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Welcome to the Independent Association of Business Scholars Proceedings

Allow me to be the first to welcome you to the Independent Association of Business Scholars' inaugural publication. Within these pages, you will find a wealth of information that has been painstakingly presented by a number of business authors and scholars. In addition, each contribution to these proceedings has been peer-reviewed and reviewed by additional business scholars. It is the hope of the Independent Association of Business Scholars (IABS) that these proceedings will be food for thought for your business practice as well as meet several lofty purposes within the field of business.

What is the Purpose of this Publication?

Throughout the course of any scholarly endeavor, it is necessary for scholars to have an outlet for their thoughts, research, opinions, and theories. This is an important step in the process that continues to allow for expanded thought and collaboration. As scholars, we are first and foremost committed to growing our knowledge in our respective fields. For it is this contribution to the field which differentiates us from the practitioner working in the field. For this purpose, the Independent Association of Business Scholars has been formed.

If you are reading these proceedings, you are no doubt interested in expanding your personal knowledge in the general field of business. For this, you are to be applauded. As has been said many times, complacency and stagnation are counter-productive to success. This is due to a lack of improvement. This lack of improvement can be in any aspect of business. From leadership to human resources, accounting to operations, an important element of success comes from a willingness to hone methods and processes. These proceedings are a forum for business scholars to share their thoughts and research to assist the practitioner in this effort. The first purpose of these proceedings is for the reader to consider the contents of this journal to be recommendations for personal and professional improvement. These recommendations can either be discarded or employed at the practitioner's whim thus empowering the practitioner to improve their abilities and lead to a higher likelihood of success.

The second purpose of these proceedings is to offer a forum for scholars to express their thoughts and provide their research for greater use. There is no higher calling in the field of research than that of having an opportunity to contribute to the improvement and betterment of the field and those who labor within said field. IABS recognizes the need to promote research and its publication but also recognizes the need for a forum for scholars to discuss their thoughts and provide opinions in a written form. Scholars are provided this opportunity to submit their research, opinions, and theories and are, therefore, afforded the opportunity to reach a larger audience.

The editorial board of this publication has as one of its primary goals to provide scholars the opportunity to share and publish high-quality, peer-reviewed information in a forum that is more open than a traditional scholarly journal. Because of this flexibility, IABS endeavors to cater to a myriad of different business subjects. This flexibility will also enable scholars to free themselves of the usual constraints normally associated with publication. Among these restrictions are page limits, field limitations, statistical constraints, and other criteria for submission. Further, it is also important to note that a financial cost associated with a publication that is found in other journals is purposefully not present. A journal seeking a profit motivation by having high submission costs increases the barrier to publication. For this purpose, IABS also endeavors to meet the needs of scholars who choose not to be a part of the traditional pay-for-publication system.

IABS purposefully has a broad call for submission that promotes a more free exchange of scholarly ideas. This is not to be confused with a lack of academic rigor as IABS still maintains a high degree of integrity and a focus on quality scholarship. Rather, the aim of this purpose is to foster a more open academic discourse.

The third and final purpose for these proceedings is to foster a healthy exchange of ideas and academic discourse. Discussion stemming from publications and the opportunity to bolster, refute, or further ideas presented in these proceedings is not only welcomed but encouraged. With the lofty goal of a positive impact on the field of business, the IABS looks forward to creating and furthering the academic conversation of the theories and ideas posited within these pages as well as the real world implications of such ideas. Those who publish within these pages are and will be afforded the opportunity to continually contribute and are welcomed into the conversation with open arms as they contribute to this discourse.

Academic discourse naturally creates friction and conflict. The lofty goal of such conflict is to further advances in the field. Moreover, it is important to have discussions on the concepts and ideas posited in our field. This discussion will be productive if, and only if, three main criteria are met.

1. A free exchange of ideas can only be present if the barrier to publication is at a level that will allow for discussion and disagreement. Omitting conflicting thought and suppressing a free exchange of ideas does nothing but stall the academic discourse which is necessary within our field. For this reason, IABS promotes and encourages submissions relating to previous articles and thoughts. Whether to bolster or disagree, such submissions will promote a free exchange of ideas.
2. It is imperative that the discourse be civil and based on a factual exchange of thoughts and ideas. There is no room for incivility. Rather, a good faith effort is assumed and required of all who contribute to this publication. Discussion is at its heart a free exchange of ideas. However, if not done correctly, the discussion will naturally be stifled and halted. Such behavior cannot and will not be tolerated within this forum.
3. A plethora of fields must be welcomed to this discussion. Far too often scholars only publish in journals catering to their

specific fields. These journals are inherently edited and run by individuals within that same field. This flaw could lead to a groupthink mentality and stifle a free exchange of ideas. For this purpose, IABS welcomes scholars from every field that can even remotely be related to business. The diversity of thought that can be fostered by contributions from a multitude of fields cannot be understated. This diversity of thought and backgrounds will enrich our discussion and further contribute to the impact of these proceedings.

The Future of IABS

As this journal grows and IABS takes on new members it is the goal of this organization to provide increased opportunities for publication and presentation. In addition to this journal, it is hoped that conferences and other opportunities will come about from this endeavor thus continuing to further goals outlined here as well as increase the prestige, impact, and scope of this project. The purpose set forth above will be the overarching guide for IABS and its future dealings. Opportunity to further these purposes will be welcomed. Expanding the impact and scope of IABS is a primary goal in the coming years.

What Significant Contribution Does IABS Provide?

As you can see, the goals set forth by the IABS are indeed lofty. However, at this juncture in the evolution of academia, it is important to have such goals. Simply put, the traditional method of academic publication and discourse has become too exclusive. As a result of this exclusivity, the benefit of scholarly endeavors is not readily translated into the field for day-to-day use. It is important to remove the barriers between the hallowed, often vine-clad, halls of academia and real-world practice.

Too often the two do not intersect except when a practitioner endeavors into a classroom for further education. This flawed model does not promote continuous improvement within the field and often lends itself too often to business practitioners searching for the next guru or book from which they can glean a few precious ideas. This journal will be a treasure trove of such concepts and ideas and will be a true benefit to those who are seeking business improvement. The purposes outlined above are in place to ensure the maximum benefit to both scholars and practitioners with an overall goal of having a positive impact on business. The topics discussed in these pages will also provide validated academically sound information from terminally-degreed scholars who are adept at research and teaching and have chosen as their calling in life to contribute to their field by educating others. This impact cannot be understated.

Far too often business publications are written by individuals who do not possess the academic qualifications to accurately analyze and follow a scientific method. Further, a profit motivation is in place that often leads to overstated claims of success and the promise of simple solutions.

This often leads to disappointment as well as a waste of time and money. Overall, the current process leads to a great deal of skepticism and distrust.

As outlined above, the IABS, through these proceedings seeks to bridge the gap between scholars and practitioners with an altruistic goal of improving business conditions, practices, and processes. IABS is keenly aware that such improvement will have a far-reaching benefit for businesses, our business practitioners, and the overall success of the economy. In short, *"A rising tide raises all boats."* This calling has led to this endeavor and it is hoped that, in no small way, this publication contributes to these successes.

In closing, I would like to once again welcome you to the inaugural publication of these proceedings. It is hoped that you will enjoy the contents of this journal and will find them worthy of consideration for your personal and professional practice. Further, it is also hoped that you will consider sharing your thoughts, ideas, research, and theories in future IABS publications.

I would like to personally wish you well in your current and future endeavors. May you find your personal version of success!

Brian A. Iannucci, Ph.D.

Editor, Contributor, and Member

Independent Association of Business Scholars

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EDITORS NOTE

In this volume of IABS we have gathered articles discussing Managing Knowledge, Culture, Generations, Values, and Standardized Testing. Each of these articles have a unique voice discussing issues affecting businesses today. Business leaders must be concerned with how to build high performing teams in a diverse environment globally.

Dr. Garland's article discusses knowledge management and sharing which is an important function to maintaining high performance and being competitive in any industry. When an employer does not value team cultures, knowledge, and the synergy teams build, competitive advantage is decreased.

Dr's Heinzman * Perez posited understanding differences in each generation is an important part of process and operational functions in business. Understanding builds strength in an organization which assists moving forward and gaining competitive advantages.

In my article, I explore opportunities to gain a better understanding of how values are learned and grow which may be helpful in finding better methods to build teams which perform well. Leadership is a function in business which has a direct effect on followers. The perceptions and cultural values can differ between generations, individually, regionally, nationally, and especially globally.

Dr. Nelson provides an interesting pros & cons discussion on standardized testing. Performing well may be affected by testing methods which may affect individual's direction into the work place.

Certainly, a diverse wealth of material which I believe has great value for any who read this material with a thoughtful purpose.

May ignorance be left behind and rhetoric melt away.

Dr. J. Robert Heinzman

The Significance of Team Culture in Organizations in Creating, Sharing, and Managing Knowledge

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Abstract

Knowledge creation, sharing, and management are important, large-scale concerns in organizations in the twenty-first century. Developing processes to generate and harness knowledge, particularly tacit knowledge specific to the individual organization and its processes and culture, can be an enormous undertaking from both the conceptual standpoint and from that of an information systems application and management process. This article explores the manner in which knowledge creation, sharing, and management can become embedded in the organizational culture as a natural process, rather than one requiring design and management, through an emphasis on team-building and the subsequent transactive memory systems that emerge.

Keywords: Knowledge Management, Knowledge Sharing, Knowledge Creation, Team-building, Organizational Culture, Team-bound culture, Transactive Memory Systems, Leadership

Knowledge creation, sharing, and management has gained recognition and respect in global business as a function which can improve competitive advantage, support organizational outcomes, and lead to more intensive innovation and sharing. Building, managing, and supporting these processes, however, can represent a complex challenge. Effective knowledge management is the responsibility not only of leaders in an organization but of all members, maximizing the intangible assets recognized through human knowledge and interaction. This knowledge is used to support business operations, further development of ideas and products, improve processes, organize information, make data available to all organizational members, and encourage creativity in application and sharing.

Access to organizational knowledge can reduce barriers, both cultural and geographical, improve communications, and enhance innovation, therefore leaders should prioritize this aspect of their function within the company.

Knowledge management begins with knowledge creation, which is a product of human interaction with one another and with the organization in the business setting (Rai, 2011). Aspects of each individual's personal knowledge, understanding, experience, and personality are combined in the workplace to generate new ideas and approaches to accomplishing goals, solving problems, or making effective decisions. In order to manage this process, leaders must develop an in-depth understanding of the impact of organizational culture, particularly social interaction and teamwork and must adapt their leadership style to ensure they remain effective in this role. Due to the multifaceted nature of knowledge management, emphasis is increasingly being placed on the creation of a teamwork based culture which supports knowledge creation and sharing allows the management of knowledge to become naturally embedded in team and individual processes.

This paper will define and discuss key aspects of organizational culture and a team environment in the process of knowledge creation, knowledge sharing, and knowledge management with the purpose of supporting the leadership perspective on each in contemporary organizations. The concept is defined from a social aspect highlighting the evolution and dispersion of knowledge through social interaction at the team and group levels, the importance of transactive memory systems, and the ways in which knowledge creations, sharing, and management can become embedded in an appropriate and supportive team-bound organizational culture.

Defining Knowledge Creation and Knowledge Management

The current understanding of the concept of knowledge management is very much defined by the business environment of the 21st century, as is the academic discussion relating to it. Beginning the discussion at the turn of the 21st century, Rastogi (2000) defines knowledge management as "a systematic and integrative process of coordinating organization-wide activities of acquiring, creating, sorting, sharing, diffusing, developing, and deploying knowledge by individuals and groups in pursuit of major organizational goals". This definition is foundational to the generalized understanding of knowledge management in business today.

Modern organizations of almost every type have a constant and swift flow of information and knowledge both internally, and through external communications and interactions, creating a dynamic environment in which integration of so much data must be thoughtfully and carefully managed. The ability to capture and share organizational knowledge generated among its members and within its environment is the ultimate expectation of effective knowledge management (Rastogi, 2000). However, knowledge creation is an important aspect of knowledge management; there is rarely an instance where enough organizational knowledge exists and the sole purpose is to simply manage it. Knowledge creation should be continuous, taking place at all times and adding to the existing organizational knowledge system (Nejatian, Nejati, Zarei, & Soltani, 2013). In this way, existing organizational knowledge supports the creation of new organizational knowledge, avoiding stagnation and allowing innovation to evolve throughout the culture of the organization.

In the contemporary business environment, knowledge is often more than a straightforward understanding of organizational processes, outcomes, and expectations. Organizations must stress the intangible aspects, such as culture awareness and sensitivity, culture, transferable market or industry knowledge, and innovation as well in order to generate a true competitive advantage through knowledge creation and management (Ringel-Bickelmaier and Ringel, 2010; Mojibi, Hosseinzadeh, and Khojsteh, 2015).

Mojibi et al. (2015) suggest that true innovation and benefit through knowledge management only occurs when the intellectual capital of an organization is inclusive of all categories of human capital including behavior, communication, customer, and structural capital. In order to be truly progressive, knowledge should be created, shared, and managed in each of these contexts and this can only occur when the import of knowledge is well defined as a key organizational function overall.

Organizations maximizing knowledge management as a competitive advantage may be referred to, logically, as knowledge-intensive organizations. Lopez, Peon, and Ordas (2004) define some major variables found within these organizations that can be easily identified in the knowledge creation process. First, the individual is considered as a key component of knowledge generation, as they hold skills, experiences, capacity of learning, and cognition which can be expressed to others through behavior and attitude (Lopez et al., 2004). Second is the concept of teams or groups, in which a synergy must occur among multiple individuals as they work towards organizational goals and objectives (Lopez et al., 2004). Finally, the organizational culture plays a key role, as it can be either supportive or detrimental to the knowledge creation and sharing processes (Lopez et al., 2004). The interactions of people with one another, team members with one another, teams with other teams, and ultimately, organizational members with the organization create a network in which knowledge flows. For this reason, knowledge management is at its most effective when it is embedded in the organizational culture.

Organizational Culture and Knowledge

Organizational culture represents perhaps the most critical area for leaders to emphasize knowledge management; the internal culture of a corporation must include support for positive social interaction and sharing of ideas. Rai (2011) specifically highlights organizational culture as the element which can impact knowledge more than any other, due to its influence on how individuals learn, acquire, and share knowledge. Certain aspects of culture have been found to have a positive impact on knowledge, such as collectivism, while others, such as power distance, are often detrimental (Rai, 2011). Leaders who are effective at fostering knowledge creation and undertaking knowledge management will consider research such as this, and will seek to develop a culture of trust and ethics; rather than inducing a competitive atmosphere, leaders will seek to grow organizational knowledge through relationship-building, stability, and collaboration (Rai, 2011).

It is also important to consider Martin's (2000) earlier discussion of knowledge creation and knowledge management in regard to its relationship to organizational culture, which states that knowledge often becomes embedded not only in documents or repositories, but also in organizational routines, processes, practices, and norms. This clearly indicates the potential for the culture and norms to allow knowledge to grow outside of technological data management or standardized processes, feeding off of the environment above all else. As Senge (1990) demonstrates, interactions between individuals are often defined by contradictions, be it in values, beliefs, goals, expectations, or personal traits. While conflict can occur as a result of these contradictions, learning can occur as well. Conflict can represent tangible evidence of the growth of knowledge and creation of knowledge as a natural outcome when resolution occurs (Fillion, Koffi, & Ekionea, 2015). If leaders purposefully create and nurture the organizational culture to support knowledge creation, these contradictions are synthesized into awareness, understanding, and ultimately, knowledge (Rai, 2011). Some aspects of organizational culture have emerged as most crucial to knowledge management as a process, allowing it to integrate as an embedded process which is supported without the need for extra effort. Collaboration, shared context, and the overall function and process of teamwork emerge as key aspects to creating an environment in which knowledge grows, is shared, and opportunities for innovation based on existing knowledge arise.

Team-bound Culture, Team Interaction, and Knowledge

The group and team aspects of organizational culture are well understood as crucial to building culture overall. The generation of shared context, collaborative thinking and goal setting, and the integration of values and attitudes in the team culture are powerful drivers in knowledge creation. Logically, the importance of organizational teams and teamwork is also essential in knowledge management, stressing that knowledge in the form of data resides more effectively and accessibly not in computer systems, but knowledge in the form of intelligence derived from the social systems within the organization (Turner, Zimmerman, & Allen, 2012). The combination of these aspects can allow the manager to combine the generation of knowledge with its capture and technical management in order to improve overall knowledge building and innovation. Modern day organizations often use teams as building blocks for creating and institutionalizing new knowledge, taking advantage of the creativity that can emerge when groups of people pool their own individual knowledge, as this process can push individuals through many iterations of an idea (Salas, Cooke, & Rosen, 2008). This generates organizational knowledge that is then held within the team and shared through natural interactions, sharing knowledge throughout. Through the simple practice of supporting teams, organizations and leaders therein can engage in knowledge management by building teams and fostering relationship building.

Due to the increasingly complex nature of the modern-day business, organizational teams are most typically used for specific purposes such as problem resolution, streamlining of tasks, and development of new products or processes (Salas et al., 2008; Jain & Jain, 2013). Tasks or challenges may become too difficult or too large for a single individual, and the combination of multiple individuals' knowledge is recognized as much more powerful. While each member of the team or group may have very different circumstances, such as varying levels of responsibility, differing specialties, and even diverse reward or compensation systems, Turner et al. (2012) insist that the fact of the common goal or purpose of the group as a whole will still be relevant. Once this is identified, creation, retention, and transfer of knowledge can begin and the critical aspects of knowledge management become clear (Turner et al., 2012).

The concern, then, is maintaining the team interaction and culture once the specific problem is resolved, or the task accomplished. Rather than creating teams for distinct or individual purposes, maintaining teams and fostering an environment that supports and even relies on teamwork as a regular function will enhance knowledge creation and management over time. If teams are maintained, communication and innovation occur on both horizontal and vertical levels as described by Jain and Jain (2013) and value can be recognized not just in top-level thinking, but throughout the organization and its members.

Transactive Memory Systems through Team Interactions

In addition to a flow of knowledge that moves in all directions, organizations which rely on a team bound culture more often develop a transactive memory system, which broadens the flow of information further. Members from one team to another can capture and organize knowledge as they anticipate tasks and outcomes through a sharing of knowledge not just within teams, but among them (Burtscher, Kolbe, Wacker, & Manser, 2011). One way Burscher et al. (2011) describe which will allow managers to encourage this behavior is through team monitoring systems, which interlinks teams through assessments and measures. A team may have its own goals and objectives, while yet another team may be formed which plays a role in measuring the outcomes or output of the initial team, in addition to undertaking other objectives of its own. This process opens communication and allows knowledge to be shared even more readily among an even broader number of organizational members.

Virtual teams are especially common in contemporary business and offer an excellent opportunity to encourage a transactive memory system in an organization. Because of the need to rely so heavily on technology, the complexity of this team environment can be even more extreme, making the need to create new knowledge and manage it in an accessible way even more crucial. Creating an interrelated system wherein teams come into communication with other teams, especially across vast geographical distances, provides even greater opportunity for knowledge creation and management.

Interrelated systems also address the concern of tacit versus explicit knowledge sharing and management. Explicit knowledge is most often codified and massive amounts of organizational resources may be invested in technology and electronic systems in an attempt to maintain it and make it accessible (Choi, Lee, & Yoo, 2010). Transactive memory systems may be valuable to some extent there as members can learn from one another how, why, and when to access knowledge of this type. However, the real value of interrelationships and transactive memory is found in the creation, sharing, and management of tacit knowledge which is logically much more difficult to store outside of the organizational members themselves. If an appropriate organizational culture based in teams and sharing is created, an ease of tacit knowledge sharing arises that becomes embedded in the processes and interactions on a cultural level but is very difficult to replicate outside of the organization (Choi et al., 2010; Jasimuddin & Zhang, 2014). This is a key consideration, as it enhances organizational outcomes and competitive advantage, while also reducing the need for additional resources to attempt to sort, codify, and share knowledge which is better translated through interaction.

Conclusion

The inter-connectedness of a team culture and the ability to create, share, and manage knowledge on an organizational level is clear; emphasizing team-building and teamwork should clearly be a key component of organizational culture as a means to enhance knowledge management overall. In essence, placing the responsibility for knowledge creation and management almost solely in the realm of the organizational culture and, more specifically, in the hands of organizational members as they function in teams provides foundational support for creating, sharing, and managing knowledge.

Prioritizing interaction, reaction, and transactive memory systems among groups and individuals as a means to foster innovation and generate knowledge creation ultimately leads to knowledge management becoming embedded in the culture as a natural process rather than a separate consideration or task. This not only has the potential to save organizations from investing enormous resources into knowledge management, it also provides a greater level of agility and adaptability. Individuals, adjusting and adapting to change, organizational need or internal or external influence can integrate each of these much more quickly than a collective.

Knowledge management must be considered outside of an organization's internet technology and information systems departments as intensively as within them. The process of creating and sharing can become a collective endeavor and innovation as knowledge is shared, processed, and further enhanced by the inclusion of more and more individuals when teams are emphasized. There is an important understanding among leadership studies that organizational culture and team-bound culture in the workplace support a wide range of positive outcomes, and by including the importance of knowledge sharing and management as an embedded and natural process of both, knowledge is maximized and leveraged to enhance outcomes both internal and external to the organization.

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An Exploration of Millennials
"Attitudinal and Behavioral Differences"

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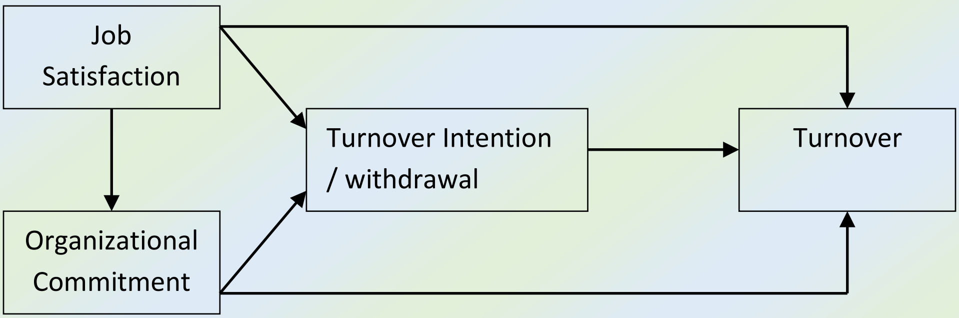
Abstract

Research has focused on the Boomer generation throughout the latter part of the 20th century and early 21st century. Limited studies have been done on the millennial generation and the X generation has for the most part been ignored. This study gathers research results based on the Millennials in an effort to examine the attitudinal and behavioral differences between the Millennials and the Boomers with little focus on the Xers. The results indicate that the proposed research model is, for the most part, supported and that the generational variances occur at the values and characteristics levels and not at the independent/dependent variable level with the exception of the millennial treatment of attitudinal organizational commitment. In conclusion, there are management actions required to plan for the value and characteristic variances.

Keywords: Job satisfaction, turnover, organizational commitment, employee engagement

The behavioral characteristics and relationships of the Boomers such as job satisfaction, organizational behavior, intention to quit, motivational aspects, morale, etc. are well researched and documented. These behaviors were based on a set of beliefs and values that produced predictable behaviors based on the research such as job satisfaction predicting organizational behavior; job satisfaction being inversely related to the intention to quit, respect for authority, trust in leadership, loyalty to the organization, etc. The following model is expected based on boomer and Xer based research (Tett & Meyer, 1993).

Figure 1



This begs the question of how the Millennials behave toward these kinds of variables based on their value set and the predictions and variable relationships affected by these beliefs and values. This paper seeks to explore how the variables that were predictable under the boomer generation might behave differently under the millennial generation.

Literature Review

The landscape within the workplace is changing. For the first time in modern history, we have four generations (Veterans, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials) represented in the workplace (Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000). The interactions and diversity among these age groups may have an impact on how leaders interact with these different generations of people in the workplace (Sullivan, Forret, Carraher, & Maineriero, 2009). For example, each generational age group has distinctive characteristics that influence their attitudes and interactions in the workplace (Eisner, 2005). The ability to keep each generational age group within the workplace happy will require a unique understanding of each group's characteristics and values, according to Kaplan and Taoka (2005). While the behavioral characteristics of the boomer generation such as job satisfaction, motivational attributes, and other behavioral variables have been extensively researched and documented, there is little empirical research about how Millennials respond to these kinds of variables in the workplace. By understanding the characteristics and values of the millennial generation and who they are as a group, organizational leaders can adapt their leadership style to accommodate and engage them in the workplace as followers with hopes of developing them into future leaders (Burkus, 2010).

Values and Characteristics

It is important to understand the value system of the millennial generation because it is a primary underlying factor for understanding this group's attitudes and behavior in the workplace (Greenwood, Gibson, & Murphy, 2008). According to England (1967), an individual's value system is defined as "A relatively permanent perceptual framework which shapes and influences the general nature of an individual's behavior (p.54). In a study conducted by Greenwood, Gibson, and Murphy (2008), which compared terminal values (values a person aspires to) and instrumental values (modes of conduct) between Millennials and Boomers, the researchers found that Millennials ranked the terminal values of an exciting life, a sense of accomplishment, equality, social recognition and true friendship as considerably more important than Baby Boomers. The instrumental values of the ambitious, broadminded, clean/green environment, helpful, independent and self-control were considerably more important to Millennials than Boomers.

Conversely, Boomers ranked the terminal values of comfortable life, a world at peace, health, salvation, and wisdom considerably higher than Millennials, and the instrumental values that ranked considerably higher for Boomers than Millennials were capable, courageous, forgiving, honest, and responsible (Greenwood et al., 2008). In addition to these terminal and instrumental values, Millennials grew up accustomed to the digital age and tend to be more comfortable with digital technologies than previous generations. They also saw their parents adversely affected by high divorce rates and corporate layoffs, which resulted in their unwillingness to make long-term commitments and demand greater flexibility when it comes to the workplace and their careers (Dwyer, 2009). According to Kaifi, Nafei, Khanfar, and Kaifi (2012), this generation tends to desire collective decision-making, working in groups, involvement in meaningful work, and are more socially conscious, although they can be considered more opinionated than previous generations. These differences in generational values create a generational gap that leaders must understand in order to effectively lead Millennials in the workplace (Greenwood et al., 2008). The first value that will be explored is Work-Life Balance followed by job satisfaction, organizational commitment, intention to quit, and leadership.

Work-life balance

Organizational leaders working in today's multigenerational workplace are faced with various challenges. One of the main differences between the generations is motivation. For example, while older Boomers are interested in job security and benefits, Millennials are much more interested in balancing their careers with their personal lives (Dwyer, 2009). In fact, according to Ng, Lyons, and Schwetzer (2010), Millennials are more inclined to negotiate and demand a more balanced work-life at every stage of their career development. This will require organizational leaders to focus more attention on the work-life balance expectations demanded by Millennials, which will become more critical as younger Millennials enter the workplace and begin their careers, according to Gilley, Waddell, Hall, Jackson, and Gilley (2015).

Work-life balance has different meanings between the different generational age groups within the workplace, Work-life balance has also been defined many ways, but is typically understood to mean how employees choose to prioritize their careers, family and other commitments outside of the workplace. Research has shown that creating a work-life balance for employees promotes overall job satisfaction, increased productivity, and reduces employee turnover. Therefore, Organizational leaders need to be aware of the options available to their employees for creating work-life balance because failing to understand the wants and needs of multiple generations in the workplace can result in work-life conflicts between employees and organizational leaders, which can prove to be challenging to leaders (Gilley et al., 2015).

Flexible work schedules and the ability to continue working part-time are allowing Boomers to remain longer in the workplace to meet their financial needs or to find meaning in their lives, according to Eversole, Venneberg, and Crowder (2012). This is one example of how work-life balance can meet the needs of employees. However, the desire from Millennials to seek careers that offer workplace balance are beginning to receive attention. One survey, for example, discovered that college business students were seeking employers that were more flexible in providing a workplace where they could balance their careers with other interests and commitments in order to help them experience greater career satisfaction (Smith, 2010). Since Millennials have seen firsthand the challenges and frustrations their parents experienced both professionally and personally, they are less willing to forgo their personal lives for their careers. As a result, they are demanding more flexibility from employers (Gilley et al., 2015). Recognizing the demands for a greater balanced work-life from Millennials will help organizational leaders create an environment whereby Millennials can grow and develop into the next generation of leaders.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is the affective feeling that individuals have toward the work that they perform in the context of their job characteristics (Williams & Hazer, 1986). Job satisfaction can be described as an attitude reflecting how much an individual likes or dislikes their job (Bruck, et al, 2002). In 1954 the primary determinant or factor attributable to job satisfaction were wages that had two functions i.e. to allocate human resources and to provide the incentive to work or motivation (Gitlow, 1954). Historically, the facets or components of job satisfaction were expressed as, feelings toward co-workers, benefits, the job conditions, the job/work itself, policies and procedures, pay, and supervision (Bruck et al, 2002).

Job satisfaction and engagement

The Society for Human
Resource Management (SHRM), Employee Job Satisfaction and Engagement research report listed 30 aspects of job satisfaction and engagement based on a study of 600 employees (SHRM Engagement, 2015, p9.). Listed in rank order of importance:
Millennials were the main drivers influencing the importance of career development opportunities, career advancement opportunities, networking opportunities, organization’s commitment to a diverse and inclusive workforce, and the organization’s commitment to a “green” workforce” (SHRM engagement,2015, p42).

Table 1. *Employee job satisfaction and engagement*

Importance	Aspect	Satisfaction
72%	Respectful treatment of all employees at all levels (1)	33%
64%	Trust between employees and senior management (2)	28%
63%	Benefits, overall (3)	27%
61%	Compensation/pay, overall (4)	24%
59%	Job security (5)	32%
58%	Relationship with immediate supervisor (6)	40%
58%	Opportunities to use your skills and abilities in your work (6)	34%
56%	Immediate supervisor’s respect for my ideas (7)	37%
55%	Organization’s financial stability (8)	33%
55%	Management’s recognition of employee job performance (8)	24%
55%	Communication between employees and senior management (8)	23%
53%	Feeling safe in your work environment (9)	48%
52%	Management’s communication of organization’s goals and strategies (10)	26%
50%	The work itself (11)	36%
48%	Overall corporate culture (12)	31%
47%	Career advancement opportunities within the organization (13)	20%

47%	Autonomy and independence (13)	28%
46%	Meaningfulness of job (14)	35%
44%	Relationships with co-workers (15)	42%
43%	Teamwork within department/business unit (16)	26%
42%	Organization's commitment to professional development (17)	23%
41%	Teamwork between departments/business units (18)	22%
41%	Job-specific training (18)	22%
41%	Communications between departments/business units (18)	21%
39%	Career development opportunities (19)	21%
38%	Contribution of work to organization's business goals (20)	33%
37%	Variety of Work (21)	32%
33%	Networking opportunities (22)	21%
31%	Company-paid general training (23)	24%
31%	Organization's commitment to corporate social responsibility (23)	26%
29%	Organization's commitment to a diverse and inclusive workforce (24)	28%
20%	Organization's commitment to a "green" workplace (25)	19%

Note: Table created from data obtained from the Society of Human Research Management's 2015 job satisfaction and engagement report.

The most significant differences between the Boomers and the Millennials and Generation X in the top five employee engagement opinions is the feeling that employees “are encouraged to take action when they see a problem” and that they are “provided with the resources to do my job well”. (SHRM engagement, 2015, p53).

The respondents in the SHRM engagement study (2015) were 26% Millennial, 37% Xers, 35% Boomer, and 2% Veterans. The number of Millennials had a significant weighting so that the overall statistics are greatly influenced by the Millennials. Millennials indicated a higher level of a feeling of engagement associated with career advancement opportunities than older generations (SHRM engagement, 2015).

Emotion regulation, entitlement mentality, and job satisfaction

Emotion regulation is based on emotional dissonance or the difference between the outward display of emotion and the internal feelings of emotions. This difference and the management of this difference results in emotional regulation which results in a psychologically taxing state. Studies have supported high levels of emotional discord associated with emotional dissonance. The literature also supports that the suppression of unpleasant emotions decreases job satisfaction (Cote & Morgan, 2002).

Employee social interaction during displays of emotional reaction influences and solicits a response from other participants in social interaction. In situations where there is positive reinforcement in terms of emotional support from participants in the situation, the literature supports a favorable response. This favorable response results in the amplification of pleasant emotions thus increasing job satisfaction. (Cote and Morgan, 2002).

The Cote and Morgan study (2002) was conducted on 111 Millennials born in the late 1990's and supported both of the following hypotheses (p949).

"Hypothesis 1: The suppression of unpleasant emotions decreases job satisfaction."

"Hypothesis 3: The amplification of pleasant emotions increases job satisfaction."

This study provided a foundation for illuminating the unique emotional relationship of Millennials in emotion regulation and social interaction.

According to Alexander and Sysko (2012), Millennials exhibit a level of hedonism, narcissism, and a cavalier work ethic never experienced in the history of the US workforce. Millennials are willing to work hard, embrace a corporate vision, and bond with their immediate manager somewhat offset by ambiguous attitudes. College professors have observed a lack of drive, motivation, and accountability by Millennials who believe that they should be rewarded with good grades just for making it to class. They show a lack of regard for the validity of the source of materials used in research and an affinity to believe in peer opinion and public media. They suffer from a perceived lack of original thought. (Alexander & Sysko, 2012).

These psychodynamics are based on the "trophies for all" mentality of their parents when in competitive situations which creates unrealistic expectations. Overly protective parenting helped to produce Millennials who are risk averse and have a fear of ambiguity (Alexander & Sysko, 2012).

The attitudes and emotional states of Millennials lead to a psychological feeling of entitlement which leads to a desire for short term goals and an effort to demand respect. This and other data in the literature make the Millennials twice as likely to leave the workplace within a year of starting employment.

Job satisfaction and intention to quit

The literature suggests a keen propensity for the millennial generation to leave an organization based on a short term tenure mindset. How job satisfaction affects this intention to quit propensity deserves attention.

Generally, factors affecting job satisfaction are age, coping strategies, experience, and educational levels. Factors in a study of a cadre of nurses averaging age 35 +/- 10, showed requiring to do more than can be done well and inadequate help ranked negatively on job satisfaction while the ability to act independently of the supervisor ranked positively toward job satisfaction. (Unruh & Zhang, 2014). These elements are somewhat offset based on the literature supporting the entitlement mentality of the Millennials and their short-term tenure perspective.

A study based on a cadre of employees from 10 diverse firms with an average age of 33 found support for the following hypothesis (Frenkel, Sanders, & Bednall, 2013, p12):

“Hypothesis 1: The extent of agreement between senior management and line management as perceived by employees regarding their treatment is positively related to employees’ job satisfaction (H1a), and negatively related to employees’ intention to quit (H1b).” This hypothesis supports the previously discussed propensity for Millennials to be close to their immediate managers (Alexander & Sysko, 2012).

Employees’ interactions affect job satisfaction according to social interaction models. This is supported by the following hypothesis (Cote & Morgan, 2002, p949).

“Hypothesis 3: The amplification of pleasant emotions increases job satisfaction.”

The end result is an increase in job performance and a lessening of intention to quit plus an increase in performance outcomes.

The SHRM Engagement Report (2015) found that the Millennials favor flexible work arrangements as a job satisfier more so than older generations. This flexible work environment can be seen as a differentiator in attracting high potentials employees. Better than half of all organizations surveyed by SHRM offered flexible work options

(SHRM engagement, 2015).

It is clear that there are identifiable differences in behavioral responses between the generations and that the changes in job satisfaction and engagement need to be explored in terms of the relationship to organizational commitment

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment is an attitudinal or behavioral attachment that exists between an individual and an organization that makes it less likely that an individual will leave an organization. (Ali, 2015). Attitudinal commitment deals with the cognitive connection of how people feel about the organization based on observed antecedents. Behavioral commitment relates to the process by which individuals connect to an organization and how they behave under these conditions. (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Meyer and Allen (1997) defined a three-component model of commitment containing affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Affective commitment deals with the emotional attachment, identification with and participation in the organization. Continuance commitment deals with the cost of leaving an organization and normative commitment deals with an employee’s feeling of obligation to remain with an organization. Continuance commitment is further divided into a feeling that there is a lack of alternative job solutions available to the individual and a propensity to want to keep side-bets that have built up over a length of time (Ali, 2015).

This paper focuses on affective commitment or attitudinal commitment which looks at behavioral aspects more so than continuance or normative commitment. There is literature that supports the Millennials as lacking organizational commitment in favor of a loyalty or commitment to their individual managers. Executives and middle managers are typically of the Boomer or X generation and have difficulty relating to the attitudes of the Millennials. The Millennials tend to be aloof, narcissistic, and having a cavalier work ethic (Alexander & Sysko, 2012).

There has been meta-analytical research indicating a weak but existent trend of older generations having higher levels of affective organizational commitment than younger generations (Costenza et. al, 2012). Boomers have slightly higher affective commitment and lower intention to quit than Millennials (Costanza, et al, 2012). Millennials have a higher preference than older generations for a “green” workplace which is found to be related to organizational commitment making a “green workplace” a probable factor in attracting high potential Millennial’ employees (SHRM engagement, 2015).

Leadership Styles and Preferences

While research has been able to show that Millennials demonstrate different attitudes and beliefs compared to earlier generations in the workplace, their leadership and followership styles and preferences have been less examined by researchers. Understanding their leadership styles and preferences may help to provide valuable insight for creating a workplace environment whereby leadership effectiveness can be maximized (Chou, 2012). According to Howe and Strauss (2000), the Millennials possess the ability to be great leaders and they reflect some of the similar characteristics displayed by great leaders in earlier generations. They are hardworking, socially focused, and visionary. However, they are susceptible to a sense of entitlement and expectations which are often impracticable, which may render them as ineffective leaders (Underwood, 2007).

According to Chou (2012), Millennials have been shown to exhibit an inclusive leadership style where the value of instant feedback is appreciated. They also have a strong sense of self-esteem, confidence and external locus of control. Additionally, they are willing to communicate and share information willingly. Thus, Millennials are most likely to exhibit "high levels of participative leadership style in the workplace" (p.75). Chou adds that Millennials will make excellent followers because they openly express their opinions and beliefs and are more likely to engage their leaders in critical thinking, which are critical factors in helping their organizations to succeed. Since Millennials are confident and assertive, Bjugstade, Thach, Thompson, and Morris (2006) also suggest that a delegating leadership style be used with Millennials followers.

Millennials have a preference for certain leadership styles as well. In a research study designed to identify the leadership preferences of Millennials, Dulin (2008), found that Millennials desire leaders who are actively involved with the organization and its members. They also prefer leaders who really listen to them and value their opinions. Millennials seek leaders that will be mentors or leaders that will connect them with mentors they can trust. Additionally, Millennials wish to be heard and demand that leaders make decisions that also consider their needs. According to leader-member exchange (LMX) theory, the quality of the relationship between a leader and follower has a strong influence on leadership effectiveness (Dansereau, et al, 1975). Therefore, organizations should strive to match their leader's styles to their followers' leadership preferences (Chou, 2012).

Analysis

The model illustrated in Figure 1 is generally supported by the literature in this paper with one significant difference i.e. Millennials tend to be committed to their immediate manager more so than the organization itself. The implications of this one major difference are related to retention as influenced by the quit intentions of the immediate manager and the impact of the immediate manager's departure from the organization. The modified model includes this modified managerial commitment factor and the term is changed to Commitment to the Manager. With four generations in the workforce, three of the generations are committed to the organization while the other negation i.e. the Millennials are committed to the manager and not strongly bonded to the organization itself. This commitment differentiation creates a notable and potential point of conflict between the generations and provides a divergent generational view of the organization itself. The model demonstrates organizational fit overall; however, generational differences in values and characteristics set the Millennials apart from the other three generations in the workforce.

Values and characteristics partially define the attitudinal and behavioral differences between the Millennials and other generations. Table 2 addresses values and characteristics differences.

Figure 1

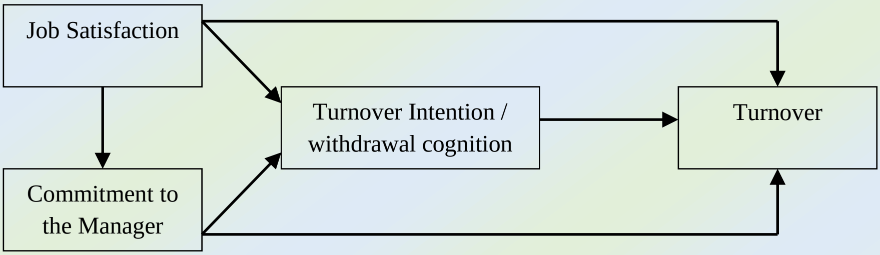


Table 2. *General values and characteristics among generational groups*

Values/ Characteristics	Value/Characteristic	Millennial Perception
Terminal Value	Exciting Life	Higher than Boomers
Terminal Value	Sense of Accomplishment	Higher than Boomers
Terminal Value	Sense of Equality	Higher than Boomers
Terminal Value	Social Recognition	Higher than Boomers
Terminal Value	True Friendship	Higher than Boomers
Terminal Value	Respectful treatment of all employees	Preference greater than other generations
Terminal Value	Trust between employees and senior management	Preference greater than other generations

Terminal Value	Long-term Commitments	Less likely than other generations
Terminal Value	Involvement in Meaningful Work	Preference greater than other generations
Terminal Value	Socially Conscious	Preference greater than other generations
Instrumental Values	Greater Flexibility	Higher than other generations
Instrumental Values	Collective Decision-Making	Preference greater than other generations
Instrumental Values	Working in Groups	Preference greater than other generations
Instrumental Values	Ambitious	More important than Boomers
Instrumental Values	Broadminded	More important than Boomers
Instrumental Values	Clean/Green Environment	More important than Boomers
Instrumental Values	Helpful	More important than Boomers
Instrumental Values	Independent	More important than Boomers
Instrumental Values	Self-Control	More important than Boomers
Instrumental Values	More opinionated	Preference greater than other generations
Environmental Value	Digital Age	Better Adapted than other generations

Note: Table created from ((Arsenault, P.M. (2003)) and SHRM (2015)

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Work-life balance is much more important to Millennials than other generations which make them more interested in balancing their careers with their personal lives. Millennials are more inclined than other generations to negotiate and demand a more balanced work-life at every stage of career development. This trend toward the importance of work-life balance will increase as younger Millennials enter the workforce. Creating work-life balance for employees promotes overall job satisfaction, increased productivity, and reduced employee turnover. Recent business graduates are seeking employers that are more flexible in providing a workplace where they can balance their careers with other interests and commitments.

Millennials place a high value on career development, career advancement opportunities, networking opportunities, organizational commitment to a diverse and inclusive workforce, and a commitment to a "green" workforce.

Millennials have a conviction that employees feel that they are "encouraged to take action when they see a problem", and that they are "provided with the resources to get their job done. This autonomous belief sets Millenials apart from Boomers.

From a leadership perspective, the literature in this paper suggest that turnover and the intention to quit by millennials is associated with their perceptions of job satisfactions and appear to be linked to their desire and need to have a much more flexible work-life balance and the need for social connections more so than other generational groups in the workplace. They are also more interested in intrinsic rewards.

The implications for organizational leaders is the importance of designing career paths for millennials that focus more on intrinsic benefits which emphasize social connections and meaningful contributions to society as a whole rather than those associated with identifying with the organization. The dyadic relationship between millennials and leaders should also be more transformational than transactional as the literature reflects that millennials obtain a higher sense of satisfaction and self-worth from having a meaningful relationship between leaders than one that merely involves a give and take relationship. This supports the findings that millennials prefer to identify more with leaders whom they can cultivate a meaningful and mutual relationship than simply trying to identify with an organization as a whole.

Conclusion

Values and characteristics differences and commitment to the manager rather than the organization have created a generation requiring significant adaptation by organizations seeking a competitive advantage for human resources and resulting higher levels of organizational performance. There are more than a few differences between the Millennials and other generations which organizations need to address in an overarching human resource plan.

Psychodynamics such as the Millennials' relatively higher levels of hedonism, narcissism, and a cavalier work ethic will require management attention and planning to provide performance focus.

Millennials have a relatively low regard for the validity of information provided by organizations and exhibit an affinity for believing peer input over formal input. Many of these psychodynamics are based on the “trophies for all” mentality of their parents, learned feelings of entitlement, and are deeply engrained. Organizations will need to develop communications plans to guide the Millennials in the direction that the organization requires in order to have cohesion in the workforce.

Organizational leaders should also look at the relationships they form with Millennials in the workplace. Especially, since they seek more meaning and value from these relationships than other generational groups in the workplace. Leadership’s styles that support participation and collaboration in a group setting with shared responsibilities seem to be more attractive to Millennials. By understanding the needs of Millennials, organizations will not only create a cohesive workplace but one that will support their next generation of leaders.

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Theories of Meaning and Value in Action

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Abstract

The research presents ideas which identify valued derivation from several theories in various philosophical schools of thought. This discussion of theories, like core and changing values of traditional philosophical realm, rationalism, idealism, empiricism, and pragmatism from the modern era, and existentialism, deconstructionism, social constructionism, and phenomenology from the postmodern area of thought, and appreciative environment, identify value theory and apply these theoretical premises too personal and workplace settings, offering recommendations where applicable.

Key Words: Modern Philosophy, Post Modern Philosophy, Values, Appreciative Environment

Theories of Meaning and Value in Action

The philosophy of value has evolved over time. Traditionally, at the origins of the Bible, the meaning of the word value was often used to distinguish between good and evil (Dahlgaard, Dahlgaard, & Edgeman, 1998). In modern and postmodern eras, the word value was given a deeper meaning and there was an “aim of finding an inner truth behind surface appearance” (Sarup, 1993, p. 131). This empirical discussion exhibits a comparison between traditional, modern, and postmodern perspectives regarding the derivation of value in personal and workplace environments. The purpose here is to attempt to identify methods of success with regard to finding meaning and make suggestions for any changes that may be needed.

Traditional School of Thought

Core Values

Traditional core values traced back to the Bible and its accounts of the Noahic Flood and the Tower of Babel reveal a good versus evil theory of meaning and value. Dahlgaard et al. (1998) stated that "in the era of our Lord, core values of evilness and wickedness were systemically applied in the workplace" (p. 51). They opined that the core values of evil were a manifestation of "gender and ethnic bias, sexual harassment, intolerance, dishonesty, arrogance, (and) selfishness…" (p. 51). God intervened to remove the people who were the source of evilness and wickedness, however, a state of confused meaning about values remained in their language.

A shared common language did not clearly communicate the meaning of values that would form a cohesive society. Dahlgaard et al. (1998) pointed out that the people of Babylon were building, "a monument to self which they had hoped would weld them together, rather than to build an organization founded on solid core values" (p. 51). This action of monument building could contribute to the confused meaning of values that may not have been communicated in their language. Flanagan, (2002) maintained that we cannot always, "couch our self-descriptions in language, our selves are not exhaustively captured in what we can say about them" (p. 220).

In today’s workplace environment, values of evilness and wickedness, confusion of meaning, and language that is not clearly understood can still be found, although, there appears to be greater emphasis on fixing these problems. People and firms are implementing core values like good morals and ethics, fairness, and opportunity to create a meaningful and successful organization. Starling (1997) referred to Nietzsche's assertion that employees who embrace the values and morals established by the leader will find their work meaningful and will have a commitment of loyalty to their organization.

In an example of value and ethics in the biometrics industry, the company Safran incorporates a set of cultural values within their mission statement and vision statement that promotes good ethics, honesty, fairness, trust, and integrity. Firms are also using mission statements and vision statements to communicate the meaning of their goals and objectives. They purposely avoid using technical or industry terms that could confuse the meaning of its language. For example, Safran’s vision statement is to continuously improve existing products and to create new products that will fulfill the changing needs and wants of the consumer. In combination, their mission statement is to lead the industry in product speed and accuracy, and customer friendly usability.

These are theoretical statements that translate a clear meaning of the company’s position to influence a positive response from consumers. Kuhn (1996) stated that if a person can learn to translate another person's theories into his or her own language, "it can be an important (communication) tool for persuasion and for conversion” (p. 202).

Changing Values

Traditional values such as one-dimensional leadership, controlling authority, and keeping operations within a single environment may not work in today’s globally dependent industries. Dotlich, Cairo, and Rhinesmith (2009) stated that “globalization, technology, and regulation are complicating efforts to satisfy the conflicting needs of investors, customers, and employees” (p. 1). Traditional models of value need to evolve and be aligned with the requirements of doing business globally. Today’s leaders should recognize the diverse needs and expectations of consumers around the globe. Dotlich et al. (2009) maintained that “leaders who fail to acknowledge and capitalize on the increasing differences among their employees, customers, and markets run the risk of losing touch with these key stakeholders” (p. 2).

Leaders today experience multiple cultures, various religions, and an increasing presence of minority workers from around the world. Global literacy is a value that can strengthen a firm’s knowledge and understanding of different people with different backgrounds. Leaders who make the effort to acquire cultural, economic, social, and environmental knowledge and information from around the world could help improve their firms’ abilities to operate globally. Yodanis (2004) stated how "as with illiteracy in general, being globally illiterate limits a person's ability to fully understand (meaning), participate, and succeed in the world" (p. 304).

Changing Philosophies

The issue of doing business globally may suggest a change in values that philosophically supports a coherence of ideology. Lodge (2009) stated that “the ability of a nation to compete effectively in the world economy depends to a great extent on its prevailing ideology” (p. 461). Lodge also opined that a nation that practices communitarianism instead of individualism will be more successful at doing business globally. He maintained that countries with communitarian values, such as Japan, are influencing changes in countries with individualism values. This could suggest a future coherence of values between Asia and the West.

Safran, a biometrics industry company, is a subsidiary of the mother company in France. The company conducts business around the globe and subcontracts work with various countries. They recognize the value of communitarianism and work coherently with the government of France when developing competitiveness around the world.

Safran uses this value to develop products that are uniquely designed to meet the needs and requirements of various countries. This kind of global effort has made Safran the leading company of biometrics products.

The only downside is losing the identity of oneself in a communitarian focus. The danger in not respecting individuality is the loss of true diversity which drives creativity and innovation. Communitarian is best left to identifying what norms and ideologies are recognized while focusing on individuality to increase creativity and innovation.

Modern School of Thought

René Descartes (1596-1650) is regarded as the father of modern philosophy. His noteworthy contributions extend to mathematics and physics (Newman, 2008, para. 1).

Rationalism

Rationalism is the adoption of at least one of three claims, intuition/deduction, innate knowledge, and innate concept thesis (Markie, 2008). Markie also contended that intuition is rational insight grasping a proposition to be true in such a way that forms a true, warranted belief in it. Deduction is the process in which the conclusion is intuited through valid arguments, in which the premise and the conclusion must be true.

Innate knowledge is a priori knowledge gained independently of experience. Innate knowledge is not gained through intuition or deduction but is part of our nature and represents our rationality. Markie stated that "others say it is part of our nature through natural selection" (section 1.1 para. 6). To have knowledge of some truths in a particular area is to have innate knowledge according to rationalism. The innate concept thesis is similar to innate knowledge because its premise is that concepts are not gained from experience.

Locke (1690) provides insight into how innate knowledge works by explaining that the memory brings an idea into the mind from the consciousness. If the perception comes to the mind without any experience, they are innate. The further the concept is from experience, the more plausible it is to claim the concept innate.

Rationalism drives truth as existing within our minds and the value of truth is not the result of experience. Based on the complexity of the concept, the concept will affect the value of the truth. An innate concept is not necessarily truth; it is only perception as we understand from cultural social backgrounds. Values are clear statements of what is critically important from a cultural viewpoint. Ethics become the vehicle for converting values into action or doing the right thing. The virtue of ethics focuses on integrity and a belief that if the person in question has good moral character, and genuine motivation and intentions, he or she are behaving ethically.

Idealism

Idealism is the theory that the nature of reality is created from the mind or ideas. The external world is said to exist prior to and independent of knowledge and consciousness. Within idealism, the approach is to find the highest principles of rational understanding and provide principles that add to ethics and aesthetics of all domains of human culture (Kim, 2008).

In line with finding the highest principles is the theory of focusing on the rights of individuals, deontology. According to deontological theory, people must examine their duties when making a decision. The deontological approach is created from universal principles such as honesty, fairness, justice, and respect for persons and property. Rights, such as the rights to privacy and safety, are also important (Alexander & Moore, 2008).

Depending on the belief of an individual utilitarianism or deontology will drive the actions and the moral intensity. Utilitarianism believes that provided no one is hurt, the decision is ethical. A deontologist believes strongly in fairness and respect for others. A utilitarian would be more likely to agree that assisted death of a terminally ill person is ethical although the deontologist would most likely believe this to not be fair and disrespectful of the rights of the person. The meaning of value within each is different when one believes they are helping while the other believes harm is occurring. In this case, the value of their ethics causes an action or inaction.

For example, we can examine the practice of drug companies who provide consulting fees and special incentives to doctors. On the surface, it seems business as usual. Although when the company begins requesting the doctor use his or her product the doctor may be inclined to use the product in order to not lose the fees and other kickbacks. It is common for doctors to receive very lucrative consulting fees from drug companies. The problem is a doctor who receives enormous consulting fees or other financial considerations may lose his or her objectivity in choosing the best treatment for their patients.

Pragmatism

Pragmatism is concerned with practical matters whose meaning is one who takes a practical approach to problems and is primarily concerned with the success of his or her actions. Pragmatism is an outcome of a philosophy that ideas must be tested and re-tested, that experiences dictate reality. Pragmatists also believe in no absolute truths or values existing. The feature idea of philosophical pragmatism is that value in practical purpose, the issue of which works out the majority successfully somehow provides a standard for the purpose of truth in the case of statements, appropriateness in the case of actions as well as value in the case of appraisals.

Though it is by the first of these contexts, the epistemic apprehension for significance and reality, pragmatism is most traditionally well-known. (Moser & Vander Nat, 2003).

Charles Saunders Pierce is the founder of pragmatism, he believed in intrinsic meaning and actions and that humans generate belief through their consequences of actions (Grattan-Guinness, I., 1994).

In pragmatic theories, truth can be recognized as the good in logic or inquire about a good or value that seeks knowledge from it and the means in which to achieve this good or value. Most of the time when one inquires about the origin of truth or its character we will begin with a belief of basing truth off of information, or something of significant value that must be examined or looked at in order to come about that truth. In pragmatics, truth and the consequences of meaning and value cannot stray from logic, or consequences of actions.

Pragmatism is about practical matters whose meaning is one that takes a practical approach to problems and is primarily concerned with the success of his or her actions (Moser & Vander Nat, 2003). Meaning derives from practical consequences and is the root of knowledge that truth and the criteria of meaning and value come from (Richmond, 2008).

Empiricism

Empiricism is the philosophical belief that all knowledge develops from the experience of the senses. Empiricism is the theory anticipated by philosophers and psychologists that all acquaintance and behavior are acquired through knowledge and is not at all attributable to instinctive or innate distinctiveness or traits. The English philosopher John Locke developed the ideas of empiricism, publishing in 1690 his Essay Concerning Human considerate. Locke thought that infants are born having no innate ethical sense, attitudes, or acquaintance in any form. Locke envisioned the human mind at birth as a blank slate, on which knowledge will record information (Moser & Vander Nat, 2003).

Disposition is a basis of individual differences in emotions that are inherent to the individual. Temperament is an inclination that allows two individuals to observe the same objective event very differently within the variety of normal behavior as well as development (Rollins, 2007).

The derivation of value and meaning in empiricism is that experience through the senses is the origin of truth and shapes people's meaning and value in life. Empiricism disagrees with pragmatism in the belief of logic and reasoning resulting in one's truth. An empiricist would argue that our experiences are not just streams of data but instead a process that we go through that creates a reality full of meaning and value considered truth. The derivation of value from the empiricism philosophy is that humans find meaning through purposes from experiences that shape values in life and are better able to think critically with combinations of empiricism. John Locke believed that knowledge, truth, and value derives from experiences (Moser & Vander Nat, 2003).

Postmodern School of Thought

Postmodernism can be described as various theories that rely on finding differences, repeating, and insignificant concepts in thought to shake the foundations of "other concepts such as presence, identity, historical progress, epistemic certainty, and the univocity of meaning" (Aylesworth, 2005, para. 1). At the very heart of this theoretical view of postmodern thought come such philosophies as deconstruction, existentialism, post-structuralism, phenomenology, and social constructionism.

Deconstructionism

Deconstructionism as a philosophical style evokes finding indications of meaning through the evaluation of text. This practice of stripping the text to its bare root provides much insight into the actual meaning intended by the authors (Lawlor, 2006).

Jacques Derrida, the father of deconstruction, sought value in words. According to Lawlor (2006), Derrida was consumed by paradoxical and refinement of the written and spoken word. One example comes from a friend employed by state agencies, which used the letter of the law to rule on pending neglect and abuse cases, she knew the need to deconstruct those laws to evoke meaning and perhaps set a precedent for new laws and rulings in court cases.

Derrida used deconstruction to critique structuralism thought, which was a process through textual and conceptual analysis on how definitions of fundamental concepts (e.g. true versus false) are undermined by the process used to determine them. Derrida influenced Richard Rorty's approach to pragmatism and his distinctive post-structuralism (Howells, 1999).

Meaning equates to value in deciphering text. Values fluctuate according to Derrida’s theory along with a path of terms, which give meaning (Sarup, 1993). Without arriving at case specifics, one case of neglect may conform to the law and the law thus applies in the ruling, whereas another suspected neglect case does not, necessitating the agency to find other examples of neglect or determine the case to be unfounded, releasing it from court processes.

Each situation was different, and the law had to be broken down into its various components and each compared against facts in the case to make a determination. According to Sarup (1993), Derrida contends that metaphor removes value from language. In a case that states that the “child was treated like a dog;” this could be very poor treatment, or in some cases, exceptional treatment (some people treat their dogs like children.) How does one derive proper value from that statement without investigating? Therefore, once the law is understood, the allegations too must be deconstructed by finding facts to support them.

Existentialism

Existentialism, whether a bygone cultural phase or a realistic realm of philosophy, begs many philosophical questions that offer an explanation of what gives value to individual and human existence (Crowell, 2008). Value on a personal level may come from family values, honesty, integrity, and trustworthiness. However, differences are apparent in the opinion of personal versus collective value in existentialist theory (Solomon, 2003). Solomon contends that humans may wonder what it means to be “a human being…like us” and reminds the reader that “like us” can be anything from being Greek like Aristotle, Republican, like George Bush, or any other socially constructed identity.

Post-structuralism

Post-structuralism is a rejection of totalizing, essentialist, foundationalist concepts and the concept that man developed during the Enlightenment, and instead, the supporting of the idea that man can only be defined within the context of culture. Post-structuralism is a late twentieth century philosophical, literary, and aesthetic theory primarily associated with Jacques Derrida and his followers. The theory was a reaction against structuralism and was represented in the work of de Saussure, Levi-Strauss, Lacan, and Barthes (Belsey, 2002, and Sarup, 1993).

Post-structuralists challenged structuralists' assumptions that systems were self-sufficient and the nature of absolute precise definitions. Many post-structuralist thinkers such as Derrida, Foucault, and Kristeva either rejected structuralists' principles or simply reversed them. Anti-humanism and existentialist phenomenology is also a feature of post-structuralism (Howells, 1999, and Devos, 1987).

Nietzsche’s argument against the illusion of truth or fixed concepts of meaning and egalitarianism greatly influenced the post-structuralism's (Sarup, 1993). Derrida, Foucault, Lyotard and others share an antipathy to any system and the Hegelian view of meaning and value in history as progress. They focus on “heterogeneous, diverse, subjective, spontaneous, relative and fragmentary perspectives” (Sarup, 1993, p. 105).

Rorty's distinctive American post-structuralism, focused on an attack on foundationalism, as expressed by Descartes, Hume, and Kant. Unlike Derrida, Rorty did not focus on close text analysis. Rorty argues that philosophy must surrender as the fountainhead of knowledge. He attacks the foundationalist approach to claiming systemic knowledge but supports what he calls edification as represented by Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and Wittgenstein (Rorty, 1999, and Guigon & Hiley, 2003).

Many elements of post-structuralism thought in the development of modern organizations can exist because of a globally interdependent economy, the increasing impact of technology, and a much more culturally diverse workplace. As a result, organizations and their leaders today must be more adaptive, flexible, and consider multiple and even conflicting perspectives when making decisions. Meaning and value in organizational life has become diverse, many perspectives, which are reflective of the kinds of products and services available today (Hiefetz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009).

Phenomenology

Phenomenology is a philosophical movement, which extended into sociology and psychiatry. In contrast to a school of philosophy, phenomenology does not have a body of doctrine to which all proponents agree; rather it is a broad approach, which views meaning and value in a non-structural and non-scientific perspective.

Phenomenology has four components: An opposition to naturalism (including behaviorism in psychology and positivism in social sciences and philosophy); a focus on socio-historical or cultural aspects and opposition to reductionism; an opposition to speculative thinking and a focus on language, urging instead "seeing" or "intuiting"; support for the technique of reflecting on process within conscious life as objects present themselves in life; and use of analysis to produce descriptions in universal terms (Gutting, 2001). In a sense, phenomenology results in a radical ontological revision of Cartesian dualism (Howells, 1999).

Social Constructionism

Social Constructionism and social constructivism are theories of knowledge that define and describe social phenomena in social contexts. In constructionist theory, a social construction is a concept or practice that is the creation or artifact of a particular group (Hacking, 1999, and Berger & Luckmann, 1987).

Social constructs are not laws from a divine source or nature but rather by-products of human behavior. Social constructivism examines how social phenomena are created, institutionalized and made into traditions, or achieved through interpretative means.

Social constructivism is a sociological construct whereas social constructionism is a psychological construct. Meaning and value for social constructionists come from the interpretation of human behavior in social contexts (Hacking, 1999).

Constructionism emanated from the work of Berger and Luckmann (1966) that links to the work of Heidegger and Husserl. Constructionist theory in sociology emphasized that human subjectivity imposed itself as objective. Modern Harvard psychologist, Steven Pinker (2002) argues that society has many social constructions that only exist because people generally agree they do, citing examples such as money and citizenship.

Evidence of social constructionism is evident in modern organizations in the form of organizational policies regarding the recruitment of minorities (and affirmative action plans), harassment policies, and the institution of other "fair" human resources practices. These things have no origins in universal laws or theories but have developed as a result of social conventions and traditions, and then become institutionalized (Wheatley et al., 2003). Meaning and Value in this context is whatever is widely agreed upon within the organizations and society as a whole.

Appreciative Environment Philosophy (AE)

Appreciative Environment is a concept of refocusing on individual's strengths (Heinzman, 2016). Within the AE philosophy, it is posited that present focus decreases subjectivity by ignoring innate perceptions. Attribution is created by first impressions, the first impression is based on visual, oratory, and values are based on our cultural perceptions. Similar to post-structuralism, it is important to be adaptive, flexible, and supportive of multiple cultural focuses. Culture is only one part of who we are, philosophies, values, and norms are different depending on the innate culture we are raised in.

Culture and philosophical differences drive beliefs and values; therefore, it is imperative leadership take the time to learn who is in their employ and what each person values. Leadership needs to focus on the positive opportunities the diversity of each individual provides to truly be present and open doors to creativity and innovation.

Conclusion

Perspectives regarding the derivation of value have evolved through different eras of philosophy. Traditionally, the philosophy of value was focused on a one-dimensional concept of good versus evil. In the modern era, Value was theorized through rationalism, idealism, and pragmatism to seek the inner truth of value as an innate ideology. The postmodern era's philosophy of value is viewed as a by-product of human behavior and social constructivism. Moving toward a positive focus being present provides greater opportunities for businesses to move into the future with greater opportunities and positive outcomes.

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Shifting Paradigms for College-Student Placement: Alternatives to Standardized Testing

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Abstract

Standardized tests have been administered primarily to determine placement of students in college. The problem is that there is currently no alternative that is being explored or considered by public officials. Contrary to Frederick Taylor's beliefs and the Theory of Scientific Management, standardized testing may not be the "one best way to measure intelligence or potential" (Cropf, 2008, p. 160). This study explores the argument for and against standardized tests, whether they should remain a deciding factor for a potential college student's placement, and provides reasonable recommendations for alternatives to testing based on research and prior studies.

Key Words: Standardized tests, education, college students, assessment.

Shifting Paradigms for College-Student Placement: Alternatives to Standardized Testing

In early 1999, an aspiring violinist named David Jones*[1] applied for a full-ride scholarship at the nearby University. David was a senior in high school and had been playing the violin for over 12 years. He was considered by many of his music associates and teachers as a prodigy of his time and a modern-day Paganini. David dreamed of one day touring

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[1] Names have been changed for academic purposes

the world touching audiences with his rare and fine talent. David won several awards throughout his life for compositions that he had written as well as concertos he had performed. He was also on the honor roll, elected student class president and awarded music sterling scholar of the year. However, one of David's weaknesses was his poor performance and lack of ability to do well on standardized tests, college entrance exams in particular. He attended several test-prep courses, which taught students how to take a four-hour timed test that was supposed to determine their college potential and placement. David had a little test anxiety and would tense up when it was time to take the test, as he was well aware that he was not able to perform well on standardized tests. David took the American College Test (ACT) three times in order to get the best score. He knew it was going to be an important factor in his music scholarship application. David received a below-average score on the first test. On the morning of the day that he took the test for the second time, he woke up late and got a traffic ticket on the way to the testing center, which heightened his anxiety. On the final section of the test that he took for the third time, he was very fatigued and merely filled out circles blindly in order to finish within the time restriction. His third and final score resulted in being the best out of the three, which was difficult to understand since he merely guessed on one-fourth of the test questions.

When David applied for the full-ride scholarship at the University, he was required to play two concerts in front of four judges and school officials who were to determine his placement and eligibility. After

David finished both concertos meritoriously, one of the judges made a comment on his remarkable talent and flawlessness in playing two very difficult concertos. Another judge, however, noticed his below-average ACT score and made a comment that he must raise his test score and take the test once more in order to be considered for a scholarship at the school. David was very discouraged and studied diligently to take the test one more time in order to be eligible for the scholarship. By the time that David studied and took the test one more time, another candidate had already been awarded the scholarship for which he had applied. David continued to play violin but eventually switched majors to further his educational goals.

The example provided is based on a true story of a talented student who possessed a very specialized skill and became subject to a judgment based on a standardized assessment used to determine students' eligibility for college. "Standardization means that the scores of all students tested can be fairly compared one against the other" (Germain, 1999, p. 3). I have met many students, including David, who struggle with their performance on standardized tests. Many students who take a college entrance exam may score significantly well, but may not even be able to play one single note on the violin. Would we ask a brilliant mathematician to play a violin concerto? Would we ask a concert pianist to solve a math problem? Not every subject can be assessed or tested in a standardized manner as it may require special skills that only a select few possess. Would previous and world-acclaimed theorists perceived as geniuses have scored well on college entrance exams? Would we still have all the knowledge we have today if inventors and geniuses such as Einstein had been subject to such standardized tests? These are rhetorical, yet thought-provoking questions that may be answered by reviewing the history, purpose, and feasible alternatives to standardized tests.

History and role of standardized testing

The idea and concept of standardized tests originated from Sir Francis Galton and Charles Spearman whose ideas of modern mental measurement and general mental ability were materialized with their first group of twenty-four people testing achievement in 1924 (as cited in Hanley, 2006, p. 12). Spearman's main purpose was that "public examination on school subjects would be a useful proxy for objectively measuring one's overall intelligence, and therefore determine one's place in the social hierarchy" (Hanley, 2006, p. 34). Standardized tests utilize a multiple-choice technique, which are distributed to a "large group of students under similar conditions" (Hymes 1991, p. 10). The technique used is the preferred method due to its "easy administration and grading process" (Hymes, 1991, p. 10). The tests consist of "content of which had been selected and checked empirically, for which norms were established" (Watkins, 1952, p. 5). The tests are "so constructed that the scoring could be accomplished with a relatively high degree of objectivity" (Watkins, 1952, p. 5). Hymes (1991) stated that "standardized tests are labeled objective since the scoring is generally done by a machine and is not based upon subjective judgments of individuals grading the papers" (p. 11).

Standardized tests are primarily used for their "ability to measure a broad range of outcomes in a cost-effective, time-effective manner" (Hymes, 1991, p. 9). Alfie Kohn, a nationally acclaimed educational critic, has written several books on the topic of standardized testing. Kohn (2000) stated that these tests are "problematic because they measure mere memorization or even test-taking skills" (p. 51). These tests do not focus on the most valuable and important qualities of a good leaner. Educator Bill Ayers provided an insightful list as to what standardized tests do and do not measure: Standardized tests can't measure initiative, creativity, imagination, conceptual thinking, curiosity, effort, irony, judgment, commitment, nuance, good will, ethical reflection, or a host of other valuable dispositions and attributes. What they can measure and count are isolated skills, specific facts, and functions, the least interesting and least significant aspects of learning. (as cited in Kohn, 2000, p. 65)

There are several standardized tests administered to students of all ages but the ones pertaining to this particular study are the two major college entrance exams: the ACT, developed by ACT, Inc., and the SAT, developed by Educational Testing Service.

Test publishing companies are mandated to normalize their tests every 5-7 years. The primary concerns of the test publishing companies are reliability and validity. These two components are carefully monitored. The question that is raised with the practice of administering standardized tests is whether they are a valid enough means to determine the future pursuits of education of students. For this very reason, it is imperative that standardized tests are reliable and valid. Reliability refers to the construction of the test and how dependable they are in reporting similar results when taken by similar groups over a period of time. It is vitally important for the test to be free from errors in its measurement and construction and measurement.

Therefore, if a test is reliable, it should be able to produce accurate statistics that will account for the student's progress (Rees, 2003, p. 67). It is also important that the tests are administered with similar instructions and conditions, which include directions, class environment, and test times in order for the results to be more reliable. Validity refers to the test taking and what exactly it is measuring, which is a factor that is more difficult to control and measure. The content of the test needs to be able to reflect the skills and ability that it is supposed to measure (Rees, 2003, p. 98). A study such as this will present how standardized tests are utilized in the school environment and the pros and cons of standardized testing, which will reveal whether or not there are feasible alternatives to measure high school student's college potential and placement.

Pros of Standardized Testing

The main advantages to standardized testing, which will be reviewed, are: 1. Cost-Reasonability, 2. Organization and readability, 3. Equity, and 4. Ease of Administration.

Cost-Reasonability.

One of the main advantages of standardized tests is their convenience and cost-effectiveness in determining results. Since these tests are multiple-choice, they can be put through a Scantron test-scoring machine, which can correct several tests and determine the results in seconds. Paul L. Williams is a proponent of standardized tests since they cost “pennies a pupil and the alternatives are far more expensive” (as cited in Hymes, 1991, p. 11).

Organization and Readability.

Standardized tests may reveal students’ strengths and weaknesses so that they know areas needed for improvement. Standardized testing may cause an alteration in behavior of students, teachers, and administrators. The behavior changes due to an “increase in motivation, the incorporation of feedback information on tests, an associated narrowing of focus on the task at hand, and increases in organizational efficiency, clarity, or the alignment of standards, curriculum, and instruction” (Phelps, 2005, p. 57).

Equity

Standardized tests were actually developed to promote test fairness (Phelps, 2005, p. 21). These tests are considered fair because all of the students who take them are being asked the same questions and therefore, have the same or equal chance of resulting in a comparable score based on the similar circumstances. Students also receive preparation to take college entrance exams, which promote and increase the high school graduate to college graduate ratio in that students are more likely to apply and attend college. Test preparation classes are also given in a standardized environment in that all students receive relatively the same or similar preparatory questions for the test, which may result in comparable scores. These tests are also timed, which give no question as to how and when the tests will be finished, graded, and given back provided with the results.

Ease of Administration

One of the most popular coaching test preparation programs, Kaplan, was developed by Stanley Kaplan in 1964 in Brooklyn when he tutored high school students preparing to take the SAT or ACT college entrance exams. Coaches who review a typical high school curriculum and administer practice tests that are timed to help and prepare students for test day direct these Kaplan classes. Teachers in the classroom are also made aware of these college entrance exams and are encouraged to introduce or instruct material in such a way that would be helpful for students to know and remember when taking the SAT or ACT exam. The SAT and ACT don't solely follow a multiple-choice format; there is also an essay that is graded by human educators. The multiple-choice format of the test is favored not only because of its accuracy and ease because it enables administrators to "obtain a lot of information about the examinees' skill levels in a limited amount of time" (Phelps, 2005, p. 115). The tests are administered in similar circumstances, which may raise the test's ability to provide consistent results. Officials depend on its reliability and ability to result in an accurate score. In just a four-hour period, administrators believe that they can obtain the proof of the "ability of SAT scores to predict future college grades" (Phelps, 2005, p. 117). However, standardized test scores are not the only component that college admission officials look at when reviewing potential students. They also look at the student's academic history (i.e. grades, essay, involvement, accomplishments).

In summary of the advantages of standardized tests, they are cost-effective and it would be too expensive to find a feasible alternative. The tests are organized and easy to read, which makes it convenient for college admission officials to interpret and compare the scores. Standardized tests are equitable in that each student has the same chance of achieving a good score since the circumstances and content of the test are the same. Lastly, standardized tests are easy to administer, in that they are simple to distribute and grade.

Cons of Standardized Tests

There are significantly more cons than pros to standardized testing, the most important of which are: 1. Capriciousness, 2. Insufficient method of administration, 3. Bias, 4. Lack of college preparation, and 5. Insufficient method of bridging educational gaps.

Capriciousness

Standardized tests may be considered reliable and valid because the test scores are consistent and support the purpose of testing in that they "help college admissions officers make decisions about who should be admitted to their schools" (Phelps, 2005, p. 117). However, tests results may be ambiguous in that they are standardized and do not consider the ability of each individual student. For example, what if diets were standardized and everyone trying to lose weight had to use the same diet? What if they didn't lose weight and they had no other option? Diets may be considered as valid since they measure what they intend to measure: losing weight. However, not everyone has the same body and may require a customized program to meet his or her needs. Therefore, not all diets can be considered reliable. For example, a group of ten people trying to lose weight were on the same standardized diet and exercise program. Each person was on the same schedule, had the same materials, and was weighed in each week at the same time with the same scale. It could be assumed that each person would experience similar results since so many of the components are similar. However, there are other components that need to be considered here since each person has a unique body type and need for calorie intake and exercise. Everyone has a different metabolic rate, height, weight, genes, medical history that should play a factor in the weight-loss process. Just as each person requires a customized plan for weight loss, each student requires a more customized assessment to accommodate his or her different learning style and test-taking ability.

Improper Assessment of Skills

College officials view standardized test scores as a determining factor for students' potential, ability and performance in a school setting. It has been argued that "admissions and scholarship tests have been evaluated principally on their ability to predict a student's grade average in college or professional school" (Goslin, 1963, p. 93). Teachers label standardized tests as "arbitrary" and state that "tests may be standardized, but students are not" (Germain, 1999, p. 6).

Many educators consider standardized tests as unfair, biased, and arbitrary. Standardized tests merely demonstrate how well a student can take a test and demonstrate his or her "test-taking skills" (Kohn, 2000, p. 17). The limits of these multiple-choice tests prove that they are not able to measure "complex cognitive problem-solving skills" (Kohn, 2000, p. 12). The multiple-choice format of the test makes it so that "students are unable to generate a response; all they do is recognize one by picking it out of four or five answer provided by someone else…they can't explain their reasons for choosing the answer they did" (Kohn, 2000, p.11). One academic expert stated that a multiple-choice test "does not measure the same cognitive skills as are measured by similar problems in free-response form" (as cited in Kohn, 2000, p. 12). Roger Farr stated his doubt that there is "any way to build a multiple-choice question that allows students to show what they can do with they know" (as cited in Kohn, 2000, p. 17). It is important to acknowledge that the SAT and ACT tests are not entirely comprised of multiple-choice questions as there is also a required essay associated with the test that is written at the end in response to a question and/or statement provided. Kohn (2000) criticized that these essays also follow a "contrived model rather than tapping real communication or thinking skills" (p. 12).

Improper Method of Administration

There is also a concern pertaining to how these essays are graded. Most SAT or ACT essays are not even graded by educators. In interest of saving money, these essays are "shipped off to a company in North Carolina where low-paid temp workers spend no more than two to three minutes reading each one" (Kohn, 2000, p. 12). The graders are also given incentives to how many essays they could grade in a certain amount of time, which proves the invalidity of this method of assessment. One grader who was interviewed revealed that he would "read a paper every ten seconds" (Kohn, 2000, p. 12). Kohn (2000) concluded "we can't assume that an essay test is a valid measure of important indicators…but we can be reasonably certain that a multiple-choice test *isn't*" (p. 13).

Standardized tests are timed, which may indicate to the student that it is most important to complete the test within the given time. What if a doctor were required to meet the constraints of a stopwatch when performing surgery? What if Einstein had been timed to construct and refine the theory of relativity? Must education and results be timed? This can communicate to students that they must memorize and regurgitate facts in a certain amount of time rather than thinking for themselves and creating their own theories. It reveals that there is a "premium on speed as opposed to thoughtfulness or even thoroughness" (Kohn, 2000, p. 13).

Bias

Standardized tests assume that all students have acquired the same or similar knowledge and education. Education varies from school to school and from teacher to teacher and cannot be considered as a one-size-fits-all solution. The tests assess a very basic overview of the material presented to students on the test day. The students can take several practice tests, but it may be very likely that they will encounter items for the first time on test day. Examinees may spend hours memorizing facts and information for the test and forget it all in a matter of days, which may defeat the "purpose of testing" of "predicting future college grades" (Phelps, 2005, p. 117). Standardized tests are not an efficient predicator of future college grades since college curriculum is not focused on standardized tests and is more concentrated on writing and critical thinking skills. The tests are not able to measure whether a student understands the material, as there is nothing more than a bubble to fill out. Despite the tests quality of standardization, there are limits that decrease its inherent value. The majority of educators are convinced of the tests' inaccuracies because "even when they are scored correctly, and even when they meet conventional standards for reliability, many students will be misclassified because of the limits of test accuracy" (Kohn, 2000, p. 46).

Lack of College Preparation

Another inherent problem is that students go through three to four years of high school, learning new material each year and are suddenly introduced to a test four months before graduation that they must take in order to apply for college. Students' senior year is comprised of not only doing the course work designed for that particular year, but also learning a new test format that they must learn to take in order to excel in their academic future. This makes it seem that students' academic futures depend primarily on this one score derived from a timed test that is over in just a few hours on a given day. This does not necessarily help with college preparation, but merely provides a score that will determine which scholarship, if any, and to which school they will be accepted. It would be more meaningful if college preparation played more of a significant role during senior year and if the students' teachers were more involved in the high school to college transition as they are the ones who are most involved in their educational experience.

Improper method of bridging educational gaps

Years ago, studies and tests indicated that high school students were ignorant of simple and basic historical facts. In 2002, President Bush wanted to improve high school students' historical knowledge. He declared that "our Founders believed the study of history and citizenship should be at the core of every American's education…yet today, our children have large and disturbing gaps in their knowledge of history" (Rees, 2003, p. 12). In efforts to improve education and historical knowledge, Bush relied on standardized tests. Reese (2003) conducted a study indicating that nearly one in five high school seniors think that Germany was an ally of the United States in World War II and twenty-eight percent of eighth graders do not know the reason why the Civil War was fought. One-third of fourth graders do not know what it means to pledge allegiance to the flag. Bush also emphasized the significance of this folly by stating how “ignorance of American history and civics weakens our sense of citizenship” (Rees, 2003, p. 51). A supporter of education who campaigned for higher education and improving test scores “wondered how employers could be complaining about the skills of high school graduates when the state’s standardized test scores were so high” (Hymes, 1991, p. 22). Critics such as Kohn (2004) argued that we are “sacrificing learning for higher scores” (p. 54). In the 1970s, there were complaints from some business and industry leaders claiming, “We are getting high school graduates who have a diploma, but can’t read or write!” (Cizek, 2007, p. 67). Overall, standardized tests are not able to measure the ability of students’ critical thinking skills necessary to become successful and independent citizens. Therefore, these tests are not reliable sources for making educational policy decisions on what is best for potential college students and determining their potential.

In summary of the disadvantages of standardized testing, they are capricious in that they are not customized to determine the abilities of each individual. Standardized tests measure test- taking skills instead of individual talents that each individual has developed over the years. The method of grading and administration is too systemized to determine true ability. The tests are bias in that they do not consider students' diversity and assume that they all acquire the same knowledge. Standardized testing is considered high-stakes testing since external factors such as school funding depend on test scores. The tests do not prepare students for college in that they just provide a score that will determine their placement, not any concrete idea or material about the college experience. Standardized tests do not prepare students for the real world. They are also not the answer to bridge educational gaps in that they are not a proper assessment whether or not a student genuinely understands.

Alternatives to Standardized Testing

The primary alternatives to standardized testing, which will be reviewed, are: 1. Increased Parent-Teacher Involvement, 2. GPA, 3. Performance Assessments, 4. Portfolios, 5. Standardized Tests Adjustment, 6. Interviews, and 7. School Committee.

It may seem that we need standardized tests simply because there is no alternative method of measuring student achievement and assessing the quality of education.

Pollard (2002) stated:

In a 1999 Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup poll of the general public, respondents were asked which of four methods would provide the most accurate measure of a public-school student's academic progress throughout high school. Only 27% of the respondents chose standardized test scores. Examples of the students' work were the first choice, receiving 33% of the vote. The remainders of responses were split between letter grades and teacher-written observations. (p. 4)

Ultimately, educators have decided that alternatives to standard tests must possess the following qualities that: "measure fundamental, important things in the curriculum, measures more than a narrow, low-level set of objectives, does not encourage rote teaching of material covered by the test, and holds schools, in addition to students, accountable for achievement" (Hymes, 1991, p. 25).

Increased Parent-Teacher Involvement

Kohn (2000) suggested a few alternatives that include increased parental involvement in high school. For example, parents could receive periodic written reports of their child's performance from the teacher, which would be kept on file for college admission boards to view. Parents could also maintain regular communication or attend a conference with the teacher with college admission officials present to evaluate a student's potential. Parents do not think that tests are the only way for evaluating their children's performance.

GPA

The Grade Point Average (GPA) could be more heavily weighted in substitution of standardized tests. However, there have been criticisms with the other measures of academic achievement in college such as GPA that even weaken the validity of standardized tests. A recent study found that “college GPA, a linear combination of assigned grades from different courses, is widely known to be an imperfect measure of student achievement. This unreliable measure decreases the predictive validity of college admission tests” (Lei, Bassiri, & Schultz, 2002, p. 2). Therefore, it is apparent that the GPA measurement for college student placement is not a good alternative to standardized testing.

Performance Assessments

Cost-effectiveness is a large concern among alternatives since it is so inexpensive to administer standardized, computer-graded tests. Instead of pulling more tax dollars to support and administer standardized tests, that money can instead be used to hire more teachers to support more of a “hands-on” approach to assessment. It is important to increase the involvement of the teachers since they are the individuals who are most involved in the students’ education and learning. “The most skillful teachers don’t rely very heavily on standardized tests” (Pollard, 2002, p. 9). They observe their students, and communicate with them on a daily basis. “Good teachers are able to frequently determine, without using exams, the students’ comprehension level and ability to understand” (Kohn, 2000, p. 37). Parents might be concerned about whether or not the teachers’ evaluations are accurate since they are more personal and not determined by any test. But how can one assume that standardized tests are any more accurate or credible? Hymes (1991) believed that performance assessments are great methods for determining accuracy and whether a student genuinely understands the material. Tests of this type, also called authentic assessments because they more closely resembled challenges of the real world, "differed from traditional assessment techniques in that they required students to demonstrate what they know, can do, or were taught, instead of just selecting an answer somebody else had written" (Hymes, 1991, p. 22). These assessments are opportunities for students to display or present their work and for their performance to be evaluated or assessed. An early advocate of this technique, Richard J. Stiggins, from the Northwest Regional Education Laboratory, defined these assessments with the following four components: "(1) a reason for the assessment, (2) a particular performance to be evaluated, (3) exercises that elicit that performance, and (4) systematic rating procedures" (as cited in Hymes, 1991, p. 25).

Portfolio

Another alternative can be done in the form of a portfolio. This will enable students to collect examples of work that they have done over the course of the year, or over the course of multiple years. Portfolios, however, may turn out to be the vehicle that carries the banner of alternative assessments over the long haul. "Even though they are usually defined as one alternative form of assessment, in reality they call for a combination of assessments to make a better-informed judgment on the progress of students" (Hymes, 1991, p. 12). This would give the student a chance to display his or her individual talents, interests, and characteristics, something that standardized tests are not able to display.

This would give the whole process a human touch and feel in that the portfolios would be viewed by individuals instead of graded by Scantron machines. According to Edward D. Roeber, some possible performance measures may include “art, career development, mathematics, music, reading, writing, and speaking and/or listening” (as cited in Hymes, 1991, p. 27). Robert Lin favored the performance assessments in that “they facilitate improvements in instruction and learning and conform more closely to important instructional goals than the traditional multiple-choice items” (as cited in Hymes, 1991, p. 27).

Standardized Test Adjustment

If we continue to use standardized tests, we should do as much as possible to make them as meaningful as possible. A few alterations would have to be made to increase reliability, which include making sure that the tests are not timed, do not include multiple-choice questions, and are not norm-referenced, in order to prohibit the scores from being “compared against those of a so-called norm group/sampling of students” (Hymes, 1991, p. 10). Test results should be given without any reference to other students’ scores or a given standard of achievement. Additionally, certain factors should be taken into consideration when evaluating tests scores such as low income communities, lack of resources, language barriers, etc. knowing that students with different backgrounds achieve different knowledge. Certainly, it is time for reform and change in the educational system other than increasing the number of tests and exams.

Interviews

In addition to the performance assessment, teachers and members of the admission committee in the program can setup a 20-30 minute interviews with the student, in order to gauge potential in the program. A personal one-on-one interview can be able to reveal many important characteristics and talents, which cannot be identified otherwise or very clearly on a Scantron answer sheet filled out for a standardized test. The interviews would have to be used as a supplement as the results of the interviews would be difficult to determine and compare. Using and testing other methods could prove or at least put into comparison what standardized tests are already attempting to produce and how other tests could potentially assist in providing more validity and reliability.

School Committee

Another potential option I propose is to form a committee at the beginning of the student's high school career that would be made up of three teachers of his or her choice and three teachers chosen by the school. This committee would meet once a year with the student and evaluate his or her performance in school as well as extracurricular activities. The committee would work with the student in developing a portfolio with the student that could potentially be comprised of examples of his or her best pieces of work. Some of these pieces could be based on the students' talents, expertise, and interests and include music or art compositions, sport achievements, debate tournament results, speeches, awards, etc. The portfolio would also include his academic summary, citizenship marks, as well as feedback from teachers. This would motivate students to perform to the best of their ability as well as to work more cohesively with teachers instead of fearing or being intimidated by them. This would increase attendance and promptness in schools since the attendance and timeliness would be reported in their portfolio. This method would also give the student something to work on his or her entire high school career. Using this method would also have potential of preparing students for college and their future. In the real world, people must provide a resume and references, both of which students would be equipped with at the end of high school with their portfolio. Students would also be required to write a research paper by the end of their senior year, which would be supervised by a teacher on their committee. Since college work is more writing intensive, it would be important for students to get some applicable experience while they are in high school so that they can have some idea of what to expect. The portfolio would be given a score as well as an analysis as to provide not only a quantitative measure, but also a qualitative. This method would get the teachers more involved in the student’s learning experience instead of having machines and teachers, who do not even know the students on an individual and personal basis ultimately decide the students’ educational fate.

In order to increase the two factors that bring the greatest concern, validity and reliability, there will need to be a way of testing (a pilot) these alternatives in order to see if another method could prove a more valid or reliable outcome. In 1990, Vermont focused on performance assessments with the focus on student portfolios. They were only used on a local school or district level and were found to “serve as an excellent means for teachers and parents to review student progress – especially in areas where tests fall short, however, their use has not yet been structured enough to become a true accountability measure” (Hymes, 1991, p. 29).

Conclusion

It can easily be observed from all of the aforementioned options that there are certainly alternatives to standardized tests. Based on the research, the following three criteria are the most important and reasonable when considering alternatives to standardized tests: 1) cost-effectiveness, 2) minimal student and teacher pressures, and 3) sufficient assessment of skills and potential. These criteria may judge the plausibility of the alternative’s application. Among the alternatives, the committee method meets all of these criteria. It would be cost-effective in that the teachers on the committee would already be familiar with the school for ease of implementation. Teachers would be able to contribute their expertise and individual teaching skills, and the program would be customized for each student. The committee method would have to be tested as a pilot program as it would create the most validity and reliability, one of the largest concerns of standardized test administrators. The committee method would be valid in serving its purpose to predict future college grades, as they would be based on their previous work. It would also exemplify great reliability in that the assessment would be performed over a long period of time in order to perform consistent results. Instead of the funding that is going toward college preparation classes, testing, and scoring, it can go toward implementing the committee method in high schools. With the evidence given about the administering and grading process of standardized tests, it can be observed and concluded that high school students are being misled to believe that their intelligence is being identified and quantified by a number that will be a factor in deciding and determining their future pursuits in education. Despite the cost-effectiveness of standardized tests, it is worth pulling money from other areas being allotted for standardized tests to appropriate for other more effective options. Alternatives ensure that students could spend more time thinking about ideas and playing a more active role in learning. “In such an environment, they’re not only more likely to be engaged with what they’re doing but also to do it better and provide the schools our children deserve” (Kohn, 1999, p. 19).

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