

ARE THE GENERATIONAL INTERACTIONS IN THE BRAZILIAN WORKPLACE DIFFERENT FROM OTHER COUNTRIES?

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ABSTRACT: *This case approaches the differences between the generational interactions in the Brazilian workplace, in comparison with other countries, according to the current epistemology. Previous research points each newcomer employees' generation with different expectations and motivations, regarding workplace activities. Entering a new job and dealing with the challenges of the initial period of time following entry is critical and demands substantial effort to adjust to new supervisors and peers. The reduction of conflict and ambiguity is an important outcome for organizational leaders in the areas of employee recruitment, engagement, and retention. Thus, we investigated the generational interactions in the Brazilian workplace, since there are few studies on the subject to support HRM practices in a wide and diverse country as Brazil. Finally, we brought future research implications.*

KEYWORDS: Generations, Brazilian Workplace, Conflict

INTRODUCTION

Many similar occurrences, coming from different parts of the world are regarded to a possible conflict among people from different generations, with different life perspective, values, needs and demands. Generational conflict is defined as a conflict between old and young people (Button, 1992; Hamil-Luker, 2001; Meriac, Woehr and Banister, 2010). If we consider that conflict arises when one perceives that the other part may affect, negatively, something that the first considers important (Robbins, 2013) this work is important to many aspects of organizational studies, as mentioned by Parry & Urwin's (2011) literature review:

Generational differences in work values influence the requirements for all aspects of people management: recruitment (Charrier 2000), training and development (Berl 2006; Tulgan 1996); career development (Ansoorian, Good, & Samuelson, 2003); McDonald & Hite 2008), rewards and working arrangements (Carlson 2004; Filipczak, 1994) and management style (Losyk, 1997; Tulgan, 1996); as well as having the potential to cause serious conflict within the workplace (Karp & Sirias 2001, p.81).

Considering the increasing age/cohort diversity at the workplace (Eisner, 2005; Jenkins, 2008; Kyles, 2008; Whitacre, 2007, Stevanin, Palese, A., Bressan, Vehviläinen-Julkunen, & Kvist (2018) and the alleged marked differences in expectations and motivators across generational cohorts (see Crumpacker & Crumpacker 2007; Glass, 2007), understanding the differences between generations' values, preferences and perspectives can be considered an important area of research, due to the influence of this elements upon attraction, retention and development of future leaders (Westerman & Yamamura, 2007). The American Management Association (2015) posited that each multigenerational workplace presents particularities and differences on values and attitudes that may contribute to deal with a *Liquid Modernity* (Bauman, 2013) if organizations embrace changes in the recruiting process and design an environment of respect and inclusion that grasp the best of each participant.

There is a growing number of studies adverting managers against the risk of underestimating the difference among generations' perspectives regarding the workplace (Cogin, 2012; Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2007; Gilleard, 2004; Glass, 2007; Inglehart, 1997; Jurkiewicz & Brown, 1998; Kupperschmidt, 2000; Lester, Standifer, Schultz, & Windsor, 2012; Martin, 2005; Smola & Sutton, 2002).

However, a number of authors advert that, whilst abundant literature is available, they are not solid enough to ground recommendations to Human Resources' policies and managerial decisions regarding intergenerational interactions (Alsop 2008; Deal, Altman, & Rogelberg, 2010; Filipczak, 1994; Johnson & Lopes, 2008; Kowske, Rasch, & Wiley, 2010; Twenge, 2010). Other authors also suggest that there are few empirical researches addressing the actual effects of generational differences in the workplace and no model for dealing with this kind of conflict (Bell, 2010; Levy, Carroll, Francoeur, & Logue, 2005; Montana & Lenaghan, 1999; Twenge, 2010).

Despite of its academic validity, sound literature was found as regards the North American companies and their generational background, that are related to common life and social experiences of a cohort (Kyles, 2005; Eisner, 2005; Howe & Strauss, 2000; Lovern, 2001) but limited Brazilian literature regarding generations' interactions at the workplace (Silva, 2013; Veloso, et. al., 2011), and they are even more scarce if we look for the multigenerational aspect of the HRM.

Rocha-de-Oliveira, Piccinini and Bitencourt (2012) raise a question against the incorporation of concept of Generation Y "into national studies as presented in international studies, without contextualizing the characteristics and historical milestones that contributed to the formation of the thinking of this generational group in Brazil." (p.551).

Some national author as Motta, Gomes and Valente (2009), Veloso (2012), and Veloso, Dutra, and Nakata, (2016) posited that the values of young Brazilians would be similar to those of the Americans, due to the globalization of consumption and technology, making possible a straight connection between the Brazilian and American youth. In the same vein, Schewe and Meredith (2004) studied Russian and Brazilian defining events and their influence on generational development.

This idea is strongly contested by authors such as Cohen (2007), Galland (2001, 2007) and Oliveira et al. (2012) and Pais (2001) that affirm that a so-called Generation Y, cannot be used to understand the whole youth of a gigantic and asymmetric country as Brazil.

Oliveira et al. (2012) also adverted that, taking into account the enormous social inequality present in Brazil to consider that there is "only one Y generation marked by the mastery of technology and the imperative of its choices is something displaced from reality" (p.555).

Veloso (2012) answered directly Oliveira et al. (2012) concern regarding the delimitation of a "youth", showing that the studied population are, mostly, employed. Veloso and collaborators (Veloso, 2012; Veloso, Dutra e Nakata, 2008; Veloso *et al.*, 2009; Veloso, Silva & Dutra, 2011, 2012; Veloso *et al.*, 2012) presented a series of studies regarding generations aiming the Brazilian employed population and posited that their studies showed that most of the generational characteristics portrayed in the international literature were also present in the Brazilian literature, in the concordance with Schewe and Meredith's (2004) previous findings.

Kliksberg's (2006) alert regarding the current situation in Latin America, and in an unequal country like Brazil, where young people will take different paths according to the social strata to which they belong, creating gigantic distortion in the same cohort (see also Arend & Reis, 2009; Gonçalves, 2005; Gonçalves et al., 2008; Kliksberg, 2006; Lopes, et al., 2008; Oliveira et al., 2012). Accordingly, Tomizaki (2010) stated that a generation also represents a social class situation once individuals who experience a particular field of work tend to develop a specific way of thinking and acting. For the social class situation to make sense, it is necessary for the group to have a set of shared experiences for which it attributes similar meanings, although this does not imply an absolute homogeneity within the group. Thus, to consider a generational perspective it's necessary to approach historical cohorts and collective memories so, an investigation of each group historical events can enlighten the analysis of the difference in values, behaviors and attitudes among them.

The present study presents a comparison between both visions, following Joshi, Dencker, Franz, and Martocchio, (2010) who acknowledges that “*generations*, as a construct, is elusive and quite controversial among authors” (p.393).

Joshi et al., (2010) presented an integrated perspective to manage a multigenerational workplace escaping from the traps of “clear definition” regarding generations’ year delimitations or defining historical events. Although this discussion may be important to the academic community, the difficulties newcomers and insiders are facing are ongoing and the level of suffering is significant, but we only see the top of the iceberg. In order to manage properly a multigenerational workplace is imperative to understand de motivations and the perspectives of each cohort, being emphatic and addressing their needs since the first interactions. Joshi et al., (2010) elaborated a friendly framework based on *Generational Identity*. That means, one needs to care enough to invest time to approach this intricate phenomenon without cliches and HR fast track tools.

Bearing in mind the particularities of the HRM in the Brazilian companies, and the formation of the generational frame of references presented above inside the scarcity theory, it was necessary to add studies regarding generations in Brazil¹. Finally, the article aims to throw more light on discussion on the generational impacts in the Brazilian workplace, in comparison to other countries generations.

METHODOLOGY

This is a qualitative, inductive, interpretive, single study, involving extensive archival research, which unit of analysis (Yin, 2009) is the Brazilian generations at the workplace, Secondary data were gathered through literature review and archival research. This study is limited to the Brazilian generations Baby boomers, X, and Y. Generation Z members are not included because they are too young to be part of the Brazilian workforce, and therefore, are considered in this study, in the same line of reasoning, we are not considering Veterans, once there are few reminiscent still working nowadays.

¹ At the time of writing this paper, we couldn't find any longitudinal time-lag studies regarding generations in the Brazilian's literature, the majority of the generation findings are more similar than different, although the social and developmental situations are somewhat different from the US and Europe literature. For instance, according to Motta, Gomes and Valente (2009) and Veloso (2012), and Veloso, Dutra, & Nakata, (2016) nowadays, with the globalization of consumption and technology, the values of young Brazilians would be similar to those of the Americans, making possible an association between the Brazilian and American youth (see also Oliveira, Piccinini, & Bitencourt, 2012).

Background: current epistemology on generations

A generation is a group of individuals who share a similar worldview, resulting from exposure to common social and historical events occurring within the same time, throughout their formative years (Cogin, 2012; Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2007; Hill, 2002; Inglehart, 1997; Jurkiewicz & Brown, 1998; Kopperschmidt, 2000; Mannheim, 1952; Martin, 2005; Smith & Clurman, 1997). Parry and Urwin (2011) presented the need of “a generational adjustment of values, learning and working styles at the workplace” (p.80) redesigning the way leaders should think and act in the workplace.

A closer look to each generation may help to glimpse their frame of references, or mindset, important, as presented, to approach their interactions and understand the keystone of their conflicts. As previously mentioned, the not yet working Z or 2000 Generation and the few still working members of the Veterans or Traditionalists, were not suitable for this study for obvious reasons, so we'll limit our study to three generations that are prevalent in the workforce, Baby boomers, Generation X and Generation Y, based on Howe and Strauss' (2000) taxonomy, as shown in Table 1, as follows:

Table 1: The Generations, main events on formative years and main characteristics

Baby Boomers 1964-1946	Generation X 1965 -1980	Generation Y 1980-2000
- Cold war, Civil rights, the women's movement, and Vietnam's war (Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2007).	- Born in an unstable socioeconomic period / saw parents losing jobs (Glass, 2007; Parry & Urwin, 2011)	- Desired children (Smola & Sutton, 2002)
- John Kennedy and M.L.King Jr. assassinations, the Watergate scandal, the sexual revolution (Bradford, 1993) and Woodstock (Adams, 2000).	- Three Mile Island, the Iran-Contra affair and the Iranian hostage crisis (Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2007)	- Grew up in a time of economic expansion and prosperity becoming the most affluent generation (Allen, 2004).
- Educated in a traditional system with well-prepared teachers and rigorous academic standards, grading on their ability to share and work well together (Kopperschmidt, 2000)	- Rise of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) threatening the recent conquered sexual liberation	- September 11th attacks, the Columbine High School shootings (Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2007)
- Redefinition of gender roles and family constellations and rise of the divorce rate (Kopperschmidt, 2000)	- Fall of the Soviet Union (1914-1989) and fall of Berlin's wall (Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008)	- Socialized with several core messages like 'you are special', 'leave no one behind,' 'be connected 24/7', 'achieve now', 'serve your community' (Raines, 2010)
- Grew up embracing the psychology of entitlement. expecting the best from life (Kopperschmidt, 2000)	- Education emphasis on social skills and self-esteem; an anti-child society, increasing social diversity, the first generation to use computers and videogames (Kopperschmidt, 2000)	- Raised in a digital world, spend more than 6h online (Eisner, 2005; Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2007)
- Self-confident, tend to seek consensus in decision-making (Smola & Sutton, 2002)	- Self-absorbed parents raising the generation of latchkey kids (Karp, et al., 1999)	- Grew up under the pressure to excel in school and to overcome parental divorce (Allen, 2004)
- Bring a “do whatever it takes” mentality and micro-manage others (Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2007; Westerman & Yamamura, 2007)	- Pragmatism (Smith & Clurman, 1997)	- Participation on family decisions and expect to do the same at work (Johns, 2003)

- Hard workers with difficulties to balance work-life (Martin & Tulgan, 2004)	- Skeptical attitude regarding the company and politics, tending to act independently and individualistically (Wong, Gardiner, Lang, & Coulon; 2008)	- The most technically literate and the most educated generation in history (Sullivan, Forrey, Carraher & Mainiero, 2009; Salacuse, 2007)
- Trust as a backbone of relationships and a key principle in decision making (Korb, 2010)	- Tend to see each job as temporary and each company as a 'stepping stone' to something else (Filipczak, 1994)	- Eager for 'constant feedback (Kelan, 2012)
- Abhor laziness (Eisner, 2005)	- Innovative and embrace change. Multitasking parallel thinkers, able to do several things in parallel. They are resourceful, risk takers and independent (Kupperschmidt, 2000)	- Do believe they can do anything they decide to (Martin & Tulgan, 2004)
- Value character and loyalty and tend to be competitive, measuring success via status symbols and money (Crampton & Hodge, 2007)	- Sense of entrepreneurship and confidence to go for targets (Johns, 2003; Johnson & Lopes, 2008)	- Technology-driven; a multitasking group of individuals who are committed to generating a culturally sensitive, optimistic, and fun workplace (Sessa et al., 2007; Steele & Gordon, 2006)
- Idealists, creating or joining many causes, as self-help movements (Kupperschmidt, 2000)	- Seek a work-life balance (Wong, Gardiner, Lang, & Coulon; 2008)	- To connect give speed, high demands for customization and interactivity (Tulgan, 2004)
	- Distrustful of organizations and governments Not prone to show loyalty to the company (Sharagay & Tziner, 2011)	Distrust job security (Hira, 2007)
	- Pioneers of the free-agent workforce (Johns, 2003)	- Making money less important than contributing to society, parenting well and enjoy a fully balanced life (Eisner, 2005; Allen, 2004)
		- Need to see meaning and value in their contributions to be involved (Morrison, et al., 2006)

Generations: Brazilian perspective

Regarding the Brazilian context, 40 percent of the labor force is considered in the Generation Y². According to the IBGE³, from 2004 to 2014 the Brazilian labor market registered a structural change such as increased formalization rate, reduction of the unemployment rate, labor income growth and income mass, real changes in the minimum wage, reducing inequalities between income groups. From an international perspective, the Brazilian labor market behavior in the period followed a different trajectory of most developed countries, which had a slowdown in economic activity, decreased employment and increased informality with the 2008⁴ economic crisis.

However, according to Trevizan (2017) the Brazilian economy has passed in recent years by an economic, political and institutional turmoil, leaving the economic growth period to a deep recession. In 2016 and 2017, Brazil reported a decline in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) shrinking the economy in 3.8 % in 2015 and 3.6 % in 2016, according to the Brazil Central Bank financial system overview⁵.

This change impacted the population with the rising unemployment and inflation rates, and consumption habits as well, but, in addition to economic factors, the political scenario was another relevant point that marked the last years, spreading uncertainty after the impeachment of Dilma Rousseff and the gigantic dimensions of corruption exposed by the Car Wash Operation. The instability led people and companies to cut down expenses and investments, in a vicious cycle of distrust (Kanter, 2006; Dias, 2016, 2017).

2 PwC Saratoga, Benchmarking de Capital Humano. Brasil:PwC, 2014

3 IBGE Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics or IBGE (Portuguese: Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística), is the agency responsible for statistical, geographic, cartographic, geodetic and environmental information in Brazil.

4 Síntese de indicadores sociais : uma análise das condições de vida da população brasileira : 2015 / IBGE, Coordenação de População e Indicadores Sociais. - Rio de Janeiro : IBGE, 2015. 137p. - (Estudos e pesquisas. Informação demográfica e socioeconômica, ISSN 1516-3296 ; n. 35) retrieved from <http://biblioteca.ibge.gov.br/visualizacao/livros/liv95011.pdf> on July 2016.

5 Brazil Central Bank Report Retrieved from http://www.bcb.gov.br/ingles/estabilidade/2017_10/fsrFinSysOverview.pdf in January, 27th, 2018.

Federal Constitution and Brazilian Labor Laws⁶ (CLT) normalize labor relations since the admittance at companies, till retirement, after at least thirty-five years of service and contribution to social security. So, if generation interactions may be an important issue for private companies, it tends to be even more important in long tenure Government-owned companies, where the turnover ratio is very small⁷. Private sector employees count with 37% of the employees are 50+, and the other pick of concentration is below 35⁸, representing as presented in Figure 1, as follows:

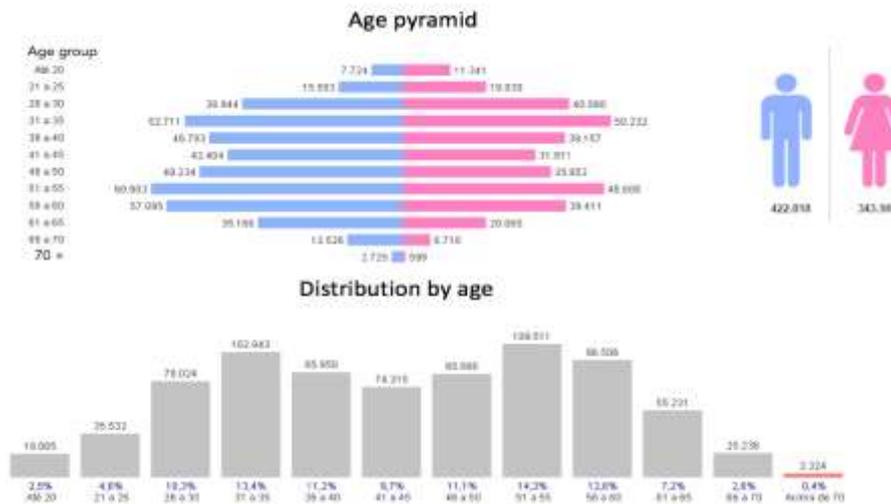


Figure 1 Age pyramid and Age distribution

Brazil is a continental country with too many disparities regarding regions and social level as well and, according to Oliveira et al., (2012) it would be difficult to frame a generation, specifically they mention Gen Y due to the inequalities of the experiences along the formational years and socioeconomic status, creating many “youths” resulting different characteristics and values.

Answering Oliveira et al., (2012), Veloso (2012) posited that, although widely speaking, their point is valid, the generational studies covers *employed people* in different companies, that represent a specific and selected group of analysis and it study is useful for many HRM purposes.

Veloso and collaborators presented a series of studies regarding generations aiming the Brazilian employed population, using a large and well-known research from *Great Place to Work*⁹ a world-wide research and consulting group. This company runs an international research known as Best Place to Work (BPTW) that investigates directly those who are employed in different sizes' companies. Using BPTW database, Veloso and collaborators

6 Consolidação das Leis do Trabalho – CLT (*Labor Laws Consolidation*), Brazilian Federal Law no. 5.452, May 1st, 1943.

7 See more at <http://www.statista.com/statistics/279722/number-of-petrobras-employees/> and Petrobras 2014 Sustainability Report at www.investidorpetrobras.com.br/download/3510

8 Retrieved from <http://www.sindsaudeprev-es.org.br/envelhecimento-de-funcionarios-no-setor-publico-e-preocupante/> in April, 19th 2016.

⁹ Great Place to Work® is a research and consulting company running 3 million surveys/ year, representing roughly 10 million employees per year, in 58 countries and grounded on thirty years of data. In the United States, produces the annual Fortune 100 Best Companies to Work For® list and over a dozen other Best Workplaces lists in partnership with Fortune including the Best Workplaces for Millennials, Women, Diversity, Small and Medium Companies, as well as for many different industries. Retrieved from <https://www.greatplacetowork.com/about-us#team> in January, 27th, 2017

(Veloso, 2012; Veloso, Dutra e Nakata, 2008; Veloso *et al.*, 2009; Veloso, Silva & Dutra, 2011, 2012; Veloso *et al.*, 2012) posited that, although speaking in three generations in Brazil may involve some risks, for they can have different contours once some major historical events may have different influence upon the forming generations (Veloso, 2012), the studies presented showed that most of the generational characteristics portrayed in the international literature are also present in the Brazilian literature (see also Schewe & Meredith, 2004).

Regarding the Brazilian generational nuances, this study relies upon three main streams of research (a) Fleury and Fisher (1992) that present a comprehensive analysis of Brazilian main events that could, similarly, influence generational outlooks; (b) Reis, Antonio, Laizo, and Marinho, (2010) that presented a study regarding values among generations and the valuable work of (c) Veloso and collaborators (Dutra, Veloso, Fischer, & Nakata, 2009; Veloso, Dutra, Fischer, Pimentel, Silva, & Amorim, 2011; Veloso, Silva, & Dutra, 2012; Dias et al. 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014) .

Following the abovementioned Brazilian authors, this study accepts Howe and Strauss' (2000) time span for delineating the generations.

Birth of Baby boomers in Brazil (1946-1964)

The world was divided by the Iron Curtain, keeping Europe, and the rest of the world, under the fear of the Cold War between United States and the Soviet Union. In the west side, the US and Europe were fueled by the struggle for civil rights, the sexual revolution, and the advancement of the feminist movement (Schewe & Meredith, 2004).

Fleury and Fisher (1992) posited that the main event to influence this post-II World War generation was the creation of the Brazilian industrial park and the rural exodus, duplicating the urban population from 31% in the 40's to more than 67% in the 80's.

This movement was orchestrated by the Government with the investments in infrastructure and the creation of SOEs like Petrobras (oil & gas), Companhia Siderúrgica Nacional (steel) and Companhia Vale do Rio Doce (mining). The SOEs shaped their management systems within the traditional parameters of the personnel department, presenting a formal and hierarchical managerial style, with a clear influence from the military that, at that time, were the main directors and board of these companies. In the 60's, with the entry of multinational companies, slowly introduced human resources management models (Fleury & Fisher, 1992; Silva, 2013).

Early Brazilian Baby Boomers grew up under the effects of president Getulio Vargas (1930-1945) suicide, an oppressive economic debacle, with high rates of unemployment hidden below protective labor laws and massive government propaganda that exalted national values, developing a strong nationalism and the perception of the state as the solution for all national problems (Fleury & Fisher, 1992). These Boomers also experienced the optimism of President Kubitschek period (1956-1961), promoting to "50 years in 5 Program" and the building and transference of the country's capital to Brasilia DF (Veloso, et al., 2011).

So, Brazilian Baby Boomers tend to be optimistic, nationalistic and to expect solutions from the government (Schewe & Meredith, 2004).

Birth of generation X and entry of Baby Boomers into the labor market in Brazil (1965-1979)

Gen X was born in the same period Baby boomers came to age. This is an ambivalent period known as “The Brazilian Economic Miracle” (Earp & Prado, 2003), a time of economic prosperity and patriotic boastfulness at the pinnacle of the military dictatorship in Brazil, known as “The Iron Years” (1964-1985) that abolished democratic congress with Institutional Act No. 5 silencing political opposition, and suppressing civil rights, at the same time, making even more present the role of the State in defining the directions of the Brazilian economy (Fleury & Fisher, 1992). Conversely, Baby boomers in the USA were experiencing an increasing democratic freedom and economic liberalism.

This era was characterized by an increasing economic growth, with an intensification in imports and exports, promotion of a rapid industrialization and urbanization, with huge investments in large infrastructure projects and the expansion of the educational system, however, at the cost of the snowballing public debt and the suppression of civil rights.

Thus, Gen X values are influenced by a sense of belligerence about government institutions, organizational skepticism, social alienation, and a repressed silence as a means of survival.

Birth of generation Y and entry of generation X into the labor market (1980 – 2000)

According to Fleury and Fischer (1992), Brazil re-democratization in 1986, and the promulgation of the Constitution of 1988 encouraged the debate on diverse subjects of the life in society, with rise of the Unions and more participation in the corporations and social life.

New technologies arrived in Brazil when President Collor (1990-1992) opened national market for the international trade, becoming the first generation to use computers and video games also in Brazil. They also were terrified by the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) with the public media exposition of known artists' AIDS advancement until their death. They celebrate the fall of the Soviet Union and fall of Berlin's wall.

Thus, some authors posited that these experiences influenced them to become innovative, embracing changes, risk takers, entrepreneurial, resourceful and independent. However, generation X workers found it difficult to enter the labor market, in the so-called "lost decade" of the 1980's and early 1990's, with the greater openness of the Brazilian economy to international competition (Fleury & Fisher, 1992).

Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, and Sowa (1986) warned that Generation X looks for organizations that value their competencies, reward productivity (rather than endurance) and create a sense of community. Generation X employees tend to change jobs if their work demands are not met.

Generation Y

At the dawn of 21st century, the world socioeconomic scenario was defined by Zygmunt Bauman as the *liquid modernity* (Bauman, 2013) portrayed by the culture of non-permanence with volatile markets and an increasing incorporation of information and communication technology into people's daily lives, changing in a fast speed, the way things are perceived and valued (Martin & Tulgan, 2006).

Millennials request for frequent feedback and their desire to quickly ascend in the hierarchy and pay raises (Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2007; Francis-Smith, 2004; Kupperschmidt, 2000; Ng et al., 2010; Whitacre, 2007) what, somehow, may bump against Baby boomers work values. In spite of their beginner position, Millennial workers ask for a deeper level of information, what astound and challenge supervisors, potentially increasing the tensions at the workplace (George, 2008). Myers and Sadaghiani (2010) stated that

Millennials' expectations for frequent, supportive, and open communication, as well as their lack of formality regarding status, structure, or propriety, may cause senior level workers to feel disrespected by young workers, whom they believe have not yet earned these considerations. Boomers may even resent Millennials' implicit and explicit requests for communication and information. (p.229)

Veloso and collaborators (Veloso, 2012; Veloso, Dutra e Nakata, 2008; Veloso *et al.*, 2009; Veloso, Silva & Dutra, 2011, 2012; Veloso *et al.*, 2012) studying GPTW database, and Smola and Sutton (2002) studying 350 American workers, found similarities between the X and Y.

The findings of both studies, presented X and Y generations with a critical and skeptical view of the corporations and formal work environments; aspiring flexible work hours and home-office work, in a quest to balance life and work. Both of them demand more frequent feedback to improve performance.

Hershatter and Epstein (2010) held that there is considerable evidence that Millennials are already more family-oriented than previous generations. Thus, their older co-workers may initially respond to Millennials' work-life balance effort with resistance and skepticism (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002; Smola & Sutton, 2002). This can happen particularly in their relationship with Boomers coworkers, who often occupies leadership positions, that may doubt Millennials' commitment and dedication to the organization, seeing them as selfish or lazy (Collinson & Collinson 1997; Raines, 2002).

In many ways, Millennials differ from Baby Boomers who are, comparatively, more loyal to the company, more cooperative, and optimistic about work. Eisenberger et al., (1986) stated that Millennials as the highest voluntary turnover rate among generations. Martin (2005) using some sarcasm, said that Generation Y employees may be prepared to make long-term commitments to organizations... however, that can mean one year.

Gen X, and especially Millennials, believe that work is less central to their lives, valuing leisure and seeking more freedom from supervision and work-life balance, than their Boomer counterparts, Smola and Sutton (2002) are of the same opinion that the importance of work in one's life (work centrality) has declined in the younger generations.

Boomers and Xers, raised in a more individually perspective, are quite *time sensitive*, that is, sensitive to expend time on something without a *clear return of investment*, as to support newcomers' needs. They are not as feedback oriented as Millennials would expect, leading to a twofold possible expectations' clash: in one side, younger workers feeling neglected by managers and demanding for more feedback (that means, more of their scarce time), and, at the other side, Boomers, and Xers feeling as Millennials' babysitters, demanded to spend a time they don't have with a person they don't think that deserves that (Kandelousi & Seong, 2011; Marston, 2010). Practice shows that the everlasting workload and exponential increase of complexity both in work and life, put the importance of 'training newcomers' at the bottom of insider's priority's list.

Another important issue regards how and where work is done. Millennials are the first generation that has grown up in houses with computers, and, internet availability (Gorman et al., 2004; Raines, 2002), they have been described as the most technically literate generation (Eisner, 2005; Wolberg & Pokrywczynski, 2001), that means, they interact more using media than previous generations (Gorman et al., 2004; Pew Research Center, 2007). Allerton (2001) posited that the universalization and early exposition to medias fashioned Millennials mindset and behavior differently than prior generations, bringing new issues, that previous generations didn't face, as, for instance, where and when the work is done.

Technologies had changed the perception of time and space, creating a blurred line between work and personal life. One can work from almost everywhere, at any time. The universal use of multifunctional devices at the workplace increased the use of digital ways of communication (such as WhatsApp, Instagram, Snapchat, SMS texting, and Facebook) and had altered perceptions of appropriate time to response (feedback) in digital communication (Robinson, 2011).

As Millennials tend to see work within these flexible terms (especially where and when the work is done) they ask for flexible work schedules to accommodate their aspiration for work-life balance (Randstad Work Solutions, 2007; SHRM, 2009; Simmons, 2008) that goes on the opposite course of Boomers' work values and expectations. Favero and Heath's (2012) affirmed that "historically, employers placed a greater premium on face time and the number of hours worked as an indication of worker productivity rather than on actual productivity" (p.346). Although productivity metrics can be more precise nowadays, maybe there is still present a tendency among Baby boomers to look at effort and suffering as a sign of commitment and value, what is irrational and obnoxious for Millennials.

Adding to that, Generation Y stands out in the work environment for some particular characteristics, as, for example, their optimism regarding unlimited professional growth, the need of learning in the workplace and quest for personal meaning connecting personal values to the company values (Veloso, et al., 2008) as summarized in Table 2, as follows:

Table 2: Main Brazilian events and generations compared. Adapted by the authors from Dutra, Veloso, Fischer and Nakata, 2009; Fleury and Fisher, 1992, Reis, Antonio, Laizo, and Marinho, 2010; Veloso, 2012; Veloso, Dutra, Fischer, Pimentel, Silva, and Amorim, 2011; Veloso, Silva, and Dutra, 2012.

Brazilian Context and Main Events and generations			
Generation	At the formational years	When they arrived the labor market	
	1946-1964	1965-1979	Main Characteristics
Baby Boomer	Cold War and the Iron Curtain	The Brazilian Economic Miracle	Tend to be optimistic, nationalistic and to expect solutions from the government
	President Juscelino Kubitschek "50 years in 5" Program	The Iron Years: military dictatorship with the Institutional Act No. 5 and censorship	
	Government investment in infrastructure and creation of SOEs	Social agitation and strong repression	
	Rural exodus and high birth rate	Rapid industrialization and urbanization, Expansion of the educational system	
	High rates of unemployment but blurred by government nationalistic propaganda		
	1965-1979	1980 – 2000	Main Characteristics
X Generation	The Brazilian Economic Miracle	Lost decade (1980-1990)	Belligerence against government institutions Organizational skepticism Social alienation Innovative and entrepreneurial, Risk takers, resourceful and independent
	The Iron Years: military dictatorship with the Institutional Act No. 5 and censorship	Brazil re-democratization and the Constitution of 1988	
	Social agitation and strong repression	Rise of the Unions with progressive political participation and national strikes	
	Rapid industrialization and urbanization, Expansion of the educational system	Death of elected president Tancredo Neves	
		Globalization and market opening President Collor impeachment Reengineering and hyperinflation AIDS killing slowly known artists	
	1980 – 2000	After 2000	Main Characteristics
Y Generation	Lost decade (1980-1990)	Culture of non-permanence and volatility	Critical and skeptical view of the corporations and formal work environments; Flexible work hours and home-office work Frequent feedback to improve performance and career growth. Belief on unlimited and fast professional growth Quest for meaning/purpose
	Brazil re-democratization and the Constitution of 1988	9/11 terrorist attack in NY	
	Rise of the Unions with progressive political participation and national strikes	Cell phone, Internet and games	
	Death of elected president Tancredo Neves	Consolidation of democracy and economy	
	Globalization and market opening	Scarcity of skilled workers: labor blackout	
	President Collor impeachment	Rapid expansion of telecom and internet	
Reengineering and hyperinflation	President Lula election and workers party assuming the power until President Dilma's		
	AIDS killing slowly known artists		

These beliefs and assertions among different cohorts may compromise the intergenerational workplace, as seen before. Academic and press literature present an increasing attention on generational interactions, referring conflicts caused by the clash of perspectives and values at the workplace. Authors as Benson and Brown (2011), Burke (2005) and Eisner (2005) mention

that this subject has been a recursive topic in HR meetings, but resulting few consolidated orientations for policies and practices. Eisner (2005) posits that managers and senior managers are quite bewildered regarding how to deal with this new employee.

Discussion: The generational identity at a multigenerational workplace

A multigenerational workplace is not something new, however, the growing interest on the subject may reflect concerns regarding new challenges of people attraction, development, and retention. For instance, Bloem, et al., (2014) and Schwab (2017) mentioned the impact of the Fourth Industrial Revolution in the way of thinking and working. Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod (2001) had pointed that, in some countries, organizations were finding increasingly hard to attract and retain talented workers, particularly those who are younger and highly skilled. In Brazil, from 2006 to 2010, a series of articles were adverting against a so-called manpower shortage or “workforce blackout” (Domingues, et al., 2016), what changed substantially HR strategies for attraction and talent retention.

Nicholas (2008) presented the lack interpersonal interaction between generations as a symptom of this divide and Stevanin et al., (2018) mentioned that this lack of connection increases conflicts in the workplace, moving the attention from the work towards the tension created by the conflict. According Dias (2011, 2012, 2016), the conflict can be avoided when parties are prone to accept their differences, and create trust among parties.

Favero and Heath (2012) presented a need for understanding the workplace through a generational perspective, what is of greater importance in the first interactions:

Each generation brings to the work environment a different perspective grounded in unique demographic, economic, and social experiences that, ultimately, influence the divergent ways each defines success and security.... generational differences result in friction and affect job satisfaction, retention, and, consequently, productivity. Furthermore, the generation gap contributes to subtle mistrust and communication breakdowns between coworkers, preventing effective teamwork and collaboration. (p.336)

Approaching the workplace using multigenerational lens, may amplify the perspective of the noticeable ongoing changes and its’ impact upon the workplace.

Stevanin et al., (2018) posited “the failure to comprehend generational differences would result in the need for organizations to change their structure by reducing the number of staff” (p.15).

Although we had already presented the generational identity based on Joshi et al., (2010) that offers a workable framework, one of the most known and used approaches present the generations uses an age-group taxonomy, even though, De Meuse and Mlodzik (2010) and Parry and Urwin (2011) point out that, depending on which author you read, the precise age ranges and names for each generation may vary.

It’s worthy of mentioning that, although there may be questionings regarding the differences of Brazil’s and US generations (Oliveira et al., (2012), the present study will be grounded mostly on Howe and Strauss (2000) taxonomy because it “used rich historical data to define U.S. generations back to the sixteenth century. This taxonomy is the most comprehensive and ubiquitous generational taxonomy available” (Kowske, Rasch, & Wiley, 2010, p.265) that are (a) Veterans or Traditionalist: born before 1945. Lived under scarcity and fear, influenced by

World War (WW) I and II, the Economic Crash of 1929 (Shragay & Tziner, 2011); (b) Baby Boomers: born between 1946-1964. Those born just after the WW II, mostly in the US, were profoundly affected by the Vietnam War, the civil rights riots, the John Kennedy and M. L. King Jr. assassinations, the Watergate scandal, the sexual revolution and Woodstock (Bradford, 1993; Adams, 2000), they grew up expecting the best from life (Kupperschmidt, 2000); (c) Generation X (1965-1979) born into an unstable socioeconomic period and witnessed their parents' helpless effort to keep their jobs in the corporate downsizing frenzy, and, as a consequence, 'they are not likely to show loyalty to a particular organization' (Shragay & Tziner, 2011, p.379); (d) Generation Y, Millennials, Nexters, Internet Generation, Me Generation or Y'ers (1980 – 2000) that grew up in a time of economic expansion and prosperity and are the most prosperous and scholarly generation (Allen, 2004) and, finally, the (e) 2000 Generation or Z Generation: born after 2001 to the present day. In this study, we will not focus on the extreme generations for practical reasons, once the Veterans' Generation is no longer working and the Z Generation isn't working yet, that demand a minimum age for working and a maximum age for working, before compulsory retirement.

Bruce Tulgan (2004) conducted a comprehensive ten-year upon management practices of more than 700 companies searching a clearer picture of the contemporary U.S. workplace. In his study, Tulgan affirmed that between 1993 and 2003, a profound shift in the values and norms of the U.S. workforce escorted to the actual challenging environment. Tulgan (2004) mentioned, for example, that work has become more challenging and time-consuming; the employer-employee relationship moved towards a less hierarchical approach, and work relations no longer tended to be long-standing relationships. The author pointed that employees are moving towards a more active voice at work, taking more responsibility for their own success and failure, developing critical skills and strengthening professional network looking forward career development.

Tulgan (2004) also stressed the importance of immediate supervisors to handle this complex environment and points to the need for investing in people management skills. The author mentioned a push-pull dynamic where, in one edge there are supervisors aggressively pushing to unleash employees' potential to increase productivity and, at the opposite edge, employees looking forward to having more *life after work* [emphasis added].

Parry and Urwin (2011) pointed that the generational conflict is not a temporary phenomenon and should be understood in a broader perspective. Garman, Leach, and Spector, (2006) presented it as a new drift in the marketplace that needs to be addressed properly. Kreitner (1995), Buford, Bedeian, and Linder (1995), Higgins (1994) and Kupperschmidt (2000) proposed that understanding these generational differences is critical to instigate employee productivity, innovation, and corporate citizenship.

Aware of the impact of these different cohorts at the workplace, and the scarcity of research that could foster HRM for the Brazilian companies, this study encompasses these generational perspectives to shed light upon newcomers and old-timers' interactions at the workplace. Understanding generations characteristics may help to understand their expectations, and, consequently, their interactions (Burgoon, 1993; Burgoon et al., 2000; Leets, 2001; Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010).

Considering the pace of change in our society, the implications for leaders and incumbents are to challenge the presumption that the new generation need to adapt to the older ones, as mentioned in the literature that presents newcomers in a quest for internalization of

organizational norms, values, and practices so they can work with more autonomy (as presented by Bauer et al., 2007; Liu, Wang, Bamberger, Shi, & Bacharach, 2015; Wang et al., 2015). Instead, both generations need to cooperate to adapt the company to a liquid society (Bauman, 2013) that demands more innovation and service in all interactions. This paradigm shift may be one of the major innovation in the organizational mindset.

Internal conflicts are known for shifting the focus from productivity to organizational power games (Dias, 2014; Schaerer, Lee, Galinsky, & Thau, 2018). Prevention is proven to be cheaper and more efficient than intervention. HRM needs to anticipate conflicts and change organizational structures as, for instance, rewarding policies, to reduce the gap between generations.

The present study recommends investing more time and attention to comprehend the generational interface, understanding each generational cohort's expectations and potentials to get the best from each one. An important shift for leaders is to move towards the needs and demands of each generation, as their needs are different (Crampton & Hodge, 2007; DiCecco, 2006, Salahuddin, 2010; Stevanin et al., 2018) inverting the direction from being obeyed, to be admired and followed by teams.

Finally, for future research, we encourage longitudinal studies on generations regarding the Brazilian the workplace, both in Public and private sectors, in order to compare possible relations among these two dimensions.

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