



Exploring age-based disparities: A study of age and generational trends towards professional development programs in Ahmedabad

Arjama Patra ¹, Pooja Vataliya ², Chandni J. Vidani³
Narayana Business School, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India.

Corresponding Author: Chandni J. Vidani, chandnisomyani1209@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This primary research study delves into the nuances of age-based disparities regarding professional development programs in Ahmedabad, India. Recognizing the increasing diversity within the workforce, the research employs a mixed-methods approach to comprehensively explore how different age groups perceive and engage with these programs. Specifically targeting Generation Z, Millennials, and older generations, the study aims to assess awareness, attitudes, and participation levels in professional development initiatives.

The research aims to give a greater knowledge of the intersections between age, generational patterns, and desires about professional progress by combining surveys that are quantitative and interviews of a qualitative nature. The ultimate goal is to offer valuable insights beneficial to employers, educators, and policymakers, helping them tailor strategies to effectively engage and empower individuals across diverse age groups.

This study is important because it adds to the larger conversation on labour management and the development of talent. By shedding light on the unique considerations necessary for addressing age-based disparities in professional development initiatives, the findings serve as a valuable resource for organizations and institutions striving to foster continuous professional growth among their employees.

INTRODUCTION

In today's ever-changing professional landscape, characterised by the constant evolution of technology and shifting dynamics in the workplace, it is essential to have a deep understanding of the varied needs and preferences of the workforce. This research paper aims to uncover the intricate connection between age, generational trends, and engagement with professional development initiatives in Ahmedabad. The study delves into the disparities that exist based on age, shedding light on the different perspectives and attitudes towards these programmes.

Examining the age-based differences shaping attitudes towards professional development is crucial in modern workplaces where various generations coexist, each with their own unique experiences, values, and expectations. This study examines the perceptions and engagement of individuals from various age groups in Ahmedabad regarding professional development programmes.

Understanding the complexities of age and generational trends brings depth to the world of professional development. Every generation has its own unique set of skills, aspirations, and learning preferences. Exploring the differences and understanding the diverse paths of professional development across age groups is made even more fascinating against the vibrant economic and cultural scene of Ahmedabad.

This research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, to gain a comprehensive understanding of age-based differences in professional development involvement. With a focus on filling this void in research, the study not only enhances scholarly conversations but also provides valuable practical guidance for employers, educators, and policymakers who seek to customise professional development strategies for the varied workforce in Ahmedabad. With a keen eye for detail and a deep understanding of the subject matter, this paper delves into the intricate relationship between age, generational trends, and the ever-changing world of professional development in a vibrant city in India.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. Assessing the average awareness levels about professional development programmes among different age groups within Generation Z in Ahmedabad City.

2. Examining and evaluating the different levels of awareness regarding professional development programmes among various age groups within Generation Z.

3. Examining the factors that contribute to differences in awareness levels among different age groups in Ahmedabad City within Generation Z.

4. To fully understand the impact of age-related disparities in awareness of professional development among employers, educators, and policymakers.

5. Exploring potential strategies to effectively tailor professional development initiatives that appeal to the diverse age groups within Generation Z in Ahmedabad City.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Understanding the nuances of professional development awareness among Generation Z is crucial in today's diverse workforce that spans across different generations. This literature review conducts a comprehensive analysis of current research, with a particular focus on age-based differences and generational preferences for professional development programmes in Ahmedabad.

The study is organised based on two hypotheses:

There is no significant difference indicated by H₀, and

There appears to be a notable difference in levels of awareness among different age groups within Generation Z.

Characteristics of Generation Z:

Individuals born approximately between the middle of the 1990s and the beginning of the 2010s have grown up in a digital world, possess an entrepreneurial spirit, and tend to prefer hands-on learning experiences. Research suggests that these unique characteristics influence their perspective and approach towards professional development opportunities.

Prior investigation:

Research indicates that there may be notable differences in the expectations, values, and preferred learning methods of Generation Z compared to older generations. Understanding these distinctions is crucial in developing effective professional development strategies tailored to their needs.

Examining Awareness Levels across Various Age Groups:

Research on professional development programmes has primarily focused on specific age groups. Research suggests that there may be variations in how Generation Z perceives and engages with certain initiatives based on age.

Diverse Learning Preferences:

Understanding the various ways in which different age groups within Generation Z prefer to learn is crucial. Some individuals may lean towards online platforms, while others may value mentorship or hands-on experiences.

FACTORS THAT IMPACT AWARENESS

Strong proficiency in technology:

It is often emphasised in literature how well-versed Generation Z is in technology. The level of awareness could be influenced by the extent to which technological resources are integrated into professional development initiatives.

Impact of Culture:

Research suggests that regional and cultural factors influence the perception of professional development. Ahmedabad's unique cultural environment can contribute to variations in levels of awareness.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR EMPLOYERS AND POLICYMAKERS

Adapting Strategies:

Understanding the unique needs and preferences of Generation Z in Ahmedabad is essential for employers and policymakers to tailor professional development strategies that cater to their specific learning styles and expectations.

Increasing Engagement:

It is widely recognised in the literature that being proactive in professional development is crucial, especially considering the various factors that can influence awareness, such as generational differences.

This review highlights the importance of studying age-related differences and generational trends in the awareness of professional development programmes among Generation Z in Ahmedabad. Previous studies have provided valuable insights that have shaped the current investigation. These insights have helped form hypotheses and guide the examination of awareness levels among different age groups within Generation Z. The findings from this research contribute to the ongoing discussions on talent cultivation and workforce engagement. They provide essential insights for academia and the strategic advancement of professional development initiatives in Ahmedabad and beyond.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data Sources

Gathering Data: Questionnaires are utilised to gather the primary data for this research.

DEVELOPING A DATA COLLECTION PLAN

Self-administered Survey:

Participants independently completed the survey to provide the necessary data. The answers were made available online for collection. The survey consisted of a range of questions that asked participants to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement in order to gain insights into their reading habits and their perceived knowledge about health.

Sampling Method:

Convenience Sampling: This method involves selecting participants based on their availability and accessibility, rather than using a more rigorous sampling technique.

For this study, a method called convenience sampling was employed, where participants were selected based on their availability and accessibility to the researcher. The study centred on collecting data from individuals residing in Gujarat. This sampling method was selected for its practicality and ability to easily locate participants who were willing and available for the study.

Statistical Test Utilised:

Utilising Inferential Statistical Techniques:

Utilising inferential statistical methods, specifically ANOVA (Analysis of Variance), will help in analysing the hypotheses for investment purposes. By adopting this approach, we can effectively analyse the relationships and differences between variables. These statistical techniques will help determine the acceptance or dismissal of the hypotheses, revealing whether the observed variations or correlations are statistically significant.

Analysis Overview:

SPSS Software:

Utilising the SPSS software, the research will employ various statistical tests. SPSS is chosen for its efficiency in providing quick and accurate test results, enabling a comprehensive analysis of the collected data.

Study Limitations:

Time Availability:

The research acknowledges the limitations imposed by time constraints, which prevent the conduct of more comprehensive studies.

Area Restriction:

Due to the survey's focus on the geographic area of Ahmedabad city, the findings may not be easily applicable to a broader context.

Limitation on Sample Size:

The sample size is limited to 105 respondents, solely representing responses from Ahmedabad city. It is important to consider that this limitation may affect the study's ability to apply its findings to a wider population.

TESTING FOR RELIABILITY

The reliability study of the survey questions on professional growth preferences among Generation Z individuals in Ahmedabad City yielded an impressive Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.897. It is evident that all 10 survey items demonstrate a strong internal consistency, which further validates the measuring method. Just by considering all cases as valid and not excluding any, the survey shows strong reliability and consistency in capturing the preferences of the respondents. With a high Cronbach's Alpha value, there is a strong sense of confidence in the reliability of the data, which in turn affirms the credibility and validity of the conclusions drawn from the analysis. Researchers can rely on this measurement instrument to provide consistent and accurate insights into the professional development preferences of Generation Z in Ahmedabad City.

DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

Examining the demographic profile of the participants in this study provides valuable insights into the characteristics of the surveyed population.

The age range of the respondents is between 15 and 29 years. Typically, the participants are in the 21-23 age range, with a majority (60.0%) falling into this category. This suggests a notable presence of individuals in their early twenties. The study encompasses a broad spectrum of participants, showcasing the diverse range of individuals from Generation Z in Ahmedabad City.

The distribution of genders is relatively equal, with males accounting for 46.7% and females accounting for 53.3%. There is a noticeable difference in the average gender value of 1.53, indicating a slightly higher representation of females. Based on the data, it appears that the majority of participants were female, with a prevalence slightly above 2.00.

The participants come from diverse educational backgrounds, with the majority having graduate degrees (42.9%), followed by postgraduate (24.8%) and master's (24.8%) degrees. Typically, participants have a combination of graduate and postgraduate qualifications, with the most frequent response being graduate-level education.

Occupation breakdown: The largest group of respondents (64.8%) consists of students, followed by individuals working in the service sector (15.2%) and those who are self-employed (9.5%). Based on the data, there is a wide range of occupations represented, with students being the most common occupation among the respondents.

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

The study delves into the levels of awareness regarding professional development programmes among different age groups within Generation Z in Ahmedabad City. Here are the formulated hypotheses:

- Hypothesis (H0 1): The average awareness levels of professional development programmes among different age groups of Generation Z in Ahmedabad City do not show a significant difference.
- Hypothesis: There may be a notable variation in the average awareness levels of professional development programmes across different age groups of Generation Z in Ahmedabad City.

Based on the data, it appears that the average awareness level across all age groups is approximately 2.92. The age groups are categorised as follows: 15–17 years old, 18–20 years old, 21–23 years old, 24–26 years old, and 27–29 years old. Among different age groups, the 21-23 year olds show the highest average awareness with a mean of 3.11, whereas the 24-26 year olds exhibit the lowest awareness with a mean of 2.50.

Based on the results of Levene's test for homogeneity of variances, it can be concluded that the homogeneity assumption is valid, as the significance value is 0.138. Let's delve into the analysis of variance (ANOVA) results. The p-value for this sample is 0.130, indicating a moderate level of statistical significance. Additionally, the F-statistic is 1.824, suggesting a slight difference among the groups being compared. Based on the data, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference in average awareness levels of professional development programmes among different age groups of Generation Z in Ahmedabad City. This suggests that age does not play a significant role in determining awareness levels.

Based on the statistical analysis conducted, the study concludes that there is insufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. This suggests that age does not have a significant impact on the awareness levels of professional development programmes among Generation Z individuals in Ahmedabad City.

DISCUSSION

Examining demographic characteristics offers valuable insights into the composition of Generation Z in Ahmedabad City. Most respondents are in their early twenties, with an average age of around 3.29. This concentration of individuals in this age bracket is worth noting. The age range encompasses individuals aged 15 to 29, highlighting the wide range of perspectives within Generation Z. The distribution of genders is relatively balanced, with 46.7% male and 53.3% female respondents. Most individuals possess graduate degrees (42.9%), showcasing a diverse range of educational backgrounds. It is worth noting that the majority of respondents (64.8%) are students, highlighting the significant presence of academic pursuits among the group.

Understanding Levels: The study explores the different levels of understanding when it comes to professional development programmes, uncovering a complex landscape. The awareness score of 2.9238 suggests a moderate level of awareness. However, a significant portion of respondents, approximately 33.3%, indicated a lack of awareness or a high level of unawareness. This highlights the need to address a potential gap in awareness. Professional development programmes

show a clear preference for "Corporate Training" (59.0%), indicating a strong focus on acquiring skills that are in line with corporate requirements.

Respondents display a moderate interest (Mean = 3.53) in participating in professional development programmes, with 48.6% categorised as "Interested." The surveyed group exhibits a diverse range of preferences for programme types, such as "Teacher's Training" and others, indicating a wide array of interests.

Analysis of Hypotheses: The examination of hypotheses focuses on exploring variations in awareness levels based on age. The results show that there is no significant difference in awareness among different age groups, as indicated by a p-value of 0.130. Therefore, we accept the null hypothesis. It appears that the awareness levels regarding professional development programmes are similar across different age groups within Generation Z in Ahmedabad City.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the research provides a comprehensive understanding of the variations in age and generational preferences among Generation Z when it comes to professional development programmes in Ahmedabad City. The demographic analysis underscores the importance of customised strategies to cater to the diverse preferences and levels of awareness within the dynamic and diverse population. Although the study highlights a moderate level of overall awareness, the fact that a significant percentage indicates low awareness emphasises the importance of targeted awareness campaigns.

Having a keen interest in skills relevant to the corporate sector is a clear indication of a forward-thinking mindset. It's no surprise that Generation Z, with their ambitious career goals, recognises the importance of investing in professional development. Research emphasises the crucial role that continuous learning plays in career advancement and overall success.

Based on the analysis of the hypothesis, it appears that age does not have a significant impact on awareness levels. However, the research provides suggestions for customised awareness campaigns and programme offerings to address any disparities and fulfil the diverse needs of Generation Z. Taking everything into account, the findings provide valuable information for educators, policymakers, and organisations aiming to develop effective and meaningful professional development programmes for the residents of Ahmedabad City's Generation Z.

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