Reconciling Work-Life Balance: An In-depth Exploration of Generation X's Career Experiences

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ABSTRACT

This research delves into the intricate dynamics of work-life balance among Generation X professionals in the context of the 21st century, aiming to understand their challenges within a rapidly evolving technological and workplace landscape. Previous research has demonstrated that Generation X workers are exceptionally adaptable in managing the changing technological world and workplace relations. Work-life balance has been highlighted as an important component impacting job satisfaction and general well-being. It delves deeper into these features by investigating how Generation X professionals deal with these problems and identifying specific ways to inform both professionals and companies to improve the understanding of the complex interplay between technology, workplace dynamics, and work-life balance for Generation X professionals in today's professional world. Employing an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) methodology, the study emphasizes the importance of adaptability, flexible work methodologies, and work-life balance prioritization. With five participants aged 41 to 56 representing various professional fields, the findings indicate that Generation X professionals adeptly navigate contemporary challenges, focusing on adaptability, client-centric approaches, engagement in leisure activities, and effective work-life balance management. These strategies are closely linked to their job satisfaction and overall well-being. In essence, this research sheds light on the multifaceted relationship between work-life balance and the challenges Generation X professionals encounter in the 21st century, providing insights into their coping mechanisms and underscoring the pivotal role of work-life balance in shaping their experiences and overall professional satisfaction.

Keywords: Generation X, Work-Life Balance, 21st Century Workplace

INTRODUCTION

The 21st century has significantly reshaped career paths and work-life balance for Generation X born between 1965 and 1980 (Wagman & Vanzante, 2004). In today's workplace, generational distinctions are evident, with Generation X playing a pivotal role due to its unique position in witnessing rapid technological evolution. Their distinctive traits, such as valuing work-life balance and having differing communication preferences, create complex dynamics with younger generations (Miles, 2022). These differences impact personal and professional relationships, particularly among digital immigrants (Gen X, Baby Boomers, Silent Traditionalists), who approach digital transformation with skepticism (Norton, 2021). Digital transformation, aimed at enhancing creativity and customer interactions through technology, is crucial for organizations' response to innovation.

The research centers on exploring the dynamic nature of work-life balance as experienced by members of Generation X in the context of the 21st century, a multifaceted issue encompassing various dimensions (Costello, 2020). It delves into the generational disparities arising from shifting career values, the impact of technology, diverse life stages, personal beliefs, and significant events like the COVID-19 pandemic. Bugnos et al. (2022) highlight Generation X teachers' challenges adapting to technology, especially for advanced teaching methods during the pandemic. Costello (2020) emphasizes their "work-hard, play-hard" mentality, while Valentine (2021) notes their preference for autonomy and flexible hours.

The research objectives set out to address the multifaceted challenges faced by Generation X professionals in the 21st century and their consequent impact on career trajectories. Subsequently, the research aimed to delineate the specific work-related challenges these professionals encountered, shedding light on the factors influencing their career paths. Consecutively, the research focused on how these individuals navigated the ever-evolving technological landscape and shifting workplace dynamics, providing valuable insights into their adaptation strategies. Furthermore, the research sought to establish a link between these primary challenges and the job satisfaction and well-being of Generation X professionals, ultimately revealing the coping strategies they employed to effectively confront these issues.

This research is highly relevant due to the profound changes in the 21st-century workplace impacting Generation X. They play a crucial role in bridging generational differences in an evolving professional landscape characterized by technology and shifting career values. Their focus on work-life balance and unique communication preferences influences their experiences and interactions with younger generations. Additionally, the study gains significance given the central role of digital transformation in organizational innovation, highlighting the need to understand how Generation X and other digital immigrants adapt.

Generation X

Generation X, comprising individuals born between 1965 and 1980, constitutes a discernible generational group profoundly shaped by historical circumstances. This group faced challenges such as the introduction of birth control pills in the 1960s, the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s, and pivotal geopolitical shifts like the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union. As the "middle child" generation between baby boomers and millennials, they navigated through societal changes, including the War on Drugs and energy crises. In the Philippines, they experienced the Martial Law Era and witnessed the 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution. The recent COVID-19 pandemic brought financial struggles and caregiving responsibilities. Gen Xers are known for their resourcefulness and independence but can exhibit cynicism. They value work-life balance, are influenced by their parents' work experiences, and exhibit variations in wealth by the end of 2020 (Schneider, 2021). These experiences collectively define Generation X as a generation marked by resilience and adaptability, significantly shaped by historical influences (Menand, 2021; Hechanova, 2017; Klipfel, 2020; McKenna, 2024)

Work-Life Balance and Generational Differences

Work-Life Balance (WLB) is a recurrent theme in corporate discourse, with its importance varying across domains (Gragnano et al., 2020). Gen Xers prioritize WLB over employer loyalty, a sentiment underpinned by Clark's five core theories on life and work dynamics (Clark, 2000). The significance of generational differences in WLB is recognized across these theories, highlighting its complexity. Generational diversity in the workforce, as studied by Stanisauskiene and Urboniene (2019), plays a significant role. Gen Xers, known for their independence and strong family values, faced challenges adapting to new technologies during the pandemic (Usmani et al., 2019). However, older millennials and Gen Xers demonstrated higher resilience during the pandemic compared to younger generations (Rosa, Cleofas & Oducado, 2022). Gen Xers are also shown to earn more money and hold numerous leadership roles (Buffett, 2022), emphasizing

their focus on work-life balance over financial gain.

Managing Generational Diversity in the Workplace

The discourse on managing generational diversity in today's workplaces is dynamic and multifaceted. Paychex (2023) asserts that understanding generational differences is not just advantageous but also a crucial organizational imperative. This aligns with Saleh's research in 2023, emphasizing the importance of valuing distinct generational beliefs and work ethics (Saleh, 2023). Both authors advocate proactively embracing generational diversity, as it offers strategic benefits like expanding customer demographics and boosting employee satisfaction and productivity. Ng, Lyons, and Schweitzer's seminal work in 2018 underlines the palpable repercussions of generational distinctions on career trajectories and interprofessional interactions (Ng, Lyons, and Schweitzer, 2018). It stresses the need for bespoke management approaches that celebrate generational diversity to maximize employee engagement and retention.

Complex Generational Insights for Organizational Success

Costello (2020) delves into the distinctive attributes and work ethic differentials between Generation X and Generation Y. This research highlights the intricacies within generational categorizations, dispelling the presumption that age alone can serve as an exhaustive determinant of an individual's character or occupational competencies. This complex understanding imperatively exhorts organizations to adopt a more refined approach to navigating the complex terrain of generational diversity. Rapuano, Varkuleviute, and Raisiene (2021) state that challenges entrenched gender norms in the context of remote work, emphasizing the need for pliable and inclusive policies. Finally, Herrity (2023) illuminates the distinct attributes characterizing Generation X professionals, emphasizing their self-reliance, adaptability, and commitment to a harmonious work-life equilibrium. Herrity's perspective is an insightful reminder that individual generational cohorts offer unique qualities that may be harnessed to propel organizational success.

Synthesis

The studies highlight several key aspects of generational diversity in the workplace. To begin with, the importance of Work-Life Balance (WLB) is consistently emphasized, particularly by Gen Xers, who prioritize it over employer loyalty, aligning with Clark's (2000) theories on generational differences. This generational distinction is further exemplified by the challenges Gen Xers faced during the COVID-19 pandemic while adapting to new technologies, showcasing their resilience compared to younger generations. Moreover, their tendency to earn more and take on leadership roles underscores their emphasis on WLB over mere financial gain (Gragnano et al., 2020; Usmani et al., 2019; Clark, 2000).

Besides that, managing generational diversity is depicted as a dynamic and multifaceted undertaking, with authors advocating for its recognition as a crucial organizational imperative. Ng, Lyons, and Schweitzer (2018) specifically emphasize the need for tailored management approaches to effectively engage and retain employees from different generational backgrounds. This recognition of generational diversity is not only beneficial in terms of understanding customer demographics but also in enhancing employee satisfaction and productivity (Stanisauskiene & Urboniene, 2018; Paychex, 2023; Saleh, 2023).

However, notable research gaps exist within this body of work. Initially, the literature acknowledges the importance of work-life balance but lacks comprehensive investigations into the specific factors influencing the challenges faced by Generation X professionals in attaining this equilibrium (Herrity, 2023; Costello, 2020). Furthermore, there is a dearth of analysis regarding the diverse strategies and coping mechanisms employed by Generation X professionals to manage work-life balance effectively (Rapuano et al., 2021). These gaps present a clear opportunity for future research to delve into the nuanced factors influencing work-life balance challenges within this generational cohort and to identify best practices and support systems to

facilitate their work-life equilibrium.

Statement of the Problem

In the 21st century, Generation X faces unique challenges in the evolving workplace, marked by rapid technological change and generational differences. Their emphasis on work-life balance and distinct communication preferences creates complex dynamics, particularly with digital immigrants who approach technology skeptically. This research explores the multifaceted issue of work-life balance for Generation X, considering factors like shifting career values, technology impact, life stages, personal beliefs, and events like the COVID-19 pandemic. It is relevant due to Generation X's pivotal role in bridging generational gaps and the central importance of digital transformation in organizational innovation. The objectives are to examine their perspectives on work-life balance, analyze coping strategies, and evaluate the impact on job satisfaction, career progression, and overall well-being, offering insights for organizations to better support them.

Central Question:

How do Generation X professionals face the predominant challenges in the 21st century?

Specific Questions:

1. What specific work-related challenges do Generation X professionals often face in the 21st century, and how do these challenges influence their career paths?
2. How do Generation X professionals in the current century manage the distinctive obstacles posed by the evolving technological environment and shifting dynamics in the workplace?
3. How are the primary challenges experienced by Generation X professionals in the 21st century connected to their job satisfaction and overall well-being, and what strategies do they employ to effectively address these challenges?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research utilized a qualitative methodology, employing a phenomenological framework to gather significant data. This approach sought to elucidate diverse phenomena or contexts by exploring their relationship with subjective experiences, thereby facilitating comprehension and interpretation of the significance participants assigned to their daily existence (Smith & Nizza, 2022). Aligned with the researcher's specific goal to describe the actual experiences of Generation X in their respective careers, their perception of work-life balance, and the strategies they implemented evident in their personal and professional development.

Participant

The study focused on a specific demographic profile, consisting of five individuals from the Generation X cohort, aged 41 to 56 years old, from different professional fields. A phenomenological approach was used to select participants, which involved conducting multiple interviews by Polkinghorne's (1989) recommendation, typically involving 5 to 25 interviewees. However, Brouwer et. al (2020) suggested that the number of participants needed for qualitative interviews varied depending on the research subject, the point at which thematic saturation was reached (when no new information or themes emerged), and the specific research methodology used. In contrast to quantitative research, where a fixed number of participants was typically required for statistical representativeness, qualitative interviews prioritized data

depth and richness over a fixed participant count. The study focused on individuals from different working classes, identifying participants with extensive knowledge of the subject matter through purposive sampling techniques. The sampling criteria prioritized homogeneity in terms of Generation X membership, a minimum of 20 years of work experience, gender diversity, and familiarity with evolving work methods. Individuals outside the Generation X category or with less than 20 years of work experience, as well as unrelated participants or those with health or ethical concerns, were intentionally excluded to ensure sample consistency and research integrity.

Instruments

Channeled from the formulation of research questions, the researchers developed interview guides. These interview guides underwent validation by experts to ensure the validity and content of the questions. The researchers opted for an open-ended interview format, a choice that was in harmony with the nature of the qualitative research project. They aimed to allocate a time window of 30 minutes to 1 hour for each interview session, allowing for an in-depth exploration of the topics. In addition to conventional note-taking methods, the researchers utilized audio recordings as a supplementary tool for capturing consent and creating comprehensive records of the entire interview process.

Data Gathering Procedure

Upholding ethical standards, the researchers crafted an informed consent form, adhering to the guidelines of the World Health Organization Research Ethics Review Committee, ensuring robust data confidentiality and anonymity. Subsequently, the consent forms were distributed to participants with careful attention to ensuring their comprehension as they read the document aloud. To provide detailed context descriptions, a diligent record-keeping system was maintained throughout the research process. Gatekeepers were enlisted to assist in the research. All interviews were scheduled at mutually convenient times, ensuring a consistent approach during data collection, which was conducted through face-to-face or online interviews with simultaneous note-taking and audio recording.

Data Analysis

The researchers opted to use Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) – this technique could be utilized to comprehend professional experiences that involved assigning data to various codes, organizing them into themes, and discovering patterns and relationships between them. It enabled a more detailed understanding of what individuals did in their social circumstances. It is worth emphasizing that IPA could be utilized with other data sources such as documents (Jowsey et al., 2021). Following Saldaña's (2015) recommended four-step coding process, the researchers first identified codes within the data. Next, these codes were grouped into categories and further organized into high-level categories. The researchers then reviewed and synthesized these high-level categories, using analytic memoing to generate overarching themes. Finally, these emergent themes were applied to address the research questions, facilitating a deeper exploration of the dataset. By combining coding strategies and carefully considering coding systems aligned with the research objectives, this approach aimed to yield meaningful insights from the collected data (Saldaña, 2015).

Trustworthiness

In this research, trustworthiness was of paramount importance (Korstjens & Moser, 2018), as it directly impacted the credibility and reliability of the study's findings. To enhance credibility, informed consent was diligently obtained from all participants, emphasizing their voluntary participation. Expert validation of interview questions further bolstered the integrity of data collection. Creating an open and authentic atmosphere with participants cultivated trust and rapport, reinforcing overall credibility. Dependability was

ensured through consistent scheduling of interviews and meticulous record-keeping, enhancing the reliability of the study. Transferability was emphasized by employing thick description techniques and providing detailed participant demographics to extend insights to diverse contexts. Lastly, confirmability was safeguarded through rigorous data analysis grounded in the data itself, minimizing researcher bias and solidifying the research outcomes' credibility.

Ethical Consideration

The research adhered to the World Health Organization's Informed Consent guidelines. It went beyond the typical ethical considerations of credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability. Privacy and confidentiality were of utmost importance, with stringent measures in place to safeguard participants' personal information and maintain their anonymity during the study. The informed consent procedures were thorough, clearly delineating the research's purpose, potential risks, and participants' rights. Adherence to ethical guidelines for research involving human subjects, as stipulated by relevant institutional review boards, was unwavering, prioritizing the welfare and rights of participants. Moreover, the principle of beneficence guided the research, aiming to have a positive impact on the well-being of Generation X professionals by potentially informing policies and practices that enhance their work-life balance and overall job satisfaction. Finally, the researchers consistently engaged in ethical self-reflection, fostering continuous awareness and scrutiny of their values and potential biases throughout the research process to further bolster the study's ethical integrity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section discusses key findings from phenomenological research on Generation X's work-life balance in the modern era. It uncovers how they navigate challenges, adapt to workplace changes, and reveal their experiences. Subsequent sections will explore these aspects further.

Table 1. Predominant Challenges

Domains	Themes	Subthemes
The prominent challenges encountered by Generation X in the 21st century	Balance	(1) Professional Life; (2) Technological Advancements
	Exceptional	(1) Patience; (2) Quality Service
	Enlightenment	(1) Challenges; (2) Adapting
	Sensibility	(1) Challenges; (2) Culture; (3) Integrate
	Adjustment	(1) Transition; (2) Inexperienced

Balance. It is a critical concept at the junction of professional life and technological advancement. It entails adeptly managing work responsibilities as well as personal well-being in the professional domain. It represents the fragile equilibrium between innovation and ethical concerns in the realm of technological progress, ensuring the responsible development of technology that aligns with core human values.

Professional Life. The participant contemplates their extensive teaching tenure, which has spanned numerous years, and the obstacles encountered, especially in light of the pandemic. They underscore how

the pandemic has dramatically influenced their vocation, highlighting the transition from conventional teaching practices to the integration of technology for online classes. This underscores the profound alterations in their professional life brought about by the pandemic.

Participant A said, "*I understand. Many…, maybe, when you know, during the pandemic, when it started becoming a pandemic, how many years have I been teaching? It's been a lot of years, and maybe I'm already in, you know, a certain age bracket. How about you? How many years have you been? Let's assume it's been 18 years; let's lower it a bit, okay!*"

Technological Advancements. The participant outlines the difficulties that educators faced amid the pandemic, specifically concerning the use of technology in their teaching practices. They delve into the shift from traditional techniques, like typing and printing, to the facilitation of online classes on unfamiliar digital platforms, highlighting the swift technological progress that has fundamentally transformed the field of education.

Participant A said, "*After many years, the pandemic arrived, and it became very challenging for us, especially for us teachers. First, when it comes to using gadgets, you're only familiar with the typical typing and printing for your visual aids. But when you have to conduct an online class on different platforms that you're not familiar with…*"

Exceptional. In the world of great service, there is a constant commitment to patience and the delivery of top-notch quality. It is a world where the ordinary becomes extraordinary, and where customer pleasure is not just a goal but a way of life. The demonstration of patience is essential, as each interaction is filled with the time and care required to exceed expectations. Quality service is more than just a promise; it is a standard that is continually raised. In this environment, the combination of patience and outstanding service results in an exceptional experience.

Patience. They derive a sense of contentment from their current position. Nevertheless, they grapple with the task of effectively handling a wide range of personalities, requirements, and daily fluctuations in their patients' dispositions. Dealing with some patients proves to be challenging due to their communication difficulties, while others present high demands.

Participant B said, "*In my job as a clinic head, I am happy with my current position. Perhaps the challenge lies in how we handle the different personalities, needs, and moods of our patients every day.*"

Quality Service. Their main priority, along with their colleagues, is to deliver exceptional service to patients, even in times of exhaustion. They consider the significant challenge to be the daily interactions with a diverse range of personalities. However, when it comes to the job aspects of patient care and laboratory work, everything is functioning effectively.

Participant B said, "*But for us and my colleagues, our main priority is to provide excellent service to the patients, even when we're tired. I believe that's the significant challenge – dealing with different personalities every day. However, in terms of the job, serving the patients, and working in the laboratory, everything is going well.*"

Enlightenment. It explores the journey of acquiring knowledge, insight, and wisdom. It highlights the obstacles individuals encounter and the adjustments they make in their pursuit of enlightenment, shedding light on the transformative process of personal growth and understanding.

Challenges. The participant is retrospectively reflecting on their overall experiences during their overseas employment, including the lessons they had to acquire and the difficulties they encountered.

Participant C said, "*Challenging, challenges… Especially working abroad, adjusting to their culture is one of the challenges. Because every country has a different culture, so you have to adapt quickly.*"

Adapting. The participant is not only elucidating his approach to assimilation but also guiding how to adapt when visiting Singapore, including which languages and accents would be suitable.

Participant C said, "*Like here in Singapore, I have to adapt and learn how to speak their language, like basic Mandarin. And I have to re-adjust my accent, and adapt to their accent, they have a different accent here in Singapore. If you use your Philippine accent, they can understand you well enough.*"

Sensibility. It examines the terrain of elevated emotional consciousness and receptivity, probing how individuals negotiate their emotional sensitivities within the context of societal, cultural, and personal influences, accentuating the intricacies of emotional comprehension and adjustment.

Challenges. As part of her response, the participant furnishes supplementary information by enumerating various distinct groups of individuals with whom she collaborates daily. This listing serves to provide additional context to her answer, offering a broader view of her work interactions. In doing so, she aims to enhance the comprehensiveness of her response.

Participant D said, "*When it comes to challenges, there's a lot of challenges, of course. First, because I'm working in a multicultural country, wherein there's a lot of races that you will be able to encounter like there's Indian, there's Chinese, so the difficulty on this part is how to integrate with this kind of people.*"

Culture. The participant proceeds to elaborate on how her experiences align with the challenges of working and adapting to a multicultural country. She has previously provided context for her grievances, and now she delves into the way these challenges intersect with her narrative. Her explanation contextualizes the difficulties she faces within the broader framework of working and adapting in a culturally diverse environment.

Participant D said, "*Like Indians, they have different cultures, they have different attitudes. Same thing with the Chinese, they have different cultures, they have different attitudes. So you have to know how to integrate with these people.*"

Integrate. The participant shares her final thoughts on the matter by giving us perspective on what other people might also think when they work with her.

Participant D said, "*And I believe these people are also doing some adjustments to integrate with me.*"

Adjustment. Having to adapt to a sudden change of events. We have certain difficulties when we transition to unfamiliar concerns.

Transition. It was quite a challenge as the participant was transferred into a different kind of work the participant hadn't experienced yet.

Participant E said, "*Ahh, I see. The challenge for me was when my job shifted from the kitchen, and suddenly, I was assigned as an assistant in ultrasound. That was a significant challenge for me because I had no experience in the medical field.*"

Inexperienced. The participant's lack of expertise in using gadgets and other technologies vital to the field has been a challenge caused by the sudden transition in the job description.

Participant E said, "*I see, it was a big challenge because, of course, I didn't know how to manage the responsibilities of an assistant in ultrasound, especially when it comes to the equipment used, especially with the computer. I did not know of that, so that became a significant challenge for me at work.*"

Table 2. Differences in Career Progression

Domains	Themes	Subthemes
The Differences in Career Progression between those with Effective Work-Life Balance and those who do not	Well-being	(1) Slow pacing; (2) Multitasking; (3) Prioritization
	Harmony	(1) Balance; (2) Productive
	Introspection	(1) Experience; (2) Difference
	Surveillance	(1) Difference; (2) Progress
	Favorable Result	(1) Resourcefulness; (2) Hands-on

Well-being. It denotes a holistic state of health and contentment subject to the influence of individual choices, particularly about the facets of the slow pacing, prioritization, and the ramifications of multitasking on stress and cognitive focus. The imperative of judicious prioritization emerges as central to safeguarding the requisite allocation of attention to fundamental life domains, such as physical and mental health, and thus, enhancing overall well-being.

Slow Pacing. The participant reflects on the cadence of life, distinguishing their own experience and that of middle-aged individuals. They perceive a certain languidness in their own generation's approach to life and highlight the fact that things are not as rapid as they may have initially expected.

Participant A said, "*The pacing is still not as fast for us.*"

Multitasking. The participant describes the behavior of their newer colleagues who seem adept at juggling multiple tasks simultaneously. They note that these younger colleagues appear to manage various responsibilities and activities concurrently, indicating an aptitude for multitasking. The participants contrast this approach with their own, emphasizing their more traditional and methodical way of handling work.

Participant A said, "*Because you mentioned others, for me, I have new colleagues, and it seems that nowadays, the new ones I work with are more adept at multitasking. They seem to handle everything, all tasks, simultaneously.*"

Prioritization. Prioritization is brought to the forefront as the participant expounds upon their approach to managing work and personal time. They articulate a conscious effort to create boundaries and carve out specific moments for relaxation and work-life balance. This involves setting aside time for rest, like on Saturdays and Sundays, to recharge, even when their workload is substantial. They exemplify the importance of safeguarding their time, making it clear that they prioritize self-care and strike a balance between their professional and personal lives.

Participant A said, "*I mean, you know, the term 'chill-chill lang.' For me, I make sure that on Saturdays and*

Sundays, especially on Fridays, even if I have a lot of work, I tell myself that Saturday is my nap time – no work. I applied this to myself because as early as Monday, it was already there. So I give myself the opportunity, even now that it's face-to-face, and there's more time at work. I make sure that when it comes to the evening, I lessen the work-related tasks unless there are things that need to be submitted. That's what I do."

Harmony. It is fundamental to finding balance and fulfillment in one's life. It exemplifies the art of balancing numerous parts to produce a peaceful symphony. Balance is essential in this pursuit because it allows people to synchronize their actions, feelings, and goals. Individuals can uncover the route to increased productivity by channeling their energy and focus into a seamless and purposeful flow through this perfect blend of balance. The interaction of balance and production becomes the compass guiding one to a fuller, more rewarding existence on the path to harmony.

Balance. Maintaining a work-life balance is highly significant. When they resided in Malaysia, they took on the role of a work-at-home mom, with their family serving as their primary career focus. During that period, it often felt as if they were dedicating their entire day to family responsibilities. However, upon their return to the Philippines, they were fortunate to secure a position within a corporation, which exposed them to an entirely new realm. They successfully struck a balance between their family and professional life. Previously, their world seemed exclusively centered around their family, but their transition to the corporate sphere enhanced their ability to manage their work responsibilities effectively.

Participant B said, "*Absolutely, work-life balance is crucial. When we were in Malaysia, I was a work-at-home mom. At that time, my family was my career. It felt like I was working full-time for my family. However, when we returned to the Philippines, I was fortunate to find employment in a corporation. There, I discovered a different world for myself. I achieved a balance between family and work. Before, it seemed like my world revolved around my family. But upon entering the corporate world, I became more adept at fulfilling my responsibilities.*"

Productive. They have acquired the skills to enhance their productivity and efficiency at work while ensuring they can continue to provide for their children and families. In their professional environment, the focus extends beyond the job tasks, as they are afforded opportunities for team-building, travel, and incentives. This holistic approach not only enhances their sense of fulfillment but also reduces burnout, ultimately making them more effective. Unlike in the past, when their world revolved solely around their family, now, with a job, they have various social circles, colleagues, friends, and family to engage with, mitigating the risk of falling into a repetitive routine. Whenever work becomes overwhelming, they can turn to their family for support, and when family demands peak, their job serves as a valuable refuge.

Participant B said, "*Thus, I learned to be more productive and effective at work, and upon returning home, I can still support my children and family. In our workplace, we are not only focused on our tasks; we are also given opportunities for team building, travel, and incentives. Because of this, we feel a sense of balance, and our energy is not easily depleted. We become more effective. Consequently, there's less likelihood of feeling trapped in a repetitive routine. With a job, I have various groups, colleagues, friends, and family. It's unlike before when my world revolved around family, making it easy to experience burnout. However, having a job provides a balance between work and life. So, if you're feeling drained from work, your family is there. And if you need a break from family responsibilities, your job is there.*"

Introspection. This theme focuses on the act of introspection and in-depth self-examination, while also examining how individuals' introspective paths are molded by their distinct life experiences and their perceptions and handling of disparities in themselves and others.

Experience. The participant discloses details about a period in their professional life when they neglected to prioritize work-life balance during the initial years of their career. The participant candidly opens up about a time when they didn't consider the importance of maintaining equilibrium between work and personal life in their early working years.

Participant C said, "*I don't have a work-life balance because I aim to earn money. I don't even care about social experiences.*"

Difference. The participant provides insight into the transformative nature of the strategy, describing the process of its reconstruction and the profound impact it has had on his overall well-being. The participant elucidates how the changes brought about by this strategic overhaul have significantly improved his state of mind and overall quality of life in stark contrast to his previous feelings and experiences.

Participant C said, "*So, I decided to try another thing, which is to make myself busy on my off-day, giving a chance for myself to do some activities like cycling, running, or hiking. And then I felt the difference. When I come to work, I still have my energy, and my patience is longer, I think so. And I always stay calm after that.*"

Surveillance. It investigates the scrutiny and surveillance of both individuals and societies, examining how surveillance methods and technologies influence societal progress and either exacerbate or alleviate differences among different groups, providing insights into the intricate relationship between surveillance, advancement, and diversity.

Difference. Drawing from her observations, the participant shares her beliefs concerning the disparities between a worker's experience with a healthy work-life balance and when they lack it. She offers insights rooted in her own experiences, offering a subjective viewpoint on how an individual's professional and personal life can be affected by the presence or absence of work-life balance.

Participant D said, "*There's a difference in career progression, especially if people do not have much work-life balance.*"

Progress. The participant conveys how work-life balance creates opportunities for employees to advance in their careers while preventing stagnation. They articulate the role of work-life balance in facilitating professional growth and avoiding a sense of being stuck or unproductive.

Participant D said, "*Doing your job at the same time as maintaining your lifestyle and good health. Those people who don't practice this tend to become stagnant in their occupations. Unlike those who know how to enjoy their life at the same time, and perform their job, they do well in their field. This leads them to become more progressive in their chosen careers.*"

Favorable Result. A result that was expected due to one's hard work and effort put into something they wanted to accomplish and get a higher possibility of turning it out well.

Resourcefulness. The participant stated that the quality and quantity of the service as an advantage of having an effective work-life balance.

Participant E said, "*Perhaps in the approach, more can be accomplished because of balance, effective time management indeed.*"

Hands-on. The participant shows a hands-on attitude as a mother and as an ultrasound assistant.

Participant E said, "*It gets chaotic and messy when not balanced, and the children may be neglected. That's why I bring them to my workplace. In that way, I can balance my time, attend to their needs, and even take care of them while managing work. The approach to work is indeed different.*"

Table 3. Experiences of Gen Xers in a Generationally Diverse Workforce

Domains	Themes	Subthemes
Experiences of Gen Xers between Baby Boomers and Millennials in the 21st Century Workplace	Professional Growth Accountability Narrative Coherence Deliberation	(1) Expertise; (2) Technological Difficulty (1) Understanding; (2) Responsibility (1) Guide; (2) Experience (1) Encounter; (2) Learn; (3) Perspective (1) Comparison; (2) Considerate

Professional Growth. It is synonymous with career progression and is inextricably linked to the acquisition of expertise and the adept management of technological difficulty. The development of domain-specific knowledge and mastery of intricate technological concerns are essential prerequisites for meaningful professional advancement.

Expertise. The participant delves into the diversity of teaching experience, notably categorizing those aged 50 and above as "Season Teachers" due to their extensive expertise. They engage in mentoring and providing guidance to their peers while actively participating in the sharing of knowledge and coaching, underscoring the significance of accumulated wisdom within the profession.

Participant A said, "*We have that too. In our case, we use the term 'Seasoned Teacher' for those who are 50 plus; they have more experience than us.*"

Technological Difficulty. Technological Difficulty is evident as the participant addresses the challenges faced when adopting and using technology in teaching. They mention the struggle they and their colleagues encounter when dealing with technological systems, necessitating mutual support and coaching. Younger colleagues are adept with technology, and assisting, while the "Season Teachers" seek help from peers in their age group, highlighting the theme of Technological Difficulty.

Participant A said, "*However, when it comes to using technology, that's one of the things that become a problem, so I'm kind of in between.*"

Accountability. The concept or idea of taking ownership of what's been done or something that has happened. Being held responsible for one's actions and words when interacting with others in the community or company. Usually, it is taught that one should hold themselves accountable for how they conduct themselves to someone as it can reflect people or institutions that are connected to them.

Understanding. The individual is in a situation where they interact with people from different generations both in their family and at work. They acknowledge that this can sometimes be challenging due to the

generation gap. At 51 years old, they are older than most of their coworkers, which requires them to make an effort to understand and relate to their younger colleagues. They try to comprehend the mindset and behavior of their younger coworkers, and their colleagues also make adjustments to accommodate their age. Monthly staff meetings provide a platform for open communication. Their colleagues fondly call them "Mami" due to the age difference. However, in contrast, the doctors in their clinic are older than them, and this necessitates a different approach.

Participant B said, "*Both in my family and at work, we come from different generations. It can be challenging at times because we may not always understand each other. I'm 51, so my colleagues at work are younger than me. To understand them better, I try to comprehend their way of thinking and acting. They, too, make adjustments for me. We have monthly meetings with the staff. I'm sure that if there's an issue, they are open to expressing their concerns. They call me 'Mami' due to our age difference; they're in their 20s. But the doctors in our clinic are older than me, so I also need to adjust to their age.*"

Responsibility. Every generation has a unique perspective influenced by their age and the hormonal changes associated with different life stages, affecting their personality and behavior. The individual, who is currently experiencing menopause, has noticed changes in their patience levels due to lower progesterone levels. They've learned to take breaks and step back when they feel overwhelmed or irritable and then return with a calmer mindset. In their role as a supervisor, they mainly deal with decision-making responsibilities, which is different from their past positions as tellers, loan processors, and branch assistants. They now have a more significant role in caring for and leading their team, which presents new challenges in meeting their team's expectations.

Participant B said, "*Each generation has a unique perspective depending on their age, and this is related to the level of challenges at each stage of life. It has a significant impact on our personality, mindset, and behavior. I, for instance, am in the menopausal stage. My progesterone levels are not as high as before. In the past, I had more patience, but now, there are moments when I feel overwhelmed and lose my temper. When that happens, I pause, take a breath, or take a break, and I come back when I feel lighter. As a supervisor, most of my tasks involve making decisions. Before this role, I worked as a teller, a loan processor, and a branch assistant. Now, my responsibilities in taking care of people are more significant. It's a greater challenge to meet their expectations.*"

Narrative. They are commonly referring to a person's perception of a person, an object, a feeling, or an event that has occurred or is currently occurring. It can be subjective or objective depending on the construction of sentences regarding the entity being described. In the context of someone speaking on their account of a certain person, their narrative may or may not be seen as unreliable, especially when likeability politics are at play.

Guide. The individual is articulating their perspective from the vantage point of their role as a Restaurant Supervisor, which entails the responsibility of overseeing a diverse workforce comprising individuals of various age groups. In this capacity, their duties encompass not only maintaining the operational efficiency of the restaurant but also fostering a harmonious and productive working environment.

Participant C said, "*That's a very good question also, because right now in the restaurant I'm working at, I have been surrounded by younger staff, younger employees. As a supervisor, I have to guide them, and I have to extend my patience in teaching them. Because they tend to easily get hurt when you say something a little offensive. So I explain to them detailed step by step so they can follow all the basic responsibilities in the restaurant.*"

Experience. The participant discloses a personalized strategy that he employs to enhance his management of younger colleagues, recognizing that this approach may not be universally applicable among other supervisors. In doing so, he underscores the individualized nature of his management style, acknowledging that what works for him might not yield the same results for his peers in similar positions.

Participant C said, "*I also tell them stories about my experiences before, so they get something to learn based on my experience*"

Coherence. A word used to indicate a complete and concise sentence or person, often said when someone or something is agreeable, consistent, understandable, or well-spoken. It is a word that may go hand in hand with the concept of comprehension as someone may be seen as 'coherent' if the person assessing them has a good grasp of comprehension, and vice versa to someone who may not have the best ability to comprehend certain subject listening to or reading someone's speech to judge the individual's coherence.

Encounter. The participant offers her viewpoint, drawing from her interactions with trainees, primarily those from younger generations. In her assessment, she reflects on her experiences with these individuals to form her opinion. Her insights are primarily shaped by her encounters with younger trainees.

Participant D said, "*For me, there's not much when I encounter this of baby boomers now, because in my job place, I usually train these part-timers who are youngsters.*"

Learn. The participant expresses her willingness to collaborate with the younger generation, driven by the prospect of mutual learning. She is open to the idea of gaining knowledge from them while also sharing her wisdom and insights with them. Her eagerness to engage with younger individuals stems from a desire for a reciprocal exchange of knowledge and experience.

Participant D said, "*So far, I'm okay working with these people with these youngsters because I get to learn from them. In return, they will learn from me, and I will learn from them, and I am learning from them too.*"

Perspective. The participant expresses her openness to understanding the viewpoint of her younger colleagues when juxtaposed with her own. She conveys a genuine willingness to empathize and appreciate the perspective held by the younger members of her team. Her statement reflects a genuine desire to bridge the generation gap and foster better communication and collaboration within the workplace.

Participant D said, "*I had to be able to get some perspective from these youngsters when it comes to what's happening around now and then I get to know more of them how to socialize with these youngsters.*"

Deliberation. They are showing careful acts of consideration to other people even in the simplest way possible.

Comparison. It has shown in her encounters and experiences as a Gen Xer in the workforce the negative connotation of Millennials as they are usually described as being stubborn, undisciplined, and/or entitled.

Participant E said, "*Ah, my experience and my observations regarding the term you mentioned, the past and the present. In the past, the youth were disciplined, and they are still disciplined today. However, nowadays, the youth tend to assert their preferences, and when advised or corrected, even in the workplace, they sometimes act as if they are more knowledgeable and seem to act like know-it-alls. That's something I've experienced with my colleagues.*"

<u>Considerate</u>. Civility relative to building strong relationships alongside giving values and respect to the opinion of the elders has a positive impact on maintaining a good environment in the workplace.

Participant E said, "*When it comes to elders, of course, as they are older than me, they hold a certain authority, and they are the first in line in terms of seniority. Hey, whatever advice they give you, perhaps you should give importance to what they say. It's for your good, for the benefit of your colleagues, and for your overall work experience.*"

Table 4. Area for Improvement

Domains	Themes	Subthemes
Areas for Improvement relative to the positive impact of positive Gen X Career Progression and Job Satisfaction	Flexibility Alone Time Confide Management Openness	(1) Adaptation; (2) Level of Competitiveness (1) Self-care (1) Improvement; (2) Reply (1) Rest Day; (2) Enjoy (1) Eagerness; (2) Effort

Flexibility. A defining characteristic of success manifested itself through proficient adaptation to shifting circumstances and the maintenance of a high level of competitiveness. Individuals who demonstrate a capacity for adaptability and excellence amid a concurrence often position themselves favourable for success in dynamic contexts.

<u>Adaptation</u>. Individuals must adapt to the evolving work environment. They stress the importance of remaining open to change in the present age and not becoming complacent with traditional approaches. The participant highlights the significance of staying updated and adaptable in response to changing circumstances, even if one has more experience within the system.

Participant A said, "*The approach to work has indeed changed nowadays, so it seems like you need to be collaborative. You can't just say, 'Oh, this is how we've always done it.' We need to learn to adapt to the current situation. We need to be the ones to adjust, even if we were already in the system earlier because we might get left behind.*"

<u>Level of Competitiveness</u>. A clear distinction in competitiveness emerges between newly appointed teachers and those who have long-standing experience in the profession. The newer teachers exhibit a higher level of competitiveness, specifically concerning their dedication to classroom activities and their commitment to the student's education. This contrast highlights how fresh entrants to the field bring a strong emphasis on active classroom engagement and student-focused approaches, setting them apart from their more seasoned counterparts.

Participant A said, "*For example, they say that the new teachers nowadays are more competitive. It's like the seasoned teachers prefer the traditional classroom setting, where they solely concentrate on the activities of the children.*"

Alone Time. The idea of a person using their time recreationally or productively when they are left by themselves. The common term used when someone is planning on avoiding unnecessary interactions regarding their career during their day off or time off from their usual work environment, ideally spent on relaxing or acting upon a hobby that does not have a place in the workroom, examples being hiking, painting, cooking, or playing games.

Self-care. Personal time assumes a critical role in an individual's well-being, running in parallel with their family and work responsibilities. It possesses the potential to significantly impact a person's overall life satisfaction. Engaging in activities that bring happiness, like immersing oneself in Korean dramas and maintaining an active presence on social media, holds considerable importance. Prioritizing self-care stands as a fundamental component of maintaining a healthy equilibrium. Neglecting one's well-being can introduce challenges in the provision of effective care and support to others, aligning with the adage's wisdom that underscores the difficulty of aiding others when one's welfare is overlooked.

Participant B said, "*Having 'me time' is important for oneself, aside from time spent with family and work. It has a significant impact on us. The things that bring us joy, like watching dramas and staying updated on social media, are valuable. Taking care of oneself is essential. We cannot care for others if we do not take care of ourselves. As the saying goes, we cannot pour from an empty cup.*"

Confide. The act of speaking to a trusted person to be understood or comforted, however, it could also be a way for someone to ask a person they deem as rational to help them decide on a certain thing, depending on the severity of the options, one would usually go to someone they either see as a friend or someone they are extremely close with.

Improvement. The participant elaborates on a particular approach, emphasizing its effectiveness when individuals have a dependable support network in the form of friends or family at their disposal. Their discussion centers on a strategy that hinges on the availability of such trustworthy connections, highlighting its dependency on having people one can rely on for successful implementation.

Participant C said, "*For the improvement of my strategies, I believe you must have another to rely on, in your decision-making activities.*"

Rely. To gain a deeper understanding of a matter, the participant frequently turns to the second thoughts of his wife as a valuable resource. In doing so, he recognizes the significance of seeking her perspective as a means of enhancing his comprehension. By relying on her insights and revisiting her subsequent reflections, he seeks to refine his understanding of the subject matter in question.

Participant C said, "*For example, for myself, I always ask my wife for a second thought. I use her as my second opinion. We need someone to rely on.*"

Management. The idea of being able to keep people or things in check or to make one's job moreconvenient or easier, especially for those who are unable to function in a chaotic environment, resulting in them not being able to do their job efficiently due to being disoriented by the disorganized task or plan. Inthe context of time management, work-life balance fits in perfectly as it requires good enough management to make sure you stay productive while also being able to sufficiently rest during your day off.

Rest Day. The participant imparts her perspective concerning work ethics and conduct on days other than rest days. She provides her insights and observations about how one's work-related values and behaviors extend beyond the days designated for relaxation. In doing so, she offers a unique viewpoint on the alignment of work ethic with actions in the context of non-rest days.

Participant D said, "*Of course when you are working, you have to focus on your job. You have to be mindful of the things that you need to do at your workplace. And then when you are on your rest day, you have to enjoy your rest day as well.*"

Enjoy. The participant gives her strategy away in the form of a suggestion, a call to action for us to do similarly if we decide upon it.

Participant D said, "*You have to do activities that will uplift your mood, such as hiking and running. For me, these are the kind of things that I usually do to enjoy my work-life balance.*"

Openness. Being open to the opportunities to learn and experiences to explore also means having the capacity to do what it takes to achieve one's goal no matter how small it is.

Eagerness. The participant shows her dedication to compensating for the weakness with her eagerness to learn the difficulty in handling the technology.

Participant E said, "*Uh, how can I improve? Perhaps, I can enhance my knowledge in areas where I am not yet an expert, especially in handling gadgets.*"

Effort. With consecutive action, patience, and perseverance, the participant believes that she will learn things better.

Participant E said, "*To improve, I need to put in the effort and be patient so that I can learn properly.*"

Table 5. Technological Influence

Domains	Themes	Subthemes
Impact of Technology as a Tool for Competitiveness and Relevance in the Workplace	Work-Life Integration	(1) Technological Benefits; (2) Privacy concerns; (3) Work-Life Balance; (4) Budget Constraints
	Adaptability	(1) Adjustment; (2) Perseverance
	Agreement	(1) Helps; (2) Before
	Approval	(1) Knowledge; (2) Trend
	Competitiveness	(1) Willingness; (2) Coping

Work-Life Integration. This contemporary employment model leverages technological benefits to connect professional and personal lives, often giving rise to privacy concerns. While reshaping conventional concepts of work-life balance, this strategy aims to achieve a delicate harmony between work and personal responsibilities, even though budget constraints can occasionally pose challenges.

Technological Benefits. The benefits of technology in their field are apparent, with notable advantages including increased work efficiency and the streamlining of grading through automation. The participant also points out that technology enhances teaching by enabling the seamless integration of videos for educational purposes, making the instructional process more effective and engaging.

Participant A said, "*There's something about that, a significant impact, as they say, there are both positive*

and negative sides to technology nowadays. Currently, work has become faster; it's like paper and pencil are becoming obsolete. Automatically, when giving grades, you provide all the information and details they ask for at work. That's what speeds up everything, even in teaching. We also use videos, making it easier for the children."

Privacy Concerns. Worries are arising regarding the diminishing privacy, primarily stemming from the escalated reliance on technology, particularly in a work-from-home environment. The participant notes that work-related demands now encroach upon non-working hours, blurring the lines between professional and personal life and negatively affecting their overall work-life equilibrium.

Participant A said, "*As far as I know, in my case, we're losing privacy, especially with work-from-home situations. It reaches a point where even after working hours, sometimes late, around 9 or 10 o'clock, when they submit tasks that could have been submitted earlier, and they'll tell you it needs to be done 'ASAP.'*"

Work-life Balance. The participant delves into the impact of technology on the demarcation between their professional and personal life. They highlight the perpetual sense of urgency associated with work-related issues, which creates difficulties in upholding a balanced and healthy work-life equilibrium. This continuous demand makes it challenging to maintain a clear separation between their professional responsibilities and their time, ultimately affecting their overall work-life harmony.

Participant A said, "*So what happens is, it's not as healthy as before, I mean before the pandemic, our work was confined to the school. When it's done, it stays there, and you come back the next day, or you bring the necessary things with you. But now, with the help of technology, everything is expedited.*"

Budget Constraints. Budget limitations become evident as the participant discusses the necessity to enhance their electronic devices, particularly for educators in public schools. They bring attention to the obstacles encountered by individuals with restricted access to the necessary technology. This underscores the financial constraints in acquiring the essential tools for an effective educational environment, especially in the context of public schooling.

Participant A said, "*Like, for example, the cellphone. Not all of them can handle it. I remember, my first cellphone couldn't handle Google Meet, so there are Android or smartphones that you can't use for those kinds of things like Google Meet. What about my part? So, you need to upgrade your gadgets. Right? Especially for us in public schools, there are more people, yes, with phones, but the problem is, their phones can't handle that kind of platform.*"

Adaptability. One's ability to integrate oneself into their environment despite being new to it, especially regarding diverse cultures and etiquette when dealing with people outside of one's usual group of acquaintances. Something that a person needs when working somewhere for the first time.

Adjustment. In the past, they had limited opportunities to study IT, as it wasn't available during their time. However, in the modern era, there is a growing need to understand the digital world. Consequently, they made a dedicated effort to learn on their own. During periods of unemployment, they took the initiative to acquire skills in applications like Excel and other software needed for their office work. Despite not being accustomed to computer systems, they persevered and taught themselves. They recognized the importance of adjusting to the demands of this generation and learning new skills, as they couldn't rely on younger generations to do everything for them.

Participant B said, "*In the past, I didn't have the opportunity to study IT. It wasn't available during my time. But now, in the modern era, we need to learn about the digital world. So, I made an effort to learn on my*

own. When I didn't have a job, I tried to learn Excel and other applications needed in the office. Even though I wasn't accustomed to computer systems, I worked hard to learn them independently. In this generation, we need to adjust and learn. We can't expect the younger generation to do everything for us."

Perseverance. They express a desire to understand how the system works so that they can effectively explain it during their meetings. In their case, they work in the field of clinics or medicine. Their expertise lies outside of IT, but they recognize the importance of learning and keeping up-to-date with technological advancements, even if it presents challenges. This reflects their commitment to staying informed and capable in their field, regardless of the difficulties involved in adapting to new technologies.

Participant B said, *"I want to understand how the system works so I can explain it in our meetings. In my case, I work in the field of clinics or medicine. Our expertise is different from IT, but we need to learn and update ourselves, even though it's challenging."*

Agreement. Seen as the basic terms of one's relationship with others or the approval of a certain concept. It could be used when dealing with business partners or when someone is generally responding to a person's inquiry about a certain topic that might require a 'yes or no' answer.

Helps. The participant conveys a sense of endorsement and support for the contemporary technological innovations that have found their way into their professional sphere. This approval stems from a deep appreciation of the advantages and convenience that these advancements bring to their work. Their enthusiasm is directed at the tangible benefits and efficiency gains achieved through the integration of these cutting-edge tools and methods into their occupation.

Participant C said, *"The advanced technology helps all the generations get the information easily."*

Before. The participant draws a striking comparison between the traditional methods of information gathering and the contemporary approaches that are prevalent today. They highlight the stark contrast in the evolution of information retrieval techniques, showcasing how the process has dramatically transformed over time. By juxtaposing the past with the present, the participant underscores the significant shifts in information acquisition methods, shedding light on the dynamic nature of knowledge access and emphasizing the impact of technological advancements on this fundamental aspect of human communication and interaction.

Participant C said, *"Unlike before, you only have books. What if you didn't bring the books where the information you needed is? You can't give them the right information. Now, everything is on the internet, by choosing wisely good information is easily available."*

Approval. The act of validating an idea or an individual's actions, commonly used when someone is presenting a proposal of some kind, or when someone is asking a person's thoughts on an action done by someone, usually if it's good or bad in their perception.

Knowledge. The participant discusses how she and her husband have incorporated technology into their daily routines, including her occupation in the retail sector. She emphasizes the seamless integration of technology into various aspects of their lives, underscoring its significance and effectiveness. In her narrative, the participant highlights the pervasive role of technology both at home and in her professional work within the retail industry.

Participant D said, *"Nowadays, we tend to use more of this social media or these gadgets to improve our knowledge, especially on our job, on my job, for us now to be able to follow the trend because I'm on retail business."*

Trend. The participant enumerates the significance of technology within her role and elaborates on its practical applications. She outlines the pivotal role that technology plays in her job and provides specific examples of how it is integrated into her work. In doing so, she emphasizes the essential nature of technology in her professional responsibilities.

Participant D said, "*Well, to be able to follow the trend, I have to see more of this latest collection through social media. And because of social media now, we will be able to research more of what's new, what's latest, and what are the latest trend that we can use on our job, especially for me, I can see a lot of the latest trends and I can recommend to my customers that in that way I can be able to apply this latest trend that I am seeing on social media too.*"

Competitiveness. To adapt and survive with the fast advancements in the 21st century, one must cope with the diverse environment and the growing technological advancements in the 21st century.

Willingness. Although the participant admitted the difficulty in using the technological advancements in the equipment needed in the field, she is willing to learn and improve on a larger scale.

Participant E said, "*Perhaps for me, understanding gadgets is essential. Personally, when it comes to such things, I lack the skills, so I need to learn a lot more. It's not just about being content with one thing; I need to broaden my knowledge.*"

Coping. To keep up with the younger generations, the participants needed to cope with the fast pace of technological innovations.

Participant E said, "*Uhm, how did it influence me? For me, it's probably really about adapting because nowadays, most people are into gadgets. You need to have, what do you call it, that gadget knowledge. That's why I have to keep up with the current generation, which is always engaged with gadgets. It has become one of the primary tools used by the youth today, full of high-tech devices. I need to keep up with that.*"

Table 6. Benefits of Work-Life Balance

Domains	Themes	Subthemes
Significant advantages of maintaining a Work-Life Balance	Life Balancing	(1) Simultaneous Handling; (2) Equilibrium
	Equilibrium	(1) Balance; (2) Difficulty
	Realization	(1) Work-Life Balance
	Emphasis	(1) Work-Life Balance
	Legacy	(1) Constructing; (2) Role Model

Life Balancing. It is a holistic concept, involving the simultaneous handling of diverse personal and professional commitments to achieve equilibrium. Striking the right equilibrium in managing multiple aspects of life is central to the practice of life balancing.

Simultaneous Handling. The participant's engagement in a wide array of roles is readily apparent, encompassing the roles of a working mother, an educator, and a daughter. They readily acknowledge the complexities inherent in managing these diverse responsibilities and emphasize the imperative of establishing a harmonious equilibrium. The participant recognizes the inherent challenges in simultaneously fulfilling these multifaceted roles and underscores the necessity of achieving a delicate balance to navigate the demands they entail.

Participant A said, "*Because, as we were saying, if you're a working mom, you have many roles besides being a mommy. You're also a teacher, and you're still the child of your parents.*"

Equilibrium. The individual places a premium on achieving equilibrium amidst their multifaceted roles as a mother, educator, and daughter. They are acutely aware of the potential time demands imposed by these significant responsibilities, which prompts them to place a heightened priority on dedicating precious moments to themselves, coined as "me time." This deliberate allocation of personal time is not only a means of rejuvenation but also a strategy to sustain a delicate balance among these roles, ensuring they can effectively meet the diverse demands of each without feeling overwhelmed.

Participant A said, "*But when you notice that things have changed, the system is different, you need to find a balance or become something else. You now have a family, you've become a mother, and you still have responsibilities as a teacher, as we were saying, as a daughter. Your time gets consumed more, and you lose yourself, so something needs to happen.*"

Equilibrium. The individual achieved the concept of equilibrium despite their huge responsibilities outside of just being a career person. The word is synonymous with gaining a sense of 'balance' despite taking accountability for their role as a career person and as someone who still needs to spend time with loved ones.

Balance. Avoiding burnout is essential, as one of the leading causes of people leaving their jobs is burnout. They often struggle to cope with the daily pressures. When they choose to depart, it negatively impacts their financial situation. It's a different situation when two individuals contribute to the family's finances. Lacking balance, it becomes challenging to sustain employment and provide for the family.

Participant B said, "*It's crucial to avoid burnout. One of the reasons people leave their jobs is due to burnout. They can't handle the day-to-day situation. When they leave, their financial situation is affected. It's different when two people contribute to the family income. Without balance, it's challenging to continue working and providing.*"

Difficulty. When someone finds happiness in their family and work, they can manage their situation effectively. Nowadays, government support is available, reducing the need to burden their children when they can't support themselves in their later years. Striking a balance is the key. As mentioned earlier, this individual used to be a full-time mom and couldn't achieve balance due to being in a different country while their family and friends were in the Philippines. However, with balance, it becomes highly significant.

Participant B said, "*If we are happy with our family and work, we can manage. Because now, we receive assistance from the government, we no longer need to burden our children because we can't support ourselves in old age. It's better if we have balance. As I mentioned earlier, I used to be a full-time mom, and I couldn't achieve balance because I was in another country, and my family and friends were in the Philippines. But with the help of balance, it is very important.*"

Realization. An act of reflection, usually towards one's actions could also refer to someone else's. Similar to the concept of enlightenment, it is used when someone has an 'aha!' moment regarding something or someone.

Work-Life Balance. The participant provides insights into the contrast between maintaining a work-life balance and not having one. He delves into his findings and observations related to the impact of this distinction. Through his contributions, he sheds light on the consequences and benefits associated with both scenarios, thereby offering a comprehensive perspective on the effects of work-life balance and its absence.

Participant C said, "*Like what I said, having a work-life balance you tend to stay happy in your personal life and your working environment, by having that you'll see everything in a positive vibe.*"

Emphasis. The idea of giving importance to something or someone, especially prominent when someone is speaking on a topic they perceive as extremely important, emphasizes the word or sentence that they want people to remember.

Work-Life Balance. The participant advocates for the concept of work-life balance based on her perception and what it can do for others, especially based on her personal experience with it.

Participant D said, "*When you do this thing (work-life balance) in your daily lifestyle, I believe you will be able to be happy, you will be more relaxed because if you don't have this kind of work-life balance, your life, your working life will tend to become more stressful and then you are not going to be happy when you're doing your job. But when you are enjoying both, your work, your job, and at the same time, your life, outside work, you tend to become more happy and you tend to become more satisfied and you don't easily give up on whatever challenges that you need to face on your working place and your daily life.*"

Legacy. To be able to leave something good behind is a big thing, especially for the older generations. Being a good role model to the younger ones set out as a representation when dealing with certain things.

Constructing. Time management has been significant to the participants as it was said to create benefits of giving them quality service and company whether at home or the workplace. It also has been stated the importance of giving yourself time to rest and relax both your physical health and mental health.

Participant E said, "*Maybe, it's just about finding the balance in managing your work at home, and you need to handle it in such a way that when you're at home, you balance it with your family so that it won't be affected— is that the correct answer? — by problems. Perhaps it's just a matter of time, to balance your time. You need to balance it in your time, and, for example, if you know that when you arrive home, you can take a brief rest to relax your mind and body before starting your time for your family inside your home.*"

Role Model. The participant is indeed quite family-centered and future-orientated with the desire to pass the perception of perseverance and diligence not just in the area of the workplace but also in life in general.

Participant E said, "*Uhm, perhaps, it's really about patience, diligence, and the benefits you can gain from your work. If you lack patience and diligence, you won't receive benefits because you won't achieve your dreams, and you might easily give up. Even if the job is difficult, you need to convince yourself that you can do it, especially for the sake of your family. So that when the time comes and your family, your children, have their own families, they'll have in their minds that my mom never gave up, she endured it.*"

DISCUSSION

The research study gathered information on the relationship between Gen X workers and Work-Life balance, especially the weight it may have on how they approach their occupation and home life. The participants gave each interviewer consent regarding their answers being recorded and used as data for the research paper while the researchers used open-ended interviews and transcripts to encode each answer,

most of which were pulled based on their anecdotes and feelings when speaking on the topic.

The study integrated existing literature and research findings to inform its investigation, with synthesized factors forming the foundation. These factors hold significance for future studies, providing valuable insights into the intricate relationship between work-life balance and generational perspectives within the modern professional landscape.

The reflections on the professional journey presented herein offer a comprehensive overview of the challenges faced, particularly during the pandemic, which individuals deem one of the most demanding periods in their careers (Tadesse & Worku Muluye, 2020). These reflections provide crucial context for understanding how contemporary Gen X professionals navigate challenges stemming from the swiftly evolving technological landscape and dynamic work environment. Despite generational differences, adaptability amid an ever-changing milieu stands out as a key theme, showcasing seamless transitions and adoption of a flexible work approach that distinguishes them from their middle-aged counterparts. This observation aligns with the findings of Rapuano et al. (2021), illustrating that Generation X professionals prioritize the social atmosphere in their workplaces, forging a substantial link between their professional commitment and their inclination to contemplate resigning from their positions. This adaptability significantly influences their job satisfaction and overall well-being, thereby illustrating the intricate interplay of these elements within the contemporary professional sphere.

The narrative delves into the challenges faced by Generation X professionals in navigating the evolving technological landscape and dynamic workplaces. It emphasizes the connection between these challenges and their impact on job satisfaction and overall well-being. Amid the complexities associated with managing a diverse clientele, the results emphasize the paramount importance of prioritizing clients' needs over personal well-being. Truax (2008) notes that international travel and the resultant culture shock represent a taxing endeavor, particularly when facilitating effective business interactions in foreign environments. Their adeptness at establishing and sustaining a judicious work-life equilibrium offers a notable departure from their experiences during overseas assignments. An adaptable occupational environment empowers employees to adroitly harmonize personal and professional responsibilities, as advanced by Drew et al. (2006). This transformative approach distinctly augments job satisfaction and overall well-being, underscoring the pivotal centrality of work-life balance in mitigating the distinct challenges posed by the evolving contemporary professional landscape.

The results illuminate significant challenges arising from cultural disparities, which are prevalent among professionals undertaking international work assignments. This context transitions into an exploration of how Generation X professionals contend with multifaceted challenges inherent in navigating the continually evolving technological landscape and workplace dynamics. The discussion outlines initial struggles in managing work-life balance while working overseas, resulting in frequent job changes and heightened irritability. Health-related concerns prompted a transformative commitment to work-life balance, achieved through engagement in leisure activities during days off, substantially enhancing job satisfaction and overall well-being. De Hauw and Greenhaus (2015) assert that a sustainable career is one where individuals sustain their well-being, productivity, contentment, and employability throughout its duration, aligning with their broader life context. Furthermore, recognizing the necessity to adapt their communication approach with younger colleagues underscores their acute awareness and their attempt to establish rapport through shared past experiences.

Operating within a culturally diverse workplace, the participant shares invaluable insights concerning maintaining work-life balance, underscoring the pivotal significance of striking a harmonious equilibrium between professional commitments and personal life. The results emphasize the importance of allocating

focused attention to professional responsibilities when warranted, while also highlighting the merits of optimally utilizing provided days off to pursue personal interests. The research contends that younger colleagues similarly maintain work-life balance, albeit with differing approaches. This aligns with the findings of Rapuano et al. (2021), which state that millennials exhibit a preference for remote work arrangements, displaying a noteworthy propensity for expeditious assimilation of novel concepts and methodologies. Additionally, the study observes that individuals who neglect to maintain this equilibrium often find themselves stagnating in their professional endeavors, underscoring the profound importance of work-life balance.

The results emphasize the intricate process of transitioning into an unfamiliar professional domain, marked by persistent efforts to mitigate task mismanagement. Individuals firmly hold the belief that cultivating a robust work-life balance is pivotal for enhancing task management efficiency. This interconnectedness between work-life balance and task effectiveness provides profound insights into the strategies embraced by Generation X professionals when grappling with the multifaceted challenges intrinsic to the evolving technological landscape and the dynamics of contemporary workplaces. Furthermore, the study astutely observes certain tendencies among younger colleagues, particularly their resistance to critique from their more senior peers. In alignment with the research of Rapuano et al. (2021), their findings suggest that external work incentives are predominantly viewed as hygiene factors rather than determinants of commitment among the younger generation. Additionally, millennials tend to anticipate rewards regardless of their performance and often manifest a heightened sense of entitlement in the professional realm. This observation resonates with a parallel account provided, thereby shedding light on a recurring pattern in the intergenerational dynamics within the professional sphere.

CONCLUSION

In the course of this comprehensive investigation, the research has yielded significant insights into how Generation X professionals in the contemporary era navigate the distinctive challenges posed by the evolving technological landscape and the shifting dynamics in the workplace. It has also elucidated the interconnectedness of these challenges with their job satisfaction and overall well-being. The narratives provided by the participants have unveiled recurring themes and strategies that illuminate the intricate nature of this relationship.

Offering insights on the first question, the research findings illustrate that Generation X professionals demonstrate a remarkable capacity for adaptability, as exemplified by all participants who adeptly pivot and adopt flexible work methodologies, thereby setting themselves apart in a swiftly evolving professional environment. This adaptability has a discernible impact on their job satisfaction and overall well-being, underscoring the paramount significance of this attribute in successfully navigating the complexities of the contemporary professional sphere.

In response to the second question, the experiences of all participants underscore the paramount importance of work-life balance in mitigating the distinctive challenges encountered by Generation X professionals across diverse work settings. Additionally, the discernible generational disparities in work incentives and entitlements among their younger colleagues emphasize the imperative of comprehending intergenerational dynamics within the workplace. As the professional landscape continues to evolve, accommodating a diversity of generations, collaboration among these cohorts is at its zenith, with the different generations working cooperatively and benefiting from each other's distinct skills and strengths. Their proficiency in achieving and maintaining this equilibrium and its transformative impact on job satisfaction highlights the pivotal role of work-life equilibrium in managing the dynamic interplay of evolving technology and workplace dynamics.

For the third question, the participants universally acknowledge the intrinsic interconnectedness of work-life balance and professional effectiveness. They employ strategies that prioritize the cultivation of this equilibrium, recognizing its pivotal role in enhancing task management efficiency. These strategies encompass adaptability, client-centric prioritization, engagement in leisure pursuits, effective management of work-life balance, and the augmentation of task efficiency. Given the substantial demands placed on their shoulders, they judiciously allocate time for personal pursuits, thereby exemplifying balance in their personal and professional lives.

In essence, this research deepens our understanding of how Gen X professionals in the 21st century manage the multifaceted challenges posed by a rapidly changing work landscape and how work-life balance plays a pivotal role in shaping their experiences, job satisfaction, and overall well-being.

RECOMMENDATION

Future research in the domain of work-life balance among Generation X professionals should undertake a more comprehensive exploration of the intricate interplay between generational perspectives and the rapidly evolving technological landscape. An essential aspect to investigate is how these unique challenges stemming from technological shifts impact the job satisfaction and overall well-being of Generation X professionals. To gain a deeper and more nuanced understanding, it is highly recommended that longitudinal studies be conducted, tracking changes in work-life balance preferences and strategies among Generation X professionals as they progress through various life stages. Such longitudinal investigations could offer valuable insights into the evolving needs and preferences of this demographic group at different career stages.

To better understand the relationship between generational dynamics and work-life balance, future studies should encompass a broader demographic range within Generation X, considering professionals with varying levels of experience and cultural backgrounds. Investigating the effectiveness of organizational interventions designed to promote work-life balance and job satisfaction among Generation X professionals could offer practical insights for employers. This might include flexible work arrangements and wellness programs, assessed for their impact on well-being.

Given the evident influence of technological adaptation on work-life balance, future research should delve into the role of digital literacy and technology-related training in shaping the career trajectories of Generation X professionals. Understanding how they acquire and utilize digital skills is imperative. Research should also focus on strategies for facilitating effective collaboration and knowledge exchange between Generation X professionals and their younger counterparts, promoting cross-generational productivity in the workplace.

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Interview Guide

Title: Reconciling Work-Life Balance: An In-depth Exploration of Generation X's Career Experiences

1. Could you provide some of the most prominent challenges you have faced and are currently facing in your career in the 21st-century workplace?
2. Have you noticed any differences in career progression between those who effectively manage their work-life balance and those who do not?
3. In addition to your current strategies, can you identify potential areas for improvement that could positively impact your career progression and job satisfaction?
4. As a Gen Xer, what are the typical experiences in a generationally diverse workforce today, especially when you often find yourself positioned between Baby Boomers and Millennials in your professional life?
5. In what ways has the evolving technological landscape influenced the skills and training you find necessary to remain competitive and relevant in your career as a Generation X professional?
6. Could you elaborate on the significant benefits you see in maintaining an effective work-life balance?

NU BALIWAG

This informed consent form is for professional Generation X individuals from diverse fields invited to participate in the qualitative research titled "Reconciling Work-Life Balance: An In-depth Exploration of Generation X's Career Experiences."

Mike Lester V. Arceo

Aniah Marielle Z. Cairo

Christina Fiona R. Canuto

Ghean Marie A. Escleto

Marrhey Corine D. Herrera

National University Baliwag

Part I: Information Sheet

Introduction

We are the Psychology student at the National University Baliwag. Our research group is conducting a study focusing on the ever-evolving work-life balance experienced by Generation X individuals in the 21st century. We want to invite you to participate in this research, and I'm here to provide you with all the necessary information. Please take your time to make your decision, and if you have any doubts or questions about the details, you read here, don't hesitate to ask either myself or another member of our research team.

Purpose of the Research

The purpose of our research is to delve comprehensively into how Generation X professionals perceive and navigate the challenges of work-life balance. Our goal is to pinpoint the factors that impact their ability to achieve this balance and analyze the various strategies they employ to manage it. Moreover, we aim to assess how work-life balance influences variables such as job satisfaction, career advancement, and overall well-being among Generation X professionals. By drawing comparisons across different industries and occupational roles, our research aims to offer valuable insights and recommendations for organizations seeking to better support their Generation X employees in achieving work-life balance. We believe your experiences can greatly contribute to our understanding of this topic.

Type of Intervention

Your active participation in this research involves taking part in an interview that is expected to last anywhere from 30 minutes to 1 hour. During this interview, we aim to engage in a meaningful dialogue to collect valuable insights and information relevant to our research. Your input is essential in deepening our comprehension of this subject, and we genuinely appreciate your willingness to dedicate your time and share your experiences. The interview's duration has been thoughtfully planned to ensure a comprehensive discussion while being considerate of your schedule and availability.

Participant Selection

We've selected you to be a part of this research because we believe your expertise and experiences within your field can provide invaluable insights into the challenges and issues faced by your generation.

Voluntary Participation

It's vital to emphasize that your participation is entirely voluntary. You have the freedom to choose whether to participate, and you can withdraw your consent at any point, even if you initially agreed to participate. Your autonomy and comfort during this research process are our utmost priorities, and your decision will be

fully respected.

We kindly ask for your participation in answering questions regarding the predominant challenges faced by your generation in the 21st century. You're cordially invited to be a part of our research project, and if you decide to participate, you'll engage in an interview with either of the researchers.

Procedures

During the interview, we'll ensure a comfortable setting, and if it's more convenient for you, the interview can even take place in your home or a friend's home. If there are any questions you'd prefer not to answer during the interview, please feel free to express this, and the interviewer will move on to the next question. No one other than the designated interviewer will be present unless you specifically request otherwise.

We want to assure you that the information gathered during the interview will be kept strictly confidential. Only our research group will have access to the information documented during your interview. While the entire interview will be recorded, no names will be associated with the recordings. The recordings will be securely stored on a single device and, after 5 weeks or upon the completion of the research, they will be permanently deleted. Your privacy and the security of your information are our top priorities.

Duration

The research is scheduled to span three months. Within this timeframe, we plan to conduct one initial interview with you, assuming the first interview is successful. In case of any unforeseen circumstances, we will reschedule as needed. The interview itself is expected to last approximately 30 minutes to 1 hour.

Risks

Participating in this interview study carries a few risks, primarily related to the possibility of unintentional disclosure of personal and confidential information about your career experiences and work-life balance strategies. While we are dedicated to maintaining your anonymity and confidentiality, there's a chance that you may inadvertently share sensitive information during the interview. Additionally, discussing topics related to career challenges and personal experiences may evoke emotional responses or discomfort. Nevertheless, your participation is voluntary, and you have the right to decline any question or withdraw from the study at any time without providing a reason. Your privacy and well-being are our top priorities, and we have implemented ethical and responsible data collection and analysis throughout the research process.

Benefits

Participating in this interview study offers you the chance to contribute valuable insights that can deepen our understanding of how work-life balance strategies impact Generation X professionals.

This contribution can ultimately influence future workplace policies and practices. By sharing your experiences and perspectives, you can gain a sense of empowerment and fulfillment in knowing that your voice contributes to meaningful research in this field.

Reimbursements

As a token of our sincere gratitude for your participation, we'll provide a token of appreciation to express our thanks for your time and insights. Your contribution is highly valued, and this gesture is our way of showing appreciation for your involvement in our research.

Confidentiality

We want to emphasize that your confidentiality is of utmost importance. All information shared during the interview will be kept strictly confidential. Your identity will be protected, and any data collected will be anonymized and securely stored to ensure your privacy and the integrity of the research.

Sharing the Result

Rest assured, your confidential insights will remain strictly within the research team, and no information will be linked to your identity. We are committed to sharing the research findings with you and your community first, in a way that protects your anonymity, before disseminating them to the broader public with the goal of publishing the research in an international publication.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary, and your decision to participate or withdraw will have no impact on your employment or any job-related matters. You'll have the opportunity to review and request modifications to your responses after the interview, ensuring that your input is accurately represented in the research.

Part II: Certificate of Consent

I have read the foregoing information, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have been asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study.

Print Name of Participant: _____

Signature of Participant: _____

Date: _____

                    Day/month/year

Statement by the researcher/person taking consent

I have accurately read out the information sheet to the potential participant, and to the best of my ability made sure that the participant understands that the following will be done:

1. The participant will be actively engaged in an interview process, lasting approximately 30 minutes to 1 hour, where they will be asked questions related to their work-life balance experiences as a Generation X professional.
2. The information shared during the interview will be kept strictly confidential, and no names will be associated with the recorded data. After 5 weeks or upon the completion of the research, the interview recordings will be permanently deleted.
3. Participation in the research is entirely voluntary, and the participant has the right to decline to answer any question or withdraw from the study at any time without providing a reason. Their decision to participate or withdraw will have no impact on their employment or job-related matters.

I confirm that the participant was allowed to ask questions about the study, and all the questions asked by the participant have been answered correctly and to the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving consent, and the consent has been given freely and voluntarily.

Print Name of Researcher/person taking the consent: _____

Signature of Researcher /person taking the consent: _____

Date: _____

       Day/month/year