



Can we degenerate generation gap?

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Abstract

The term generation gap, it is nothing but the gap between the elders and youngsters which is seen very much nowadays. It is the difference of attitudes and opinions among people of different generations, which leads to miscommunications, misunderstandings, conflicts and so on. Through this study we can find out the root causes which lead to generation gap between older and younger generation. There may be various factors involved like social, cultural, linguistic and many more which aids in widening generation gap. So, a thorough analysis of these factors will be done in this paper. Along with that, some of the most crucial remedial measures will also be discussed here which will be very much beneficial for minimising the ill effects of generation gap. As we all know if the gap between the elders and youngsters are widened then there will be more clash, conflicts among them, thus it is very much important to know how to solve problems associated with generation gap. So, this paper will try to clearly illustrate the main causes and remedial measures which may become a basis for further research in this field and surely will bring awareness and consciousness towards generation gap.

Keywords: Generation gap, older generation, younger generation, causes, remedial measures

Introduction

The Earth has been inhabited by human beings for a long period of time, and over time human beings have been subjected to various forms of changes. Every aspect of earth has embraced changes, advancement and development and humankind isn't an exception. The world has developed and so has the humankind. The advancement of science and technology has made life easier and incorporated remarkable number of changes. The Science and Technology is constantly changing and evolving, and so has the humankind along with their way of living, beliefs, behaviour etc. Owing to this, people who were born in different generations have evolved differently, who holds to their own set of ideologies, beliefs, notions etc which are different from one generation to another, for which at times there might arise difference and gap between people belonging to different generations.

The word 'Generation Gap' is a common sociological, and psychological concept which occurs in various situations including families, workplaces and society. The concept of 'Generation Gap', is one that has become part of our 'Cultural' and 'Vernacular' dictionary. The concept of 'Generation Gap' was introduced in 60s and 70s decade, which mostly gained popularity and limelight by 1960-70, as numerous articles and books highlighted the difference between younger generation and older generation. Around this time, it was observed that there exists a lot of difference in terms of religious belief, thoughts, views, values, and perception towards relationship between people who were born at different point of time. Generation gap can be understood as a concept in which there is difference and gap between the values, attitudes or behaviours between members of old generation, and younger generation. It is a very common concept which is mostly used to Refers to the state of differences of opinion between parents, and children. People belonging to different generations have been classified into various categories according to their birth rate. Different authors and researchers have differently categorized people into different generations.

Neil Howe and William Strauss, in the book *Generations: The History of America's Future*, first published in the year 1991, offered a list of dates and generation names.

- **2000–Present:** New Silent Generation or Generation Z
- **1980 to 2000:** Millennials or Generation Y
- **1965 to 1979:** Thirteeners or Generation X
- **1946 to 1964:** Baby Boomers
- **1925 to 1945:** The Silent Generation
- **1900 to 1924:** The G.I. Generation

Causes of generation gap

Age difference

Age difference between the children and parents is one of the determining factors that leads to generation gap. Parents and children, were born at different point of time for which there is impressionable difference between time they were born because of which they had different upbringing style and were part of different society for which their thinking pattern was influenced and is reasonably different for which it has been observed that people belonging to different generations exhibits different behaviours and different ideas, values, ideas etc.

Difference in educational status

The Education system has undergone various changes and evolution, the difference in educational system, and status can also lead to generation gap. Different generation have had different educational values, patterns, methods, values and philosophy for which generation gap and conflict can occur. The older generation had education which was mostly based on the philosophy of 'Spare the rod, spoil the child', but younger generation are more invested in education that is inclined and ground on principles of psychology. It can be also brought to line that physical

punishment was very common for people belonging to older generation, but now corporal punishment is considered as a criminal and punishable offense.

Difference in upbringing

Upbringing of the people belonging to different generation differs from each other. Parenting style is a common ground that leads to generation gap; parenting styles have evolved over time with change of time. It can be seen that the older generation were inclined more towards a rigid parenting, where there was comparatively gap between the children and parents as Parents were highly authoritative and dominating over their children providing little space for emotional regulation and acceptance while with time parents are now accepting more liberal styles of parenting where they are trying to befriend their children this has led to a lot of changes and has caused difference between generation owing to difference in thoughts, values and perspective towards life differ which can essentially create a gap.

Use of technology

One of the major factor contributing towards generation gap is use of technology, it can be seen that with globalisation and rapid development in the field of science and technology the technology has also changed very rapidly, earlier it can be seen that older generation had very limited access to technology they had telephones that were land phones, PCO, typewriters, radio etc while with passing years the technology has evolved the newer the generations are getting more they are getting exposed to newer technologies which the older generation remain foreign to newer technologies such as smart phones, drone cameras, various apps, social media, modified old technical equipment, AI etc which essentially enhanced the gap between generations.

Linguistic differences

Linguistic differences have major contribution in widening the gap between generations. People belonging to different generations at times remain unacquainted with various words, linguistic terms and jargons used in the conversation. When people don't understand what is being communicated, they find it difficult to be part of the conversation which makes people from different generation distant as they fail to comprehend what the other person is saying which often give rise to misunderstanding. When new generation communicate with older generation using short languages such as 'YOLO', 'LOL', 'BRB' etc which cannot be essentially comprehended by the older generations it creates a gap between them.

Lack of communication

Communication and interaction are the key to maintaining relationship but with evolving time and demands of society the humankind barely have time for each other for which interaction and communication between people of different generations are decreasing very rapidly leading to increase in gap between people from different generation.

Comparison

One of the major causes of generation gap is comparison between the generations. Comparing the lifestyle, values, Thoughts, Beliefs if one generation with another can very negatively broaden the gap between generations leading to distress, conflict, and miscommunication between people of different generation which ultimately leads to generation gap.

Unrealistic expectations

One of another cause that is considered important in contributing towards generation gap is unrealistic expectation by both older and newer generation. Often, people of older generation hold unrealistic expectation and wishes that they will fulfil wishes and desires they hold while the newer generation expects that the older generations will blend in and try to understand them better this often leads to generating a gap between generation of people belonging to different generations.

Additionally, it can also be mentioned that there are some other causes of generation gap which includes globalisation, social expectation, increasing mobility in the society, economic development, lack of tolerance etc.

Remedial measures

There are various common factors that mostly lead to generation gap, mostly due to difference in values, and perspective of different generation. Although generation cannot be completely removed, but to a great extent it can be curbed by using various measures, which are clearly mentioned below:

Communication

Communication is one of the remedial measures to curb generation gap. It should be ensured that people of two generation young and old should have open and respectful conversation where both the generations are provided a free space to communicate, express their thoughts, views, opinions without being interrupted and judged, so, both the generation should indulge in open and respectful conversation.

Empathy

Empathy is an important attribute that every person should possess and try to cultivate. It is the ability to be able to see from the viewpoint of another person or what the person is feeling. Both generations need to put themselves on a point, where they can see, understand, and become aware about each other, their experience of growing up, the lifestyles they have and the world they live in.

Navigating a common ground

Navigating a commonly shared ideas, values, thoughts from both the generation can be an effective way to bridge the gap between generation as they can find a common ground to rest on and start conversation to build a better understanding and connection.

Technical assistance

One of the major causes of generation gap is use of technology, especially it can be seen that the older generations find it difficult to adjust to adjust with new technical equipment so, the new generations must be patient, and provide technical assistance to make them comfortable with new technologies.

Respecting privacy

Different generations have different levels of comfort in sharing personal values, information, thoughts and ideas with each so, the boundary and privacy should due be respected by both the side. Both the generations should come as close as possible but make sure that their boundaries should be respected and isn't unnecessarily crossed.

Conclusion

Time has changed, and it has subjected to human beings and their life to many changes. For example, the way of communication has changed a lot. Previously people preferred to communicate face-to-face, meet and greet and even post letters to each other but with the coming of better technologies the communication mode to great extent has shifted to from conventional to newer way such as communication through phone calls, through social media and text messages. Thus, generation gap is an abstract concept that continues to exist in the society with development and change of time. There are various factors that fuels generation gap though it cannot be removed completely but the gap can between generations can be curbed, As the world is evolving very rapidly, people are getting busier with their life with little time for themselves as well for the rest, yet being empathetic and tolerant enough to understand has become a necessity. People belonging to different generation led their life based on the need and demands of the time, so people of different generations are bound to be different from each other so, despite of the differences they should be respectful and understanding towards one-another.

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