly on the aspect related to Moral importance of work, Boomers felt that one's recognition is through his/her work hence it should be the most important aspect of one's life; Gen X-ers on the other side related more to work being associated with making them better individuals in terms of money, learning and growth. The

study reflected that Gen X-ers value system seemed to be more ME" oriented than Boomers who seems more loyal to the work and organization, but at the same time the researchers also highlighted that being me oriented doesn't make Gen X-ers selfish; it only means that they are better able to align individual goals with organizations that benefits them mutually and lead more balanced lives than their previous generations. The study also looked at comparing work values of employees in the new millennia with those in the year 1974, while also trying to understand if work values change or remain constant with age. The study strongly indicates that generational differences have more influence on Work Values than age and maturation aspect (Smola and Sutton, 2002; p.379); a factor that organizations necessarily need to take into consideration as Gen Y employees steadily join the workforce.

Further research in this direction by Egri and Ralston (2004) looked into the Personal value orientation of 774 Chinese and 784 U.S. managers and professionals. The study found that while U.S. managers and professionals exhibited age-related value differences (as has been evident through previous researches on Silent generation, Boomers and Gen X-ers); Chinese managers and professionals exhibited personal value differences based on the Era they belonged to during their formative years. The study shows that while their existed some similarity in the personal value orientation of Silent Generation (U.S.) and Republicans (Chinese); the similarities ceased to exist for Boomers (U.S.) and Consolidation (Chinese)/Cultural Revolution (Chinese) generations with only one value being similar (intermediate openness to change). In the case of Gene X-ers (U.S.) and Social Reform generation (Chinese), only two values seemed similar; that of high openness to change and low conservation. This study highlights that their exists considerable intergenerational differences in personal values amongst both these cross-cultural groups, hence future studies in cross-cultural research need to incorporate aspects of intergenerational differences also in research focus than being limited to the myopic vision of national culture difference research.

In terms of study across different industry sectors, a significant study by Chen and Choi (2008) sought to understand generational differences in work values amongst hospitality sector employees in USA. The study was conducted on a sample of 398 hospitality sector employees in southeastern USA on 15 work value constructs for employees who had clocked a minimum of 400 work hours. The study conducted in the format of work value ranking found two major work values as being similar across all generations (Baby boomers, Generation X-ers and Millennial or Gen Y); namely

How to cite: Shilpi Arora and Sandeep Vyas, Study of Work Values of Generation Y and Generation Z with special reference to IT & ITES in India. *Adv Consum Res.* 2025;2(4):5160–5166.

„way of life“ and „achievement“. However there existed significant difference in terms of other work value rankings amongst employees from different generational cohorts. Baby Boomers gave high ranking to „Altruism“ while Generation X gave higher ranking to “Security” and “Independence” and Gen Y preferred “Supervisory relationship” and “Economic returns” amongst given work values. While the study details similarities and dissimilarities amongst different generations in ranking of work values; it is significant to note that differences in work values are based on constructs that are associated with how an employee perceives the concerned construct. For example, if a particular generation (like Gen Y) has evolved in an era of consumerism and as a preferred work value as they have amply viewed the value of monetary utilization and its importance during their formative years. The study although focused on the hospitality sector, outlined that irrespective of the sector there does exist differences in work values across generational cohorts; albeit the work values itself might slight differ across industry categories based on its perceived need and valuation which makes for interesting research in future but currently out of the purview of this research achievement oriented parenting (Gen X or Baby Boomers), then their value system will perceive economic returns”

DIFFERENCE IN WORK VALUES OF GEN'Y' AND GEN 'Z'

After reviewing literature, it can be understood that there is a confounding difference and similarities between Generation Y and Generation Z in regards to demographics, work values, individual values, working environment, compensation and life style. Kothapalli Saileela & Swetha T studied the ‘work belief’ factors influencing employees of Generation-X and Generation-Y in India and found that factors influencing Work Belief were work engagement, career development and team work. It was extended by comparing work Belief of Generation X and Generation Y.

Lucy and Dianne Gardner studied the generational differences in work values and found that the youngest groups placed more importance on status and freedom of work values than the oldest group. Baby Boomers reported better person-organisation values fit with extrinsic values and status values than Generation X and Generation Y.

Rani Nitya & Samuel A (2016) analysed the generational differences in work values and found that there are significant differences in work values between Generation Y and older generations. Generation Y also reported significantly higher discrepancy in person-organisation fit values than Generation X and Baby Boomers. This had an effect on their turnover intention.

CONCLUSION:

Based on our studies and relevant literature review it can be established that though there has been some amount of study done about the work values of Generation Y

and some comparative evaluation with earlier generations have been made to identify some characteristic features of these generations, there definitely exists a scope of conducting more detailed assessment of work values of Gen “Y” and Gen “Z”. The need for future studies with a comparative viewpoint is essential to understand how the life experience variations due to socio-economic, technological and work environment factors like mobility, autonomy & self-attainment impact the work values, preferences will shape the work patterns and policies in future times. These patterns will prove decisive in defining HR practices, employee value propositions and key differentiators for attracting, motivating and retaining talent in IT & ITeS organizations which have been reeling under the pressure of attrition and staying relevant with the changing attitudes of the newer generations entering the workforce market.

RECENT RESEARCH AND EMERGING DIRECTIONS

In recent years, several new studies have broadened the understanding of work values among Generation Y and Generation Z, particularly in the context of digital transformation, hybrid work, and post-pandemic workplace evolution. These studies are highly relevant to the IT and ITeS sectors in India, which continue to employ a major share of the younger workforce and are at the forefront of technology-driven organizational change.

1. Post-Pandemic Shifts in Work Values
Recent research (Kumar & Saha, 2022; Deloitte Millennial and Gen Z Survey, 2023) suggests a significant shift in the work values of younger cohorts following the COVID-19 pandemic. Both generations increasingly prioritize flexibility, well-being, and purpose-driven work over traditional motivators such as job security and rapid promotions. Gen Z, having entered the workforce during or after the pandemic, places greater emphasis on mental health support, hybrid work models, and ethical leadership as key determinants of job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

2. Digital Fluency and Career Autonomy
Studies by NASSCOM (2023) and KPMG (2024) indicate that Gen Z professionals in IT and ITeS exhibit a higher level of digital fluency and prefer project-based, skills-oriented career paths over conventional hierarchical progressions. While Generation Y valued stability and structured career advancement, Generation Z tends to favor portfolio careers and gig-based opportunities that offer autonomy, creativity, and technological integration. This evolution signals a broader move towards skill-centric rather than role-centric career architectures in the digital economy.

How to cite: Shilpi Arora and Sandeep Vyas, Study of Work Values of Generation Y and Generation Z with special reference to IT & ITES in India. *Adv Consum Res.* 2025;2(4):5160–5166.

3. Learning Agility and Continuous Development Reports by the World Economic Forum (2024) and PwC India (2023) reveal that continuous learning has emerged as a dominant work value across both generations, though for different reasons. For Generation Y, learning is largely associated with career growth and employability, whereas Generation Z views it as a form of self-expression and adaptability in an era of rapid technological change. This distinction underscores the growing importance of learning agility as a core competency in future workforce planning.

4. Work Values and Employer Branding Employer branding studies (LinkedIn Workforce Report, 2024) show that Generation Z's employment choices are significantly influenced by alignment with social and ethical values, including sustainability, inclusivity, and diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) initiatives. Generation Y, on the other hand, continues to place higher emphasis on organizational reputation, compensation, and career progression opportunities. This generational divergence reflects the changing social consciousness of the workforce and highlights the need for organizations to balance purpose with performance.

5. AI, Technology, and Redefinition of Rewards Emerging studies (WorldatWork, 2025) highlight how AI-enabled personalization in rewards, learning, and performance systems is transforming generational perceptions of fairness, motivation, and recognition. Generation Z shows a strong preference for instant feedback, gamified recognition, and pay transparency, while Generation Y remains motivated by career stability and structured recognition frameworks. This technological shift necessitates a redesign of total rewards strategies to address the varied motivational drivers of a multi-generational workforce.

6. Future Research Directions Despite increasing interest in generational studies, empirical research in the Indian context remains limited, especially regarding intergenerational collaboration, psychological safety in hybrid teams, and the impact of artificial intelligence on work values and job identities. Future studies could explore intersections of gender, urbanization, socio-economic background, and career aspirations within Generations Y and Z to provide a more holistic understanding of their evolving workplace behaviors. Such research will be crucial for designing adaptive human resource strategies in India's IT and ITeS sector, where generational convergence and digital disruption are shaping the future of work.

REFERENCES

- Chen, P. J., & Choi, Y. (2008). Generational differences in work values: A study of hospitality management. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 20(6), 595–615. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09596110810892182>
- Cennamo, L., & Gardner, D. (2008). Generational differences in work values, outcomes and person–organisation values fit. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 23(8), 891–906. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940810904385>
- Deloitte. (2023). 2023 Gen Z and Millennial Survey: The world remade by a generation. Deloitte Global. <https://www.deloitte.com>
- Dose, J. J. (1997). Work values: An integrative framework and illustrative application to organizational socialization. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 70(3), 219–240.
- Egri, C. P., & Ralston, D. A. (2004). Generation cohorts and personal values: A comparison of China and the United States. *Organization Science*, 15(2), 210–220.
- Elizur, D. (1984). Facets of work values: A structural analysis of work outcomes. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 69(3), 379–389.
- Elizur, D. (1996). Work values and commitment. *International Journal of Manpower*, 17(3), 25–30.
- Fernandez, S. (2009). Comparing generation X to generation Y on work-related beliefs. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 23(1–2), 45–53.
- Furnham, A. (1982). Extraversion, neuroticism, and the work values of male and female managers. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 55(3), 251–257.
- Judge, T. A., & Bretz, R. D. (1992). Effects of work values on job choice decisions. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 77(3), 261–271.
- Jurkiewicz, C. L. (2000). Generation X and the public employee. *Public Personnel Management*, 29(1), 55–74.
- Jurkiewicz, C. L., & Brown, R. G. (1998). GenXers vs Boomers vs Matures: Generational comparisons of public employee motivation. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 18(4), 18–37.
- Kluckhohn, C. (1951). Values and value-orientations in the theory of action. In T. Parsons & E. A. Shils (Eds.), *Toward a general theory of action* (pp. 388–433). Harvard University Press.
- KPMG. (2024). The future of HR in a technology-led world. KPMG Insights. <https://home.kpmg/in>
- Kumar, A., & Saha, R. (2022). Evolving work values in the post-pandemic era: A generational perspective. *Indian Journal of Human Resource Development*, 12(3), 45–60.
- Kupperschmidt, B. R. (2000). Multigeneration employees: Strategies for effective management. *The Health Care Manager*, 19(1), 65–76.
- LinkedIn. (2024). Workforce Report: Employer branding and generational values. LinkedIn Insights. <https://linkedin.com/workforce-report>
- Macnab, B., & Fitzsimmons, G. (1987). Work values and job satisfaction: A comparative analysis. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 31(3), 305–319.

How to cite: Shilpi Arora and Sandeep Vyas, Study of Work Values of Generation Y and Generation Z with special reference to IT & ITES in India. *Adv Consum Res.* 2025;2(4):5160–5166.

19. Manhardt, P. J. (1972). Job orientation of male and female college graduates in business. *Personnel Psychology*, 25(2), 361–368.
20. NASSCOM. (2023). Strategic review: The IT-ITeS industry in India 2023. National Association of Software and Service Companies.
21. NASSCOM. (2024). Indian IT Industry Overview 2024. National Association of Software and Service Companies.
22. Nitya Rani, M., & Samuel, A. (2016). A comparative study on work values among Gen Y and Gen Z employees. *Indian Journal of Management*, 9(12), 34–46.
23. Parker, B., & Cusmir, L. H. (1990). A generational comparison of work values, ethics, and attitudes. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 9(9), 711–718.
24. Porter, L. W. (1961). Need satisfaction in employees. *California Management Review*, 3(1), 1–10.
25. Pryor, R. (1979). The Work Aspects Preference Scale. *Australian Psychologist*, 14(3), 273–281.
26. PwC India. (2023). Future of Work and Skills in India Report. PwC India Insights. <https://www.pwc.in>
27. Rhodes, S. R. (1983). Age-related differences in work attitudes and behavior: A review and conceptual analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 93(2), 328–367.
28. Rokeach, M. (1968). Beliefs, attitudes, and values: A theory of organization and change. Jossey-Bass.
29. Rokeach, M. (1973). The nature of human values. Free Press.
30. Smola, K. W., & Sutton, C. D. (2002). Generational differences: Revisiting generational work values for the new millennium. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 23(4), 363–382.
31. Super, D. E. (1962). Work Values Inventory. National Guidance Association.
32. Super, D. E. (1973). The career development theory. In D. E. Super (Ed.), *Career development: Self-concept theory* (pp. 47–74). College Entrance Examination Board.
33. Twenge, J. M., & Campbell, S. M. (2010). Generational differences in psychological traits and their impact on the workplace. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 25(8), 859–877.
34. World Economic Forum. (2024). The future of jobs report 2024. World Economic Forum. <https://www.weforum.org>
35. WorldatWork. (2025). Salary budget survey: India executive summary 2025. WorldatWork. <https://worldatwork.org>