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GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES ON VALUE CONFLICT



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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted to investigate value patterns in new and old generations. This study was administered on 400 subjects belonging to Dehradun district, the subjects were divided into two generations according to age – group: 18 to 25 yrs- new generation (N=100) and 35 to 45 yrs – old generation (N=100) and two sexes: males (N=100) and females (N=100). Value conflict scale by Bharadwaj, R.L. (1998) was used to measure value conflicts. Means, SD's and F ratios were computed to analyze the data. Results indicated significant difference between the two generations on two dimensions of value patterns namely: Fear vs Assertion and Pragmatism vs Idealism. Results showed that the old generation possessed the trait of Assertion. The old generation has the ability to act courageously despite feelings of fear. The new generation showed trait of Idealism, which means that new generation works towards perfection. Males showed higher levels of Assertion as compared to females.

Key words: Values, Generational conflict

Today is the time of tremendous growth and rapid social change. The new generation is adapting themselves to this change but for the old generation, this pace of change is simply too fast. Means of communication, rapid change in technology have broadened our horizons. Traditional values no longer seem evident. Assumptions about religion, education, marriage, social institutions are being questioned. Our long accepted values are under cloud of doubt.

A Value is an assumption concerning right or wrong, good or bad. A value may be tentatively defined as a conception characteristic of a group which is desirable and which influences a selection from among the available modes and means to satisfy the needs. A value is a “prospective belief” upon which a person acts by preference. The place of values in decision making is inseparable so far it relates to the decision maker. Values may be regarded as the standards by which human beings are influenced in their choice among alternative

courses of action. An individual acquires his values very early in life. Chakraborty, S.K (1998) has put forth a definition of values as “Values are states of feelings or emotions which underpin the content of a choice decision and determine the manner of using intellect, reason for implementing the choice or decision”. They are given to him by his parents, teachers, and other persons who have influenced his life. Conflict between older and younger generations is a perennial force. The social dynamics of every society undergoing cultural and social change exhibit some degree of tension between the generations. A part of the explanation of generation gap lies with the pace of social change. Values play a key role in determining a person’s choice. But if values are unclear or contradictory or a person has little faith in them, then the person will experience difficulties in making choices and directing behavior. Such difficulties arising due to modernization or young and old generation may lead to conflict in values. Rapid scientific and technological advances have tended to make parental knowledge obsolete with reference to what their children are expected to know. Some researchers have therefore concluded that there is an almost insurmountable gap between values of today’s parents and those of their adolescent sons and daughters. Allport, Lindzey and Vernon (1960) reported that usually women show more of esthetic, social and religious values while men have more of theoretical, economic and political values.

Bharadwaj, R.L; Sharma K.P. and Parasher, N (2002) studied pragmatism vs idealism value assumptions. Their results indicated no specific difference in males and females on pragmatism vs idealism value assumption. Bharadwaj, R.L. and Mithas, U.J. (2001) studied evasion vs fortitude value

assumption along with associated conflicts in relation to gender and socio-economic status. They concluded that Indians males and females incline towards evasion regardless of socio-economic status. Rosenthal, Doreen; Ranieri – Nadia and Klimidis – Steven (1996) studied traditional values in Vietnamese adolescents in Australia were studied. It was finally found through this research that, especially for girls, traditionally Vietnamese family values decreased with time spent in Australia, while independence values increased. For girls but not for boys the discrepancy between adolescent’s values and perceived parental values was associated with more conflict.

Keeping this changing scenario in mind, present study was planned to compare the value patterns of new and old generation and value patterns of males and females.

Hypothesis—To achieve the prime objective of the study following tentative hypothesis were formed: Old and new generation will be significantly different from each other on value pattern and its dimensions. Males and females will be significantly different from each other on value pattern and its dimensions.

METHOD

Sample—The sample consisted of 400 subjects using quota random sampling. These subjects were equally divided into two generations new (18 to 25 yrs) and old generation (35 to 45 yrs) and two sexes: males and females. All subjects were matched on socio – economic status, educational level and belonged to urban set up. New generation subjects were selected from the M.K.P. (P.G.) College, D.A.V. (P.G) College, The subjects of old generation were selected from Oil and Natural Gas Corporation, Defence Electronics and Applications Laboratory, Ordnance

Factory, Kendriya Vidyalaya (OLF), Dehradun.

DESIGN—To fulfill the main objective of this study 2X2 factorial design was used yielding 4 conditions having 100 subjects in each condition.

TOOLS—For- the present study, the following fairly established and standardized tool was used for the purpose of data collection:

Value- Conflict Scale by Bharadwaj R.L (1998) was used to measure value-conflicts. This scale measures six types of value conflicts namely: Evasion Vs Fortitude, Dependence Vs Self-reliance, Selfishness Vs Probity, Hate Vs Love, Fear Vs Assertion and Pragmatism Vs Idealism.

PROCEDURE—Good rapport was established with subjects. Subjects were convinced that the information given by them will be kept confidential. Value Conflict scale was given to the subjects. Subjects were instructed that the scale contains 24 items with five alternatives. Whichever alternative out of the five resembles their behavior, they have to mark it with a tick.

Result—The raw data was obtained by using manual and processed with the help of statistical techniques using Means, SDs and F ratios and is shown in Tables 1 to 4. The obtained results are discussed as below: Table 1 shows the comparison of old and new generation on value pattern. The obtained mean value yielded that the new generation possessed higher mean values on Evasion vs. Fortitude, Selfishness vs. Probity, and Pragmatism vs. Idealism dimensions of value pattern as well as on total Value Pattern. Old generation was found to have higher mean values as compared to old generation on Dependence vs. Self-reliance and Fear vs. Assertion dimensions of Value-Pattern. Table 2 shows the F ratios for new and old generations on value patterns and

its dimensions. The table clearly revealed that the two generations showed significant difference on only two dimensions of value pattern namely: Fear vs Assertion at .05 level and Pragmatism vs Idealism at .01 level. Obtained F ratio on the other dimensions of value pattern namely: Evasion vs Fortitude, Dependence vs Self-reliance, Selfishness vs Probity and Hate vs Love appeared to be insignificant. Results presented in Table 3 shows the Means and SD values of males and females on Value patterns and its dimensions. The table revealed that females possessed higher mean values than males on Evasion vs. Fortitude and Pragmatism vs. Idealism dimension of value pattern. Males possessed higher mean value than females on Dependence vs. Self-reliance, Selfishness vs. Probity, Hate vs. Love, Fear vs. Assertion dimensions of Value – Pattern as well as on total Value – Pattern.

Table 4 shows the F ratios for males and females on Value pattern and its dimensions. The obtained F ratios for males and females were found to be insignificant for all the dimensions of Value pattern except Fear vs Assertion.

Discussion—To test the proposed hypothesis Means, SDs and F ratios were computed which are shown in Table 1 and 2. The obtained findings are interpreted as follows:

The obtained results clearly indicated that both generations differed on only two dimensions of value pattern: Fear vs Assertion and Pragmatism vs Idealism Table 2. The obtained insignificant F-ratio for total Value Pattern (Table: 2) revealed that old and new generations do not differ from each other or both the generations have almost similar Value Patterns. Furthermore, the observation of mean values for total Value Patterns of old and new

generation (Table 1) revealed that new generation obtained higher mean value than the older generation on total Value Pattern however the difference between the mean value was not found to be significant so we can say that the Value Pattern of old and new generation is almost same. Therefore the proposed first hypothesis was rejected claiming that no significant difference existed between both generations on Value patterns. The findings of this study are partially in congruence with a study conducted by Porto, Juliana Barreirer and Tomayo, Alvaro (2006) who reported that parent's values influences son's values. Results of their study showed that people of older generation (parents) have an impact or influence on the value patterns of younger generation.

Significant F ratio (Table: 2) for Fear vs Assertion revealed that old and new generation differed significantly from each other at .05 level. This indicated that both generations vary significantly from each other on this dimension.

The old generation possessed this trait more as compared to new generation. It means that the old generation has higher ability to act courageously despite feeling of fear with complete understanding of facts and finding means to nullify the dampening of spirits, as many interpersonal difficulties and maladaptive behaviors arise because of persons' inability to assert themselves to the situation adequately as compared to new generation.

Significant F ratio (Table 2) revealed that on Pragmatism vs Idealism dimension the new and old generation differed significantly at .01 level. Observations of Mean values (Table 1) revealed that new generation possessed higher mean values than old generation on this value dimension. New generation was found to be inclined more towards Idealism as compared to old generation. It means that new

generation showed comparatively higher tendency to work towards the highest conceivable perfection based on the doctrine of personal conduct in choosing the course of action in day to day life events. The obtained results stand in line with the investigation conducted by Bergstrom, Marks- Jon (1996) who described that age group differences in descriptions of conflict were found to be significant.

On all other dimensions of Value Pattern no significant difference was found denoting that old and new generations have similar level of Value Patterns namely: Evasion vs Fortitude, Dependence vs Self reliance, Selfishness vs Probity and Hate vs Love. Another study, which agreed with the result, was an investigation by Hamid, P.Nicholas, Wyllie Alan J (1980) also showed that inter - generational value-patterns were never as different as to cause disharmonious relationships although they do differ sometimes.

Therefore, the proposed hypothesis was partially rejected claiming that value conflict existed on Fear vs. Assertion and Pragmatism vs. Idealism between the subjects of old and new generation. Gender differences were also studied by computing F ratios on all the value conflict dimensions shown in Table 4.

The findings revealed that on total Value Pattern obtained F ratio (Table 4) for males and females was found to be significant at .05 level. The mean value (Table 3) revealed that males obtained significantly higher mean value than females. This denoted that both sexes differed from each other on their total Value Patterns.

F ratio for Fear vs Assertion dimension was found to be significant at .01 level depicting that both the sexes differ on this dimension. The obtained mean value (Table: 2) showed that

males obtained significantly higher mean value than females on this dimension of Value pattern. Therefore, it can be interpreted that males and females differed significantly from each other on Fear vs Assertion dimension of value pattern. It means that males incline more towards assertion as compared to females or males possess higher level of ability to act courageously despite feeling of fear with complete understanding of facts and finding means to nullify the dampening of spirits, as many interpersonal difficulties and maladaptive behaviors arise because of persons' inability to assert themselves to the situation adequately as compared to females.

Insignificant F ratio was found for all other dimensions of Value Pattern namely: Evasion vs Fortitude, Dependence vs Self reliance, Selfishness vs Probity, Hate vs Love and Pragmatism vs Idealism. It means that males and females do not differ from each other on these dimensions of value pattern. This study was found to be in contrast to the earlier

findings of Bharadwaj, R.L and Mithas, U.J. (2001) who reported that Indian males and females incline towards evasion. The findings stands in congruence with the earlier findings of Bharadwaj, R.L; Sharma, K.P; Parasher, N (2002) who also reported that no difference existed between males and females on Pragmatism vs. Idealism.

Hence, the proposed hypothesis was partially accepted claiming that males and females differ significantly on Fear vs Assertion dimension of Value pattern whereas on all other dimensions no gender differences were observed.

CONCLUSION—Finally it can be summed up that the old generation showed the higher tendency of Assertion as compared to the new generation. New generation was found to possess higher trait of Idealism as compared to the old generation. Males showed higher tendency towards Assertion as compared to females.

Table 1: Means and SD values of new and old generation on Value Pattern and its dimensions

| Variable | NEWGENERATION | | OLDGENERATION | |
|------------------------------------|---------------|------|---------------|------|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD |
| Evasion vs Fortitude | 14.01 | 2.26 | 13.84 | 2.76 |
| Dependence vs Self reliance | 13.80 | 2.72 | 13.83 | 3.21 |
| Selfishness vs Probity | 15.43 | 2.27 | 15.12 | 2.81 |
| Hate vs Love | 15.12 | 2.21 | 14.91 | 2.62 |
| Fear vs Assertion | 13.08 | 3.33 | 13.78 | 3.56 |
| Pragmatism vs Idealism | 15.01 | 2.65 | 14.45 | 2.72 |
| Total Value conflict | 86.09 | 9.55 | 85.98 | 9.80 |

Table 2: Analysis of variance (ANOVA) for Value Pattern and its dimensions

| Variables | df | SS | MSS | F value | Pr(F) |
|-----------------------------|----|-------|-------|---------|-------|
| Evasion vs Fortitude | 1 | 5.29 | 5.29 | 1.28 | 0.35 |
| Dependence vs Self reliance | 1 | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.00 | 0.94 |
| Selfishness vs Probity | 1 | 17.64 | 17.64 | 2.84 | 0.09 |
| Hate vs Love | 1 | 10.56 | 10.56 | 1.86 | 0.17 |
| Fear vs Assertion | 1 | 54.02 | 54.02 | 4.78* | 0.02 |
| Pragmatism vs Idealism | 1 | 57.00 | 57.00 | 8.41** | 0.00 |
| Total Value conflict | 1 | 86.19 | 86.19 | 1.17 | 0.28 |

*Significant at .05 ** Significant at .01

Table 3: Means and SD values of Males and Females on Value Patterns and its dimensions

| Variable | MALES | | FEMALES | |
|-----------------------------|-------|------|---------|------|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD |
| Evasion vs Fortitude | 13.98 | 2.62 | 14.02 | 2.33 |
| Dependence vs Self reliance | 13.98 | 3.02 | 13.70 | 2.80 |
| Selfishness vs Probity | 15.73 | 2.57 | 15.43 | 2.40 |
| Hate vs Love | 15.28 | 2.46 | 15.02 | 2.22 |
| Fear vs Assertion | 14.01 | 3.47 | 12.45 | 3.27 |
| Pragmatism vs Idealism | 14.71 | 2.56 | 15.31 | 2.73 |
| Total Value conflict | 87.4 | 9.01 | 85.95 | 8.13 |

Table 4: Analysis of Variance for Value Pattern and its dimensions for males and females

| Variables | Df | Sum of SQ | Mean SQ | F value | Pr(F) |
|-----------------------------|----|-----------|---------|---------|-------|
| Evasion vs Fortitude | 1 | 4.56 | 4.56 | 1.23 | 1.00 |
| Dependence vs Self reliance | 1 | 12.96 | 12.96 | 1.51 | 0.21 |
| Selfishness vs Probity | 1 | 0.36 | 0.36 | 0.05 | 0.80 |
| Hate vs Love | 1 | 14.82 | 14.82 | 2.62 | 0.10 |
| Fear vs Assertion | 1 | 194.60 | 194.60 | 17.24** | 0.00 |
| Pragmatism vs Idealism | 1 | 5.06 | 5.06 | 0.74 | 0.38 |
| Tot Value conflict | 1 | 369.39 | 369.39 | 5.01* | 0.02 |

*Significant at .05 ** Significant at .01

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