



Determining Sources of Motivation for Nurses of Different Generations in Turkey

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Author ES designed the study, managed the literature searches, performed the statistical analysis, wrote the protocol and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. Author DO managed the analyses of the study. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study is to determine the motivation sources of nurses from different generations. 396 nurses were recruited for our study. The data were collected by "Socio-demographic Questionnaire" and "Motivation Sources Inventory-MSI". The nurses were divided into 3 groups: Baby Boomer-BB (14), ^{generation} X (266), generation Y (116). Motivation levels weren't statistically significant among the groups. In the dual-comparisons, motivation levels of generation Y were significantly higher than those of generation X. The MSI averages of the nurses were found to be different from each other. The managers are advised to consider the generation differences to increase the motivation.

Keywords: Nurse; generations; motivational sources; nursing management.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The human being is one of the most important factors that play a role in the success of an organization. That human beings are so important to an organization increases the need to understand the motivation factors that affect their behavior [1]. Motivation is defined as the intrinsic or extrinsic power that helps to reach a goal [2,3].

Individuals who have been born in the same historical interval or in intervals defined by economic or social circumstances are said to belong to the same generation. The generations are grouped in the literature as the Silent Generation, the Baby Boomer Generation, Generation X, Generation Y and Generation Z [4,5]. Generations have their own work ethics, judgement values, expectations and working manners. Differences of generation have influence on motivational sources. Therefore the managers have to keep in mind the generational differences and know all the features of each generation [6,7].

1.1 The Silent Generation (1925-1945)

People in the silent generation are loyal to the establishment, and seniority and age are important in career advances. This generation dislikes change and respects authority and challenging work [6].

1.2 The Baby Boomer Generation (1946-1964)

This generation is made up of workaholics, intensely self-confident individuals characterized by a strong will, optimism, respect toward authority and the establishment, and a strong work ethic. They place importance on being recognized and respected. They are egocentric [5,8].

1.3 Generation X (1965-1980)

This generation likes to be flexible and informal in their work and wishes to be free to do their own jobs. They like working on a goal-focused basis [6,7].

1.4 Generation Y (1981-2000)

A large percentage of Generation Y is eager to learn and is open to change and advice. They

would like to have opportunities for professional development and advancement [7,9]. They desire to be in managerial positions that lead them to success quickly [10].

1.5 Generation Z (2000-2021)

This is a generation that has not yet appeared on the work scene; it is a generation of technology. This generation partakes of all of the opportunities technology has set before it and is in constant visual and verbal contact with one another [11].

In order to keep employee turnover at a minimum, managers need to take into account the differences between generations and build and implement realistic strategies based on these differences [12]. Administrators must increase their knowledge of generational differences, just as they have dealt with ethnic and cultural differences in the past. Understanding how good relations can be established with the different generations and how to reap benefit from individual strengths will contribute to the development of the nursing profession [13].

A review of the literature reveals few studies that have focused on examining the sources of motivation for different generations in the field of nursing, and no references pertaining to this subject in the Turkish literature [3,14]. In nursing, which is a profession that encompasses the most frequent cases of drops in motivation, of burnout and employee turnover, determining what motivates the different generations and making adjustments for this, it is believed, will generate more motivated employees at the institutions and provide working opportunities for more work-dedicated nurses.

This study aims to determine sources of motivation for nurses of different generations.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This descriptive and cross-sectional study was conducted at the İzmir Bozyaka Training and Research Hospital, a 650-bed hospital operating under the Turkish Ministry of Health. The universe of the study constituted the 490 nurses working at the Bozyaka Training and Research Hospital (N=490). A sample was not selected for the research; the universe itself was taken as a sample. The participation rate in the research is

81% (n=396). The data were collected with the face-to-face interviews technique between the dates June 5 - September 1, 2014 and deficiencies were corrected immediately. For this reason, there is no lost value.

2.1 Data Collection Instruments

A Socio demographic Questionnaire and the Motivation Sources Inventory were used as data collection instruments.

2.2 Sociodemographic Questionnaire

The data collection instrument that was drawn up by the researchers contained information supplied in 12 items on the nurses' age, gender, educational status, civil status, the duration of their work in the profession, the department they work in, the duration of their employment at the institution and their position, the form of work, how motivated the employees feel themselves, and their perspective on the nursing profession.

2.3 Motivation Sources Inventory (MSI)

The Motivation Inventory that was developed by J. E. Barbuta and R. W. Scholl in 1998 to determine the sources of nurses' motivation was drawn up as 78 items. Spektor devised the final version of the Inventory as 30 items and 5 sub-dimensions. The validity and reliability studies for the Turkish version were carried out by Öztürk; the Turkish scale is, as in the original, made up of 30 items and 5 sub-dimensions. It is a 7-item Likert type scale. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient for the scale is 0.84. The higher the score on the inventory, the higher was the motivation. Moreover, a score of 109 or lower is evaluated as low motivation, scores between 110-156 as average motivation, while scores of 157 and above point to high motivation [15].

Internal motivators (8 questions): It expresses the behaviors that individuals do knowing that they will be satisfied with what they have done, without the need for others' appreciation.

External motivators(6 questions):It shows that individuals want to be appreciated and respected by others.

Instinctual process motivators(6 questions): It shows that individuals want to be satisfied with all kinds of unconscious motions and behaviors independently of innate reason and thought.

Goal internalization motivators(5 questions): It shows that individuals want to act in accordance with their beliefs, values and goals.

Instrumental motivators(5 questions): It shows the importance of the factors that give satisfaction to the individuals from the work they do such as pay, seniority, etc [16].

2.4 Data Analysis

The study was analyzed using the SPSS 21.0 package program. The socio demographic characteristics, professional status features of the nurses participating in the research were presented in numbers and percentage distribution. The item mean scores of the sub-dimensions of the MSI were calculated.

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was applied to determine whether the generation scores were normally distributed. Since the data did not display normal distribution, the nonparametric Kruskal Wallis test was used. The medians for the MSI sub-dimensions and the interval values between quarters were calculated. The chi-square test was performed to determine the levels of motivation between generations.

In the evaluation of the data, the mean scores for the sub-dimensions of the MSI were calculated to facilitate the comparison of the sub-dimensions since the numbers of their items were unequal. Multivariate analysis couldn't be done due to the group baby boomer being too small.

3. RESULTS

The features of generations were shown in Table 1.

The assessment of the distribution of the nurses participating in the research by their socio demographic characteristics showed that the large majority were women, more than half had bachelor's degrees, and again, more than half were married and of Generation X, and close to half had worked at their professions for 11-20 years (Table 2).

An assessment of the MSI total and item means of the sub-dimensions of the nurses of all three generations showed that out of all the groups, Generation Y scored the highest item mean, while the Generation X was second highest and the Baby Boomer Generation was third. The statistical analysis performed to determine

whether there were any differences between the MSI scores of the generations indicated that there were no statistically significant differences between the generations ($p>0.05$). Comparison of the median scores of the generations on the generational MSI is shown at Table 3.

While the intrinsic motivator sub-dimension was the sub-dimension that revealed the highest item mean among the nurses in the study, the sub-dimension with the lowest item mean was the intuitive process sub-dimension.

Table 1. Differences of generations in business life [13, 17]

The baby boomer Generation (1946-1964)	Generation X (1965-1980)	Generation Y (1981-2000)
1-Has business-focused approach	1-Wants balance between home life and business life	1-Likes working in groups
2-More responsive with consensus building	2-Doesn't like working independently	2-Desires more lengthy orientation training
3-Desires to be respected for their contributions	3-Says what needs to be done and doesn't micromanage	3-Wants constructive feedback more often
4-Respects to authority and rules	4-Respects to authority and rule	4-Aggressives to authority
5-Doesn't question of management	5-Doesn't interested in management	5-Likes clear and objective management
6-Abstentious	6-Competitive	6-Innovative

Table 2. Distribution of nurses participating in research by socio demographic and professional status characteristics

Sociodemographic characteristics	N	%
Generations		
Baby Boomer Generation	14	3,5
Generation X	266	67,2
Generation Y	116	29,3
Gender		
Female	366	92,4
Male	30	7,6
Educational status		
Healthcare Vocational High School	38	9,6
Associate Degree	108	27,3
University degree	226	57,1
Graduate Degree	24	6,1
Civil status		
Married	267	67,4
Single	129	32,6
Duration of professional work		
0-10 years	128	32,3
11-20 years	172	43,4
21 years and more	96	24,2
Working position		
Clinic nurses	328	82,8
Supervisor nurses	36	9,1
Outpatient Clinic nurses	32	8,1
Working unit		
Clinics	200	50,5
Operation Room/Emergency Service	73	18,4
Outpatient Clinic	35	8,8
Intensive Care	88	22,2
Total	396	100,0

Table 3. Comparison of the median scores of the generations on the generational motivation source inventory

Generation	N	Intrinsic motivator item		Extrinsic motivator item		Intuitive process item		Goal internalization item		Instrumental motivator item		Total item							
		n=8 questions		n=6 questions		n=6 questions		n=5 questions		n=5 questions		n=30 questions							
		Median	IQR*	Item mean	Median	IQR	Item mean	Median	IQR	Item mean	Median	IQR	Item mean	Median	IQR	Item mean			
BB Generation	14	47.00	20.50	4.86± 1,88	18.50	11.25	3.49± 1,59	14.00	6.00	2.44± 0,87	22.00	9.25	2.27± 1,39	18.00	19.0	3.49± 1,87	123.50	63.00	3.7± 12,2
Generation X	266	45.50	11.25	5.31± 1,33	22.00	12.25	3.65± 1,39	16.00	10.00	2.86± 1,25	22.00	9.00	4.30± 1,39	17.00	12.00	3.52± 1,53	123.50	34.50	4.02± 0,91
Generation Y	116	44.50	9.00	5.34± 1,22	21.00	12.00	3.65± 1,35	17.00	8.00	3.00± 1,23	24.00	9.00	4.59± 1,33	19.00	12.75	3.95± 1,71	124.50	25.75	4.18± 0,85
TOTAL	396	45.00	11.00	5.30± 1,32	22.00	12.00	3.65± 1,38	16.00	10.00	2.88± 1,23	22.00	10.00	4.38± 1,37	17.00	12.00	3.65± 1,61	124.00	32.00	4.06± 0,91
p**		0.93			0.87			0.27			0.12			0.08					0.48

*Interquartile range

*Kruskal Wallis test p value

STD: Standart deviation

Table 4. The result of the overall scores of the MSI

Generations**	Low (109)		Average (110-156)		High (157)		Total		Mean std
	N	%	n	%	n	%	n	%*	
Baby Boomers	4	28.6	10	71.4	0	0.0	14	100.0	113,21 ±36,57
X-Generation	84	31.6	161	60.5	21	7.9	266	100.0	120,63 ±27,22
Y-Generation	22	19.0	83	71.6	11	9.5	116	100.0	125,31 ±25,58
TOTAL	110	27.8	254	64.1	32	8.1	396	100.0	121,74 ±27,18

*Line percentage

**Comparison of BB Generation, Generation X and Generation Y: $X^2=7.71$ $p=0.10$

Comparison of Baby Boomers and X-Generation: $X^2=1.402$ $p=0.50$

Comparison of Baby Boomers and Generation Y: $X^2=1.904$ $p=0.39$

**Comparison of Generation X and Generation Y: $X^2=6.412$ $p=0.04$

When the item means of the responses the nurses in the study gave for the 30 items in the inventory were evaluated individually, it was seen that the Generation Y nurses scored the highest item mean in 20 of the 30 items: "My decisions reflect the high goals that I set up for myself"; "It is important to me that I work in an institution that allows me to use my talents and skills"; "I try to make decisions that are consistent with my personal standards of behavior (my personality)"; "I like to do things that give me a feeling of personal success"; "If an institution is working toward goals that I approve of, it is not important to me that my share in the success of that institution comes to the forefront or not"; "I frequently make my decisions based on what other people will think"; "If I know that my work is being appreciated by the people in authority at the institution, I will work with all my might"; "I only like to do things at work that I like doing"; "When choosing a job, I usually choose the job that looks good to me"; "The person I choose to spend my time with at work is the person I like to be with the best"; "When making a choice between two people, the most important factor for me is which one I really like better"; "I will not work at an institution that has adopted/internalized a mission that I don't approve of"; "If I have to work very hard for the institution to meet its goal, I need to first believe in the reason/rationale for working this way"; "I won't work very hard if I don't believe in the reason"; "For me to work hard, the mission of the organization has to conform to my own values"; "If they give me one day's pay, I'll just do one day's work"; "If I know that the effort I exert will come back to me in the form of higher pay, then I can work harder"; "I would generally chose the job that gives me the highest pay"; "My favorite day is the day I'm paid"; "People should keep their eyes and ears open to catch better opportunities". Generation X nurses scored the highest item scores in 6 of the 30 items: "How much I'm going to work at a job is determined by the requirements of that job (what has to be done)"; "I think that I'm a self-motivating person"; "I'd like to know that my skills and values have an impact on the institution's success"; "Other people's approval of my behavior is important to me"; "If the people around value a certain project, I will work harder at it"; "In choosing a job, I choose the one that will acknowledge my achievement the most"; "When doing my job, I will frequently put off what I'm doing to do for something else that I like doing better". The Baby Boomer nurses scored the highest item means in 3 of the 30 items: "People at work that have a lot

of friends live their lives to the fullest"; "If I don't like what I'm doing at work, I will quit my job"; "In choosing the institution I work for, I look for the one that conforms to my beliefs and values".

The motivation levels of 64.1% of the nurses were found to be average. In an evaluation across generations, it was seen that 71.4% of the Baby Boomer Generation, 60.5% of Generation X and 71.6% of Generation Y had average motivation levels. The larger percentage of the group of nurses with low motivation scores were in Generation X while the larger percentage of the group of nurses with high motivation levels was in Generation Y.

When assessed together, the motivation levels of all three generations did not display statistically significant differences in the analysis performed ($p>0.05$) (Table 4). However, in the two-generation comparisons, while there were no significant differences found in motivation levels between the Baby Boomer and Generation Y nurses ($p>0.05$), statistically significant differences were discovered in the motivation levels of Generation Y and Generation X nurses ($p<0.05$) (Table 4).

4. DISCUSSION

- The MSI total score averages of the nurses participating in the research are medium level,
- Generation Y average has been found higher between the mean total motivation points of generation X and generation Y and it is statistically significant.

In this study, which was performed to determine the sources of motivation for nurses of different generations, a comparison of the total MSI and sub-dimension item mean scores of all three generations showed that Generation Y had the highest item means in all the sub-dimensions and in the total score but the differences between the groups were not statistically significant. In research by Arroyo, in which the researcher studied a group of technicians working at a different occupation in South America, it was similarly seen that there were no significant differences between the generations on the motivation inventory in terms of its sub-dimensions [18].

The highest item mean in the research was found in the intrinsic motivator sub-dimension. Kurt's study to determine the motivation levels of

nurses in Istanbul, the study of Akbas to determine the stress and motivation levels of ward nurses in Istanbul, Dogru's study to determine the motivation levels of intensive care nurses in Istanbul, and Ozturk's study of nurses and administrative nurses in Istanbul, conducted to determine their motivation levels and performance levels, all found similarly that the sub-dimension with the highest score was the intrinsic motivator sub-dimension [15,19,20,21].

When the items in the MSI in which Generation Y nurses scored the highest were evaluated, it was striking to observe that the characteristics exhibited by Generation Y were as described in the literature. For example, the item, *"If an institution is working toward goals that I approve of, it is not important to me that my share in the success of that institution comes to the forefront or not"* was interpreted to mean that Generation Y wished to feel a part of the group at the workplace, wanted to take part in the innovations that were being carried out in line with the critical points in the organization's vision for progress [13].

The items, *"I frequently make my decisions based on what other people will think"* and *"If I know that my work is being appreciated by the people in authority at the institution, I will work with all my might"* were evaluated to mean that Generation Y needed to ask for feedback and career recommendations [11].

The other four items in which Generation Y nurses exhibited the highest item means displayed their outlook on living an entertaining social/business life: *"I only like to do things at work that I like doing"*; *"When choosing a job, I usually choose the job that looks good to me"*; *"The person I choose to spend my time with at work is the person I like to be with the best"*; *"When making a choice between two people, the most important factor for me is which one I really like better"*.

It is reported that Generation Y places more importance on material earnings in business life compared to Baby Boomers and Generation X [21]. In the present study as well, it is striking to note the items that indicate that Generation Y considers financial gain a source of motivation: *"If they give me one day's pay, I'll just do one day's work"*; *"If I know that the effort I exert will come back to me in the form of higher pay, then I can work harder"*; *"I would generally choose the job that gives me the highest pay"*; *"My favorite*

day at work is the day I'm paid"; *"People should keep their eyes and ears open to catch better opportunities"*.

The statements of Generation Y in the study that revealed the highest item mean scores were interpreted to mean that in a general evaluation of this generation, it could be said that they kept their own interests above everything else [6]. Examples of this were: *"My decisions reflect the high goals that I set up for myself"*; *"I try to make decisions that are consistent with my personal standards of behavior (my personality)"*; *"I like to do things that give me a feeling of personal success"*; *"When choosing a job, I usually choose the job that looks good to me"*.

When the motivation level scores of the nurses in the study were compared, significant differences were found between the MSI total mean scores of Generations X and Y ($p < 0.05$), but no significant differences were discovered in a comparison of the MSI total mean scores of Baby Boomers and Generation X nor between Baby Boomers and Generation Y ($p > 0.05$). This result from the study suggests that the difference may have stemmed from the differences between the generations. In a study conducted by Ozturk in Istanbul, no significant differences were found in the total motivation mean scores of the nurses in the study group when compared by age [15]. Sen's research reported that there were no differences in terms of age between the mean scores of nurses on the MSI sub-dimensions of intrinsic motivators, extrinsic motivators and intuitive process motivators, and also that there was a negative and significant relationship between the goal internalization scores and the scores in the instrumental motivator sub-dimension. The older the nurses, it was noted, the lower were the scores in the sub-dimensions of goal internalization and instrumental motivators [21]. In research carried out by Leavit in the U.S. with 1024 healthcare professionals, intuitive process motivators, instrumental motivators and extrinsic motivators were highest in Generation Y while in the Baby Boomer Generation, the highest motivators were the goal internalization motivators. No differences were observed between the groups in terms of intrinsic motivators [3]. Toode et al. in a study of nurses in Estonia, found that intrinsic motivators increased motivation at a high rate, that the influence of extrinsic motivators was moderate, and that there was a significant relationship between extrinsic motivators and the nurses' ages and the duration of their hospital employment. It was observed

however that intrinsic motivation factors increased in nurses that had received more than seven days a year of in-house training [14]. A study in Malaysia by Wan Yusoff and Kian with 127 workers in the electric and electronics industry reported a significant difference between the generations in terms of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators and that Generation Y was less satisfied with intrinsic and extrinsic motivating factors compared to Generation X [22]. Barbuto et al. conducted a study in the U.S. with rural workers and found that intrinsic motivators had a significantly greater impact on motivation compared to the other sub-dimensions [23]. It can be seen from a look into the literature that motivating factors display differences between generations and in different lines of business [3,14,18,22].

Differences between generations are particularly striking between developed and developing countries due to cultural differences and variations of perception [4].

5. CONCLUSION

The mean total scores of MSI of the 3 generations were moderate in our study. The only statistically meaningful difference was the mean total motivation score between generation X and Y. The following suggestions can be done according to our findings.

To increase motivation levels among nurses, work should be carried out to support their individual and professional development; the salary policies of institutions should be reviewed; to create the means to enable nurses to make use of intrinsic motivators, administrators should support the decisions of staff, allow them to use their skills and talents, act in accordance with individual characteristics, and support and acknowledge achievement; more qualitative and quantitative research is recommended to uncover the motivators that are the outcome of generation differences among nurses.

6. LIMITATIONS

As this study is executed in only one institution the results can't be generalized to other institutions. So this may be the limitation of this study. Additionally the paucity of the studies with our study scale limited our discussion. Our study is limited to one hospital because lack of time and resources. Baby Boomer is the oldest generation among the employees. Workers in Turkey are

obliged to retire at the aged of 65, which mandatory age limit. The retirement age on request is younger than 65 years. For these reasons, the number of Baby Boomer generation workers is low. Multivariate analysis couldn't be done due to the group baby boomer being too small.

CONSENT

All authors declare that written informed consent was obtained from the nurses participated to the study, for publication of this paper and accompanying images.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

Approval to conduct the research was obtained from the Celal Bayar University Medical Faculty Local Board of Ethics and the Medical Services Directorate of İzmir Public Hospitals General Secretariat for the South.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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