

## Positive Stereotyping Could Be Reasoned to Workplace Intergenerational Retention: A Study of Three Generations in the Health Sector of Pakistan

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### ABSTRACT

#### **Purpose:**

The research on intergenerational work environment has attracted researchers in past decades variously and seems valuable in the present time era. The purpose of the present research is to examine the effect of positive stereotyping on intergenerational retention while organizational commitment plays mediating role in this relationship.

#### **Methodology:**

The sample consisted of 206 nurses from hospitals operating under the Punjab health department and the convenience sampling technique was used based on the cross-sectional design. The quantitative survey was conducted to assess the role of organizational commitment between positive stereotypes and workplace inter-generational retention.

#### **Findings:**

The results of the current study were analyzed on SMART PLS 3.2.2 software to predict reliability, assess the structural model, and hypothesized relationships between variables. Obtained results show that positive stereotyping has a significant direct effect on intergenerational retentions. Further organizational commitment significant positively mediates this relationship.

#### **Conclusion:**

Drawing upon generational cohort theory the research highlights the positive role of stereotyping among various generations at the workplace and recommends to the retention of educators is more positive stereotyping among various age group employees.

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## 1. Introduction

Global research on multiple generations in organizational culture has focused on their ways of interactions, communications, and performance (Lyons et al., 2019). For the last few decades, people of various ages have different types of stereotyping, behaviors, and commitments in the workplace (Hammond et al., 2017). Overall work environment develops the perceptions of stereotyping of each generation (Lober, 2017). Past research highlighted the negative as well as positive stereotyping in the workplace (Anderson et al., 2017; Stewart et al., 2017; Lyons et al 2019). Positive stereotyping is mainly associated with retention of a workforce with a collaborative work environment, and affective values: social contact, appreciation, Meaningful work, enjoyment, interesting work, and variety. Secondly intrinsic growth values: autonomy, learning, and self-realization. Thirdly extrinsic growth values: achievement, money, status, and advancement. And finally explained context-related values: leisure time, job security, health, and stability (Krumm et al 2013). Work values, expectations, and perceptions of generational stereotyping affect their retention in organizations (Clark, 2017). The retention of various generations has been affected by different stereotyping behaviors such as how they treat in the organization, work ethics, acceptance by other generations, and level of relationship with others (Weeks & Schaffert, 2019). Strong perceptions about a positive workplace environment have increased the level of commitment and retention in the organization (Beaudoin et al., 2019). A collaborative work environment enhances the organizational commitments among the ages of different people (Morrow et al., 2012).

### 1.1. Significance of the Study

Individuals' work and behavior in the organization have been identified by their cohort. Generational differences and positive stereotyping could be analyzed from their respective cohort i.e., the Baby boomer generation, Generation X, and Millennials (Alferjany & Alias, 2021). Generational cohort, flexibility, and orientation to change could be benefited workplace retention of the nursing community in various hospital cultures (Stevanin et al 2020). The study of White et al 2020 sees the generational differences and similarities of nurses in the Victorian hospital, in England and recommended to see the generalizability of the findings of cohorts' effects on intention to stay in organizations in eastern cultures. The present research attempts to extend the concept of positive generational stereotyping of the nurse's community and its effect on workforce retention by mediating the role of organizational commitments with the more standardized tool by focusing on two basic research questions: (1) Do positive generational stereotypes has a positive impact on organizational commitments and workforce retention? (2) Does organizational commitment mediate the relationship between positive generational stereotypes and workplace intergenerational retention?

## 2. Literature Review

The organizational environment shows the role of various generations in the workplace. Each generation has similar work characteristics based on its respective cohort (Gursoy et al., 2008). Generation is defined as a set of people belonging to the same range of birth years by sharing common work and Life's values. They have the same kind of historical and socio-cultural context generally which are different from other generations (Schulery, 2013). Definition explained by James et al (2016) of various generations by their birth range as traditional 1928-45, Baby boomers (1944-64), Generation X (1965-80), millennial or Generation Y (1981-1995), and new millennial 1995 to onward (Stewart et al., 2017). Workplace stereotypes have been associated with various, combinations of attitudes, social perceptions, and interactions with assessing other individuals (Fishman, 2016). Positive Interpersonal communication and age diversity are significantly positively related to

organizational commitment that enables the individual to stay in the organization for a longer time (Joshi et al., 2011). According to cohort theory, people build relations with other people for social, and emotional desires (Macky et al 2008). Individual stereotypes and intrinsic and extrinsic values affect retention and commitment in the workplace (Deal et al., 2010). A collaborative work environment with age diversity retains the experienced employees in the organization (Wieck et al., 2010). Age variation and interpersonal relations are the base for commitment and retention (Fletcher et al., 2018).

**H<sub>1</sub>: There is a positive relationship between lack of generational stereotypes and organizational commitment.**

**H<sub>2</sub>: There is a positive relationship between lack of generational stereotypes and workplace intergenerational retention.**

### **2.1. Mediating Role of Organizational Commitment**

Organizational commitments are affected by intergenerational similarities and differences (Weeks & Schaffert, 2019). Organizational commitment has been shown by generational stereotyping of various age groups. The baby boomer generation respects the relations and lives for work. Generation X prefers materialistic rewards and works to live. The millennial generation has easy and cheerful feelings at work and dislikes the extra rules (Morrow et al., 2012). Generation X and Millennial stand high on organizational commitments based on a positive perception of a workplace environment (Torsello, 2019). According to Pledger et al (2017), individuals set commitments in the workplace place on perceptions of assimilation, cooperation, and conflicts. Job commitment has declined by negative stereotyping. On the other side positive stereotyping in a collaborative atmosphere increases the commitment ultimately a reason for the retention of generational groups in the workplace (Fasbender, 2016). Organizational commitment relies on formal/ informal rules and communications among group members, (Hays-Thomas, 2016). Past research identified that baby boomer and Generation X are more committed at work as compared to millennials (Zabel et al 2017; Lyons et al 2019). Organizational commitment mediates the relationship between various stereotypical behaviors and workplace retention (Sean et al., 2015). Earlier, D'Amato and Herzfeldt (2008) discussed that workplace retention is significantly influenced by group stereotyping by the mediating role of organizational commitments. In addition, Treffler and Herzig (2018) explained that the baby boomer generation has appeared hardworking and loyal. Generation X works with having an optimistic attitude and is focused on team-oriented behaviors. The millennial generation is likely to work on advanced techniques and set commitments on basis of future opportunities provided by the organization. Furthermore, Stewart et al (2017) described perceptions of stereotyping from baby boomers to millennials that influence the organizational commitments and retention. Generation X and baby boomers are conceptually considered different in respect of commitment because they are valued along to stay with the organization, job security, and retention. The research of Lavoie-Tremblay et al (2010) demonstrated that generation X is less focused to leave the organization instead of millennials. Negative stereotyping makes uneasy the millennial generation and lowers the organizational commitment.

**H<sub>3</sub>: Organizational commitment plays a significant positive mediating role between lack of generational stereotyping and workplace intergenerational retention.**

**Table.1. Generational Stereotyping, Commitment, and Retention at the Workplace**

<b>Baby Boomer Generation</b>	<b>Generation X</b>	<b>Millennial Generation</b>
Accept gender diversity at the workplace	Accept diversity at the workplace	Respect for diversity
Communicate effectively	Individualism	Look for meaningful
Optimistic	Independent, diverse, global	Motivated workers
Team oriented	Value personal interactions when communicating,	Need training opportunities and new experiences
Workaholics	Adapt to change	Collaborative in decision-making
Building leadership style	Comfortable with teamwork	Understand human needs and wants Strong sense of ethics.
Socially polite	Value autonomy/independence,	Interest in workplace Flexible at work Need relaxation and leisure activities.
Service-oriented	Desire training and development opportunities	They can work anywhere
Respect authority	Key compensation element	Give importance to individual unique values
Reluctant to disagree with peers,	Interest in flexible work arrangements	to individual unique values and perspective
Give Importance to corporate culture	Values relation of coworkers	Willingness and passion at work
Look forward to future life	Committed to organization	Values freedom
Likes to discuss	Likes to share and flexible	Live and let live

**Source: Author's own elaboration**

## 2.2. Generational Cohort Theory

The present study sees the effect of positive stereotyping on workplace intergenerational retention in the shadow of generational cohort theory. The lens of generational cohort theory is related to social identity, commitments, and positive group stereotyping (Gursoy et al., 2008). The generational cohort theory additionally explains that individuals' perceptions of stereotyping about culture, politics, and social life of an organization are the same if they were born in the same age era (Lyons et al., 2019). Generational cohort theory helps to understand the values and attitudes of various aged groups in a similar workplace (Kupperschmidt, 2000). Generational cohort theory has explained that work outcomes and productivity have been enhanced by the role of positive stereotypes. (Gursoy et al., 2008). People who have common cultural and geographical values are examined by generational cohort theory (Mannheim 1952).

## 3. Research Methodology

The present study aims to investigate the effect of positive generational stereotypes on intergenerational retention by mediating the role of organizational commitments by analyzing two basic research questions.

### 3.1. Research Design, Sampling, and Data Collection

The current study has adopted a quantitative research design. The sample of the study considered the Nurses working in various hospitals located in Rawalpindi district under the Punjab health department. Total numbers of 275 questionnaires were distributed by personal visits to these hospitals. All participants were assured of confidentiality in the information and informed about the purpose of the study. Consent forms were given to participants before starting the main survey. The convenience sampling techniques were used by employing a cross-sectional research design. Data was collected for periods of 2 to 3 weeks. A total number of 220 questionnaires were returned of which 14 are not correctly filled and finally 206 samples were selected for further analysis.

### 3.2. Instrument

To find the answer to the research questions, the quantitative scale was used developed by King & Bryant (2016). The scale has consisted of 18 items including five subcategories as Positive Intergenerational effect; Intergenerational Contact (IC); Lack of Generational Stereotypes (LGS); Workplace Generational Inclusiveness; Workplace Intergenerational Retention. The study has used only two categories of this scale which fulfill the criteria of current research.

#### 3.2.1. Lack Of Generational Stereotypes (LGS)

Item included “Co-workers outside my generation usually talk about things that don’t interest me”. Second is

#### 3.2.2. Workplace Intergenerational Retention (WIR)

Item included “In my workplace, qualified younger workers tend to be overlooked for promotions”

#### 3.2.3. Organizational Commitment.

Though various quantitative scales measure the organizational commitment, the current study has adopted the four items scale developed by Mowday & Steers (1979) and items included “I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization”.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Control Variables

The descriptive statistics on SPSS show 206 numbers of participants in which 43.6%, of baby boomers; 28.2% are Generation X and 39.5 % belong to the millennial generation.

### 4.2. Hypothesis Testing

After estimation of control variables, in the second phase analysis was run on Smart PLS 3.2.2 software. Path analysis can be calculated by Partial Least Square- Structure Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) technique to predict reliability, assess the structural model and hypothesized relationships between variables (Henseler et al., 2016). Partial Least Square-Structure Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) is used to see the indicators and constructs relationship of the structural model (inner and outer model) in three steps. In the first step composite scores of the scale are measured by the PLS algorithm. Secondly, it establishes the factors of the constructs. Thirdly, it estimates the parameters and interferences of the model by bootstrapping, (Henseler et al., 2016).

**Table.2. Constructs’ Validity & Reliability**

	Constructs Items	Loadings	AVE	VIF	CR
PGS	Co-workers outside my generation are not interested in making friends outside their generation.	0.722	0.5	1.4	0.8
	Co-workers outside my generation complain more than co-workers my age do.	0.76		1.3	
	Co-workers outside my generation tend to work differently than co-workers my age do	0.76		1.4	
	Co-workers outside my generation usually talk about things that don’t interest me.	0.652		1.3	
WIR	My co-workers make older workers feel they should retire.	0.693	0.5	1.3	0.8

	In my workplace, qualified younger workers tend to be overlooked for promotions.	0.761	1.4	
	I feel pressure from younger workers to step down.	0.701	1.3	
	I feel pressure from older workers to step down.	0.785	1.4	
	Co-workers outside my generation usually talk about things that don't interest me.	0.652	1.3	
	I feel very little loyalty to this organization.	0.782	0.6	1.4
	I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization.	0.777	1.6	
OC	I find that my values and the organization's values are very similar	0.796	1.8	
	This organization inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.	0.712	1.4	

**Source: Author's own elaboration**

Table. 2 shows significant the loadings values of the variables. The values above 0.5 are considered strong loadings (Memon & Rahman, 2014). Well-fitting Path loadings should be above 0.70 (Henseler et al, 2016). Only PGS 3 and WIR 1 loadings are average and the remaining are above .70 which stated the significant level of the model. The reliability of the scale is shown by composite reliability. Equal or greater than 0.70 is considered acceptable and above 0.80 is considered good. Values greater than 0.80 of composite reliability are considered as the goodness of fit and significant and higher than 0.70 acceptable (Hair et al., 2018). The value of composite reliability of OC is 0.9 and 0.8 for LG, WIR which represent a significant level. Moreover, the average variance extracted is also shown in the above table all the values are greater than .5 because (AVE) should be greater than 0.5 for the significant model (Lafayette, 2006). Collinearity issues also must be examined before the assessment of the structural model and this is done by calculating VIF values in the data. VIF values greater than 5 show the collinearity problem in the data (Hair et al., 2018). Table 2 shows that all values of VIF are less than 5 which presents that there is no problem of collinearity in the data set.

**Table.3. Discriminant Validity**

Constructs	PGS	OC	WIR
LGS	0.725		
OC	0.189	0.768	
WIR	0.616	0.275	0.736

Fornell-Larcker Criterion 1981

**Source: Author's own elaboration**

Table. 3 presents the items discriminant validity in which all diagonal values of the variable are higher from its corresponding below values and reach the significant values and fulfill the Fornell-Larcker Criterion (1981).

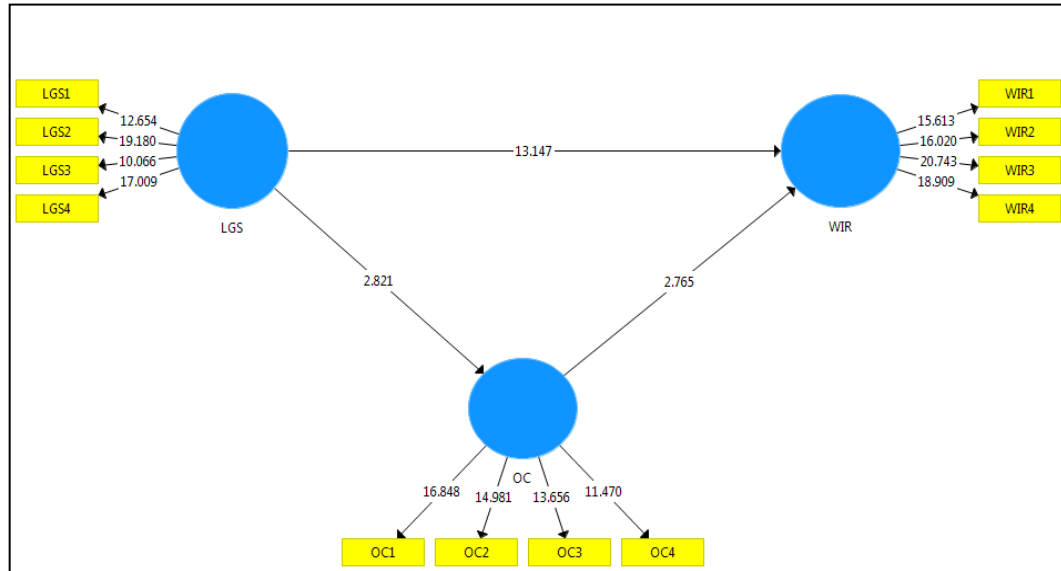
**Table.4. Total indirect effect**

Variables	PGS	OC	WIR
LGS<>OC	-	2.8	
OC<>WIR			2.7
LGS<>WIR			13.1

**Source: Author's own elaboration**

The indirect effect of lack of generational stereotypes (PGS) on workplace intergenerational retention (WIR) (dependent variable) is showing positive values LGS <>

WIR 13.14. Further organizational commitment (OC) positively mediates the relationship between LGS and WIR.i.e. (2.82 + 2.76=5.4).



**Figure.1. Total Indirect Effect**  
**Source: Author’s own elaboration**

**4.3. Measurement of Structural Model**

A structural model consisted of beta, corresponding p values <.5, and relevant T values >1.96 via bootstrapping with resampling of 5000 (Hair et al 2018). Furthermore, researchers recommended the test of F square for effect size, R square for overall effect size, and Q square for predictive relevancy of variables in the structural model (Hair et al., 2018).

**Table.5. Hypotheses Testing**

Items	Mean (M)	Decision	T Statistics	P Values
PGS -> OC	0.206	Supported	2.789	<b>0.005</b>
LGS -> WIR	0.591	Supported	11.797	<b>0.000</b>
OC -> WIR	0.166	Supported	2.827	<b>0.005</b>

Note:LGS=Lack of generational stereotypes; OC=Organizational commitment; WIR=Workplace Intergenerational retention Value > 1.96, P <.045, (Sarstedt et al., 2017)

**Source: Author’s own elaboration**

The relationship of LGS>WIR T-value 2.789, p-value =0.005, LGS>OC>WIR (T-Value, 11.79, p value=0.0000) and OC>WIR (T-value 2.82, p-value=0.005). P values should be less than 0.45 and T values should be greater than 1.96. The above table shows that t values are 2.7, 11.7, and 2.8, and all p values are below to 0.00 level which is the level of significance, (Sarstedt et al., 2017). The result of Table 6 supported the hypotheses decision of the

**Table.6. F Square**

Constructs	PGS	OC	WIR
PGS		0.037	0.354
OC			0.044
WIR			

**Source: Author’s own elaboration**

F square presents the effect size of independent variables on mediators and dependent variables. Hair et al (2018) suggested the Cohen's (1988) criteria of F square that begin from 0.02, .15, and .35 as small, medium, and large effects. Table 6 shows the effect of positive generational stereotyping on organizational commitment is small and on workplace intergenerational retention is large.

**Table.7. R Square, Q Square**

Constructs	R Square	Q square
OC	0.036	0.01
WIR	0.405	0.26

**Source: Author's own elaboration**

R square sees the overall effect size in the model and Q square presents the accuracy of the constructs. The value of R square 0.25 is considered weak, 0.50 moderate, and 0.75 substantial. The values of r square greater than .80 indicate the problem of multicollinearity (Hair et al., 2018). The values of R square higher than 0.25 present the acceptable value. Table 7 shows the small weak to moderate values of r square in the acceptable level of significance. Further for accuracy of the constructs in the structural model values of q square should be greater than zero. Values starting from 0 to 0.50 present the small to large predictive relevancy of constructs (Hair et al 2018) (Hair et al 2018). The data in Table 7 shows that the q square values are small to the medium relationship of the constructs. The accuracy of the items is relevant and at a significant level.

## **5. Discussion, Limitations, and Future Recommendations**

The aim of the study has described the theory and quantitative analysis of how the lack of stereotypes positively related to intergenerational retention and further this relation is positively mediated by work commitment. This concept hypothesized that organizational commitment mediates the relation between positive stereotyping and intergenerational work retention. Generational work has mainly consisted of beliefs, work values, and social relationships among various ages of people (Denton & Maatgi 2016). Positive stereotyping is mainly associated with the retention of the workforce with the collaborative work environment, affective values: social contact, appreciation, meaningful work, enjoyment, interesting work, and variety (Krumm et al 2013). The negative effects of ageism have been declined by a low level of negative stereotyping (King & Bryant, 2018). Key factors of organizational success have been associated with a positive work environment and relationships between the individuals (Stewart et al., 2017). Age diversity and organizational commitment have influenced generations' retention (Akhavan et al., 2017; Warshawski et al., 2017). Previous studies also showed that organizational satisfaction has been positively correlated with a lack of negative ageism (Lagacé et al., 2019). A fair and positive work atmosphere has been developed by positive generational stereotyping (Stanton, 2017). The result of the current study shows that positive generational stereotyping (PGS) has a positive effect on Workplace intergenerational retention (WIR) (13.147) and further this relation is mediated by organizational commitment. (2.8 + 2.7).

### **5.1. Limitations**

The present study has some limitations. First of all, cross-sectional research design used for the collection of data, limits its scope. Future studies may adopt the longitudinal design to see the results more virtually. Secondly, data was collected from Hospitals located in specific cities of Pakistan. Future studies can select sample sizes from other organizations or regions. Finally, the data was collected by using a quantitative scale based on positive generational stereotyping and workplace intergenerational retention by mediating the role



of organizational commitment. The present study has evaluated the effect of positive stereotyping on retention. Future research may be conducted to see the negative generational stereotyping with work outcomes.

## 5.2. Organizational Implications

The current study helps to improve performance and provide guidance to retain valuable employees of various ages. The present study addresses the various age groups working in the same workplace and it provides possible recommendations to create a positive collaborative work environment that could retain experience in age diverse workforce. First of all, organization need to set an overall positive work atmosphere in which all individuals may adopt the work values positively. A positive diverse workplace set the effective platform for each generation (Mahutga, 2019). Organizational performance and communication have been increased if employees work with mutual contacts. Understanding generational beliefs, managing age differences and retaining workforce diversity is important for increasing work performance (Clark, 2017). While performing work tasks between generations, giving freedom to age groups enables them to perform work-related values in a better way. Flexible and positive stereotyping work provides employees with a futurist workplace. Traditional and professional workers can work better in elements of choice and an easy working environment (Duignan & Yoshida, 2006).

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