

Research Article:

Smooth Intergenerational Relationship Building Among Filipino Teachers: A Grounded Theory

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ABSTRACT

The intergenerational diversity of teachers in the school community offers rich resources for professional learning and development. Nonetheless, intergenerational (IG) relationship is essential for teachers to access these social resources. Hence, through a systematic grounded theory design, this study looked into the IG relationship building process among teachers in the Philippine multigenerational basic education schools, based on a contextualized understanding of the teachers' intergenerational diversity in terms of their age, period, cohort, and professional experiences. Smooth IG Relationship Building Theory eventually emerged from the grounded data that were gathered from 20 multigenerational Filipino teachers. This grounded theory offers five theoretical propositions: (1) Multigenerational teacher community offers a wide range of resources for professional and personal development of teachers, and access to these resources is unlocked by smooth IG relationships; (2) Smooth IG relationships are hindered by generational gaps, seniority, and isolating structures and programs of the schools; (3) IG values are important to ensure that smooth IG relations do not have underlying tensions beyond the surface interactions; (4) The quality of opportunities and strategies influence the nature of relationships that could develop among colleagues; and (5) Development of smooth IG relationships among colleagues is influenced by the school culture, Filipino social relations, gender differences and IG diversity.

Keywords: Filipino teachers, professional development, multigenerational, Community of Practice

Received: 6 February 2022; **Accepted:** 3 January 2023; **Published:** 31 July 2023

To cite this article: Bongco, R. T., & Ancho, I. V. (2023). Smooth intergenerational relationship building among Filipino teachers: A grounded theory. *Asia Pacific Journal of Educators and Education*, 38(1), 97–117. <https://doi.org/10.21315/apjee2023.38.1.6>

INTRODUCTION

The world is now witnessing the coexistence of multiple generations which are extremely diverse due to the overlapping and interacting effects of age, period and cohort (Pew Research Centre, 2010). Differences were observed in their patterns of behaviours, attitudes, expectations, habits, motivational mechanisms, styles of working, learning and value priorities (Čič & Žižek, 2017; Polat & Kazak, 2015). Further, in the workplace setting, another aspect that complicates this intergenerational (IG) diversity are the wealth or length of experiences of the individuals (Novotný & Brücknerová, 2014; Polat & Kazak, 2015). These could lead to some tensions (Tay, 2011) unless individuals learn how to comprehend and accept such differences. Hence, understanding of generations has become vital in process of understanding one another (McCrinkle, 2014).

Nonetheless, diversity brings blessings, along with the said challenges (Arifin & Hermino, 2017). For instance, the multigenerational teacher community offers a wide range of resources that could support teachers' professional development. However, teachers could only access these social resources through interactions with colleagues, which in turn, is facilitated by their social relationships (Geeraerts et al., 2017).

This important role of relationships for the teachers to connect with social resources available in the multigenerational teacher community highlights the value of understanding of IG relationship building among colleagues. As such, support must be provided in order to maximise these valuable resources inside the school which are just waiting to be tapped through IG interactions and relationships. Nonetheless, such initiatives and programs must be anchored on a contextualised understanding of Filipino generations that takes into consideration the local significant events, rather than overgeneralised findings of foreign generations. Otherwise, there is a risk of developing programs that do not really address the needs of the local multigenerational teacher communities.

To date, however, many of the local IG studies that were reviewed focus on the description of cohorts (particularly the Millennials). Further, many of the said studies readily embrace the western categories even though many of the significant events used in these categories may or may not be significant in the local context.

Hence, this study investigated the process of building intergenerational relationships (IGR) among multigenerational teachers in the Philippine basic education schools, through a systematic grounded theory design. This study aims to articulate the process of IG building among Filipino teachers that is truly anchored on their contextualised IG diversity. Consequently, this shall provide a baseline data for schools and the larger basic education sector in designing programs and policies that will support the process of IGR building which is instrumental to their access to a wide range of professional development resources.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Intergenerational (IG) diversity pertains to the differences in styles, values, and perspectives of individuals as a function of their generations. IG could be seen in different ways. Ota et al. (2007) and Naar (2019) looked at IG diversity in terms of the individuals' life cycle or age. More IG studies focused on the cohort differences which is anchored on the peoples' differences as a result of the significant events during the most impressionable years of their lives. Some of the studies that employed these categorisations were those of Boysen et al. (2016) and Čič and Žižek (2017). Meanwhile, workplace generations are typically seen in terms of the length or wealth of experiences (Novotný & Brücknerová, 2014; Polat & Kazak, 2015).

However, IG diversity could also be seen as a result of the interaction of these effects. For instance, in the generational diagonal of Howe and Strauss (2007), they emphasised the interaction of age, cohort and era. Similarly, the APC analysis looks at IG diversity as the result of the interacting and overlapping effects of age, period and cohort (Pew Research Centre, 2010; 2015).

The differences of generations in terms of their patterns of behaviours, attitudes, expectations, habits, value priorities, styles of working, learning and motivational mechanisms (Čič & Žižek, 2017; Polat & Kazak, 2015) could lead to some clashes, and thus complicate building of IG relationships. However, the importance of IG relationships in accessing the rich IG resources demands that initiatives must be made to support this IGR building process.

Nonetheless, all these initiatives and programmes must anchored on a contextualised understanding of IG diversity, especially since overgeneralisation remains to be a threat. Hence, caution must be taken because while generational segmentation could be useful, it has to be recognised that variety still exists within generations (McCrindle, 2014). One aspect that brings about varieties within the generations is culture, which has a large impact on how individuals view themselves (Macapagal et al., 2013). In fact, other countries such as Malaysia, the Netherlands and China had identified their own generations (Ting et al., 2018; Hechanova, 2017).

In the case of the Philippines, this would be addressed by the growing interest in IG diversity in local studies. However, it had been observed that many of the local studies that were reviewed tend to focus only on describing the Millennials. For instance, Alcasid et al. (2017) described Millennials in terms of their career, life style and relationships. Lituañas (2017) described them in terms of their spiritual identity. Meanwhile, Tengco-Pacquing et al. (2019) described the same cohort in terms of buying behaviours. Delelis et al. (2018) included the Generation X but only to compare them with the Millennials particularly in terms of their e-gadget usage. Not much is known about the other local cohorts.

Further, it could be observed that local studies readily embraced the mainstream cohort categories of Millennials, Generation X (GenX) and Baby Boomers which were identified based on foreign contexts. Not much consideration is given to the fact that the significant events that were used to identify these cohort labels may not be as significant in the Philippines as it was in the west. For instance, many of the GenX's characteristics were based on the significance of high divorce rate during their impressionable years. This led to the GenX's lack of trust to institutions, and desire for work-life balance to ensure that their kids would have a better upbringing than they had (Boysen et al., 2016; CBS, 2017; Hendryx, 2008). Nonetheless, in the absence of divorce legislation in the Philippines and presence of strong family values (Macapagal et al., 2013), it may be inappropriate to assume that Filipinos born from 1965–1980s share the same characteristics displayed by western GenXers. In fact, in a very recent paper of Salvosa and Hechanova (2020) (published after the completion of this study), there are only two generations in the Philippine workforce, and these are the political and the technological generations. Nonetheless, clear cut-off years are still unclear. Further, none of the local studies that were reviewed employed these categories yet. Hence, it could be said that in many of the reviewed research, Filipino generational cohorts are silenced or unheard. Without understanding their nature, it would be difficult to design a contextualised IG inclusive programmes for Filipino teachers.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study was anchored on three central concepts: (a) intergenerational diversity, (b) school culture, and (c) Filipino social relations. Each of these concepts shall be discussed in detail in the succeeding paragraphs.

Intergenerational Diversity

Integrative literature review of Bongco and Ancho on IG diversity studies in the workplace shows that there are multiple conceptualisations for generations. Generation could be conceptualised in terms of age, cohort or experience. There are also studies that look at IG diversity as the result of the interaction and overlap in various effects. Pew Research Centre (2010; 2015), sees IG diversity as the result of the overlapping and interacting effects of life cycle, cohort and period. However, generations in the workplace setting reveals another effect that influences IG diversity which is the professional experience (Brücknerová & Novotný, 2017). Hence, in this study, IG diversity among the participants will be seen from the lens of the APCE model of Bongco and Ancho which offers a lens in scrutinizing IG diversity as a result of the interacting and overlapping effects if age or life cycle, period, cohort and professional experience.

Age pertains to an individual's position in the life cycle (18–35 years old as young adult, 36–55 years old as middle-aged, and 56 and older as older adult). Cohort refers to groups of individuals who share an identity due to the historical timing of their birth (Millennials, GenX, Baby Boomers). This shared identity is brought about by the significant events

particularly during the impressionable years of their lives. Mainstream cohorts were used tentatively for this study in spite of their foreign roots because no local cohorts were found that would provide the required cut-offs for categorisation in this study. Further, it was also considered that many of the local studies employed this categorisation which would be vital for the researchers to make meaningful discussions of the findings. These cohort categories were however, contextualised by taking into consideration some local significant events (Bell Trade Act, interest in national identity, and first commercial TV station for the Baby Boomers; Martial Law and People Power Revolution for the GenX; and democracy after dictatorship for the Millennials).

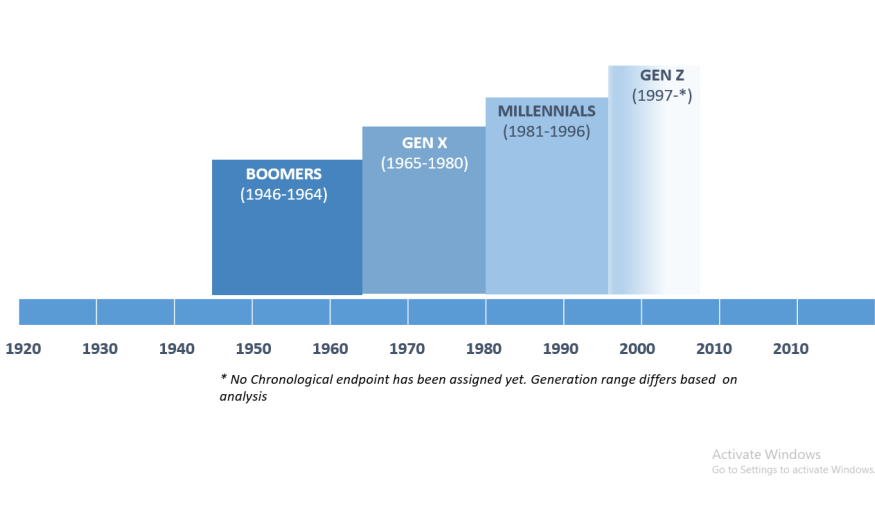


Figure 1. Teachers’ generation based on cohort categories

Meanwhile, period pertains to the relevant social, political, economic, medical, scientific, and technological events that make a lasting effect to all generations (Pew Research Centre, 2010, Alwin & McCammon, 2003). In this study, period effects that were considered are the K to 12 Education, Child Protection Policies, and ICT Developments (particularly mobile technology and Social Networking Sites).

Finally, professional experience pertains to the length (Novotný & Brücknerová, 2014) or wealth of work experience of the teacher. However, for this particular study, experience pertains to the “wealth” of professional experience through self-classification (Brücknerová & Novotný, 2017) (beginning, experienced, expert) (Novotný & Brücknerová, 2014; Polat & Kazak, 2015).

Filipino Social Relations

Social relationships are vital means to get connected with the sources for learning (Geeraerts et al., 2017). This is especially true in learning in the digital era when *'know-where'* could supplement *'know-what'* and *'know-how'* (Siemens, 2005). Hence, social relationships could be instrumental for teachers to learn from their multigenerational colleagues in multidirectional ways (Tempest, 2003).

This study shall focus specifically on the Filipino context where social relationships is quite important, especially in a collectivist society where the concept of “self” is defined in terms of relations. Hence, being part of a collective such as workgroup is part of the norm. In fact, one of the unique conceptualisations of Filipino values is *kapwa* or shared identity which was introduced by Enriquez (1978; 1992). The common English translation of “others” which is the opposite of “self” does not exactly capture the idea of *kapwa* which pertains to a shared identity or “self with others” (Macapagal et al., 2013).

School Culture

Qualitative Research is an interpretive inquiry that gives a holistic view of an issue under study (Creswell, 2007). Hence, it must ensure that the meanings of participants will be interpreted within their context by identifying factors that affect their experiences. As such, this study took into consideration the distinct culture of each school in analysing of the teachers' IG relationships.

School culture pertains to the beliefs, norms, attitudes, relations and rules (both written and unwritten) which shape and affect the school's operations (Yeboah, 2015). Meanwhile, Burnham (2007) sees school culture as the personality of the school (Yusof et al., 2016). In this study, understanding of each school's personality was developed, from the lens of Edgar Henry Schein's model of organisational culture. This model identifies three levels of culture based on the degree from which they are visible: (1) artifacts, (2) values and norms, and (3) assumptions (Hattangadi, 2017).

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research design, specifically, the systematic grounded theory design of Strauss and Corbin (Creswell, 2007). This is because the intention of the study is to articulate a theory that would explain the process of IGR building among multigenerational Filipino teachers. The systematic approach and the philosophical paradigm of the design enabled the researchers to bracket their own biases and allow the realities of the participants to build the theory.

Selection of Participants

Twenty participants were selected for this study. Selection was done in two-phases and recruitment was conducted primarily, through the social network to protect the participants' anonymity. In phase one of selection, multigenerational basic education schools were identified using the inclusion criteria. The schools must be a:

1. Public or private basic education institution in the Central Luzon region.
2. Have at least three generations of teachers in terms of life cycle.
3. Have male and female representative for each generation.

The latter criteria was set to capture the gender differences in the participants' social relationship dynamics. However, due to the high level of feminisation of the teaching profession in the Philippines (Bongco & Abenes, 2019), the search for schools led the researchers to schools with big faculty population. Selected schools are:

1. School A which is a public central elementary school.
2. School B which is a national high school.
3. School C which is a private college with basic education department.

Second phase of selection employed the recruitment of at least one male and female teacher participants for each of the three generations according to life cycle. Participants should be a Filipino teacher who had signed up for a Facebook account. The latter criterion was included in consideration of the period effect that is considered in the study which is the ICT developments in terms of mobile technology and SNS.

Table 1 shows the summary of participants. It could be seen that both sexes were represented in the sample. All young adult participants fall under the Millennial cut-off, with age ranging from 23–31 years. Similarly, all middle-aged fall within the GenX cut off with age ranging from 37–54 years, and older adults under Baby Boomer cut off with age ranging from 59–73 years (at the time of the study).

Table 1. Summary of participants per school in terms of age and sex

School	Young adult		Middle-aged		Older adult	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
A	1	2	2	1	1	1
B	1	1	1	1	1	1
C	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total	3	4	4	3	3	3

Data Collection

Data were gathered through semi-structured individual interviews and social media analysis through Facebook. Instruments used for both of these procedures were subjected to a two-phase validation including expert validation and pilot testing. Expert validation was employed to check on the instruments' relevance to the research questions. Meanwhile, pilot testing was conducted to check the tools' level of difficulty, clarity and facilitation requirements.

Semi-structured individual interviews lasted for an average of 41 minutes and 9 seconds. Below are some of sample questions that were asked during the interviews.

1. How does your relationship with your colleagues help you professionally?
2. What are the things or circumstances that enable and support your positive relationships with your multigenerational colleagues?

Further to gather evidence on the actual interactions among multigenerational colleagues without disrupting their naturalistic setting while protecting their anonymity, a social media analysis was conducted. This procedure was selected in consideration of the period effect that was identified in the study which is ICT developments. Further, existing researches suggest that social media promotes intergenerational communications (Tamme & Siibak, 2012; Nef et al., 2013; Napoli, 2014). This was done specifically using Facebook which is the world's top social networking site (Kallas, 2018).

Facebook analysis was conducted for a month (between June to December 2019). The participants were asked to identify the specific month that they wish to be analyzed. Analysis of the participants' IG interactions on Facebook were limited to those which are publicly visible in their timeline such as friend list, public posts, tags and shares, comments, and reactions.

Validation of Data

Trustworthiness is essential in good qualitative research (Birt et al., 2016). Hence, member checking was chosen as a strategy to validate the data from the lens of the participants. Member checking, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985) is a crucial technique to establish the research's credibility (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

Member checking in the study was done specifically by returning the verbatim transcript (encoded in Filipino language) to give the participants the chance to check them. The teacher participants were also given the chance to add, delete and revise some entries in the interview transcript before they were subjected to analysis.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was done on the raw data encoded verbatim (Filipino). Translation of the statements into English was reserved for writing the final write-up to reduce the chances of losing some of the meanings in the process of translation. This is because studies have already established the IG differences in communication (White et al., 2017; Devlin, 2018). Further, IG differences in language had also been observed in the participants' choice of words, tone and structures.

Data analysis was done simultaneously with data gathering in order to facilitate theoretical sampling. This enabled gathering of further data until saturation is achieved (Creswell, 2007). Analysis was done in three phases. Open coding was done through a process of key point coding and emerged 92 initial codes (eg. empathy, getting along, image switching).

During the second cycle coding, initial codes were categorised based on their similarities which yield 20 codes (e.g. personal interaction, character, recognition). Smooth relationship was identified as the core category because it is logically related to other major categories, observed frequently in the data, and is abstract enough to be related to other relevant studies.

Third level analysis generated five major themes: (1) nature of relationships, (2) opportunities, (3) challenges, (4) strategies, and (5) effects. Finally, with the aid of the analytic memoing, a grounded theory was articulated from the data. Results were presented both in graphic and narrative forms.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study aimed to articulate a grounded theory that would explain the IG relationship building process among multigenerational teachers in basic education schools in the Philippines. Analysis of data led to the development of the Smooth IG Relationship Building Theory which process is influenced by four major factors and puts forth five theoretical propositions.

Figure 1 illustrates how smooth IG relationships among multigenerational colleagues develop and lead to the IG resources for personal and professional development. The major influences, relationship development process, and its theoretical propositions shall be discussed in the succeeding paragraphs.

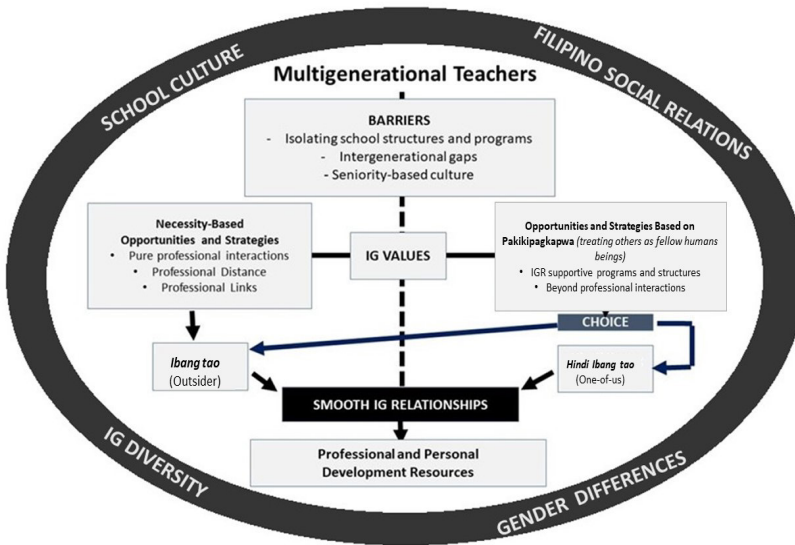


Figure 2. Smooth IG Relationship Building Theory

Smooth IG Relationship Building Theory: Four Major Influences

The whole process of IG relationship building among multigenerational basic education teachers in the Philippines is influenced by four major factors. These are the school culture, Filipino social relations, gender differences, and IG diversity.

School culture

The dynamics of building smooth relationship among multigenerational teachers is affected by the personality of the school or its culture. The school culture pertains to the beliefs, norms, relationships, and rules (whether written or unwritten) which shapes the functioning of that school (Yeboah, 2015).

Researchers have seen how differences in school culture affected building of IG relations. For instance, the artifacts such as the school building architecture, and room assignments determine the opportunities of teachers to interact with their multigenerational colleagues. In School A, which does not have any faculty office, teachers have less chances of interacting with colleagues during break times, as compared to Schools B and C which have designated faculty offices. Further, the school practices of grouping teachers according to grade level (School A) and Subject Departments (School B) determines the group with which the teachers are most likely to develop a closer bond. These are critical in IGR building because as Macapagal et al. (2013) emphasised one important factor in developing friendships

among Filipinos is proximity which determines the frequency of teachers' encounter with multigenerational colleagues.

Differences in less concrete manifestations of culture such as values and assumptions also affect the process of teachers' IG relationship building. For instance, the assumption and value on *pakikisama* (getting along) and high level of seniority in Schools A and C makes integration to the existing school culture, an important part of IG relationship building. This is especially true in School C (private school) which has a high turn-over rate. On the other hand, IG diversity appears to be one of the assumptions in the culture of School B. Because of this, the goal of IG relationship building in the said institution is not just integration of the young with the existing culture, but the evolving of the culture to accommodate diversity albeit reluctantly. This is probably due to the increasing number of younger teachers who have tenured status.

Filipino social relations

Some unique aspects of Filipino social relations have also shown significant influence on the process of building smooth IG relationships among teachers. The specific aspects of Filipino social interactions which had been evident in the teachers' IG relationship building are listed in the succeeding paragraphs.

First, teachers believe that smooth IG relationship with their colleagues serve a number of purposes. First, teachers basically strive for smooth relationships for a very practical reason that good relationship with colleagues is most likely to make work a lot easier for them as some tasks would require them to work together. Hence, they work at achieving smooth IG relationship with colleagues in spite of their personal feelings towards them (Ma'am Dina, middle-aged). Further, teachers value smooth IGR because of the sense of belongingness that it gives to them (Ma'am Lovely, young adult; Sir Jong, middle-aged). Hence, as a collectivist society (Yacat, 2017), building smooth IGR among Filipino teachers is almost instinctive.

Second, the study also shows how the value of *pakikisama* (getting along with others) is esteemed greatly by the Filipino teachers. They seem to equate it with good character, emphasizing that a teacher who gets along well with colleagues is much better than a competent one (Ma'am Angel, older adult; Ma'am Heart, middle-aged; Ma'am Capricorn, older adult). This is an evidence how Filipino teachers emphasise the accommodative surface value of *pakikisama* which is seen as synonymous to *magandang ugali* or character. It is consistent with discussion of Macapagal et al. (2013) that in the Philippine society, those who conform are seen as "good" and those who do not conform are seen negatively as *walang pakikisama* or rebels.

Third, *pakikiramdam* (shared inner perception) is a vital skill in the process of IG relationship building because Filipino teachers usually resort to indirect or non-verbal communication

strategies. This skills is the active awareness of other people's thoughts, feelings and actions (Enriquez, 1990, as cite by Macapagal et al., 2013). *Pakikiramdam* is useful in sensing underlying tensions (Sir P, young adult) and adopting appropriate strategies (Sir Dalsi; Ma'am Dina, middle-aged). In light of the non-direct communication strategies common in the Filipino society (Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000; Macapagal et al., 2013), this is important for teachers to effectively relate with their multigenerational colleagues.

Finally, confrontative surface values are indeed part of the Filipino culture (Macapagal et al., 2013). However, findings show that this option is taken only when absolutely necessary. This is because many teachers are wary that confrontative actions could harm their *pakikisama* (getting along) with their multigenerational colleagues.

Gender differences

Gender had also impacted the building of smooth IG relationship among Filipino teachers. It had been observed that male teachers are less likely to engage in self-disclosure. Hence, they tend to develop a more distant professional relationship with male and female colleagues, as compared to the female teachers. According to Dionisio (1994), this could be due to the gender upbringing of the Filipino males who were raised to assume that their goal in life is self-fulfillment rather than relationships. Further, Dr. Berger believes that this is due to the social expectations that males should be independent (Winerman, 2005).

Interaction between gender and generation had been observed in the study. First, young adult and beginning male teachers are less likely to be distant as compared to their older and more experienced male counterparts. This could be because at young adulthood, it is a person's goal to develop a wide range of interpersonal relationships (Hutchison et al., 2016). Another factor could be their experienced-based generation requires them to connect with the more experienced colleagues for better integration in the existing school culture (Löfgren et al., 2013). Finally, this could also be attributed to the increased awareness on gender equality which characterise the impressionable years of their lives. These include the adoption of gender equality in the Millennium Development Goals (2000) and the Sustainable Development Goals (2015), as well as the local initiative of passing the Executive Order No. 273 series of 1995 which approves and adopts the Philippine Plan for Gender Responsive Development.

Further, while male teachers across generations are more of the receivers of initiatives in in the process, they tend to shift into a more active role as initiators in the IG relationship building once they become expert and older adult teachers. This could be an influence of their perceived role as senior teachers who need to help the younger teachers become more integrated with the school culture (Löfgren et al., 2013). Life cycle effect could also be one of the reasons as individuals are preparing to deal with the crisis of integrity versus despair at the latter part of their lives as expounded in the Theory of Psychosocial Development by Erikson (McLeod, 2018).

IG diversity

Finally, the four layers of IG diversity also exerted influence on the process of IG relationship building. First, life cycle generation affects IG relationship building in terms of the challenges, opportunities and strategies. For instance, the younger adult teachers who are single and older adults whose kids are already grown up have more chances to engage in personal interactions with multigenerational colleagues (Ma'am Charity, young adult; Sir Mark, middle-aged; Ma'am Capricorn, older adult). Further, it also affects their roles in the process. It had been observed that middle-aged teachers who serve as the link between the two generations play a very critical role in the process (Ma'am Heart, middle-aged; Sir Jong, middle-aged). It is easiest and most common for all generations to approach them for concerns as compared to the other generations. This could be because of middle-aged teachers' similarities with the older and younger generations due to the fuzzy edges of the generations caused by the transitional events (Rosow, 1978, as cited by Alwin & McCammon, 2003). Further, at this age, individuals tend to struggle to feel useful by trying to make things that are likely to outlast them such as mentoring colleagues (McLeod, 2018). Finally, life cycle generation also affects their choice of IG building strategies. For instance, middle-aged and older teachers are more likely to initiate dialogues and serve as mediators in conflicts.

In terms of experience-based generation, its effect had been observed in the challenges that they are confronted with, opportunities and choice of strategies. First, experiences help develop important values in IG relationship building such as empathy (Ma'am Heart, middle aged). However, it also places them at a certain level in the hierarchy of school seniority where older colleagues are expected to be entitled to some privileges as a sign of respect. For instance, less experienced colleagues are expected to give way for them during assignment of tasks (Sir Leo, older adult; Ma'am Dina, Sir Jong, middle-aged). The older and more experienced teachers could also be exempted from monitoring and other tasks (Ma'am Capricorn, older adult; Sir Jong, middle-aged). Further, less experienced teachers feel that it is required of them whether or not the more experienced colleagues demand these privileges or not. This is indicative of the high respect obligation among Filipinos discussed by Ota and colleagues (2007) although their study focused primarily on the age-based generation.

Meanwhile, the period effect that appears to have the strongest influence in the IG building process of teachers is the ubiquity of the use of social media as part of the ICT developments. This platforms provides a bridge for teachers to find ways to connect with each other in spite of the structural limitations (spaces, organization and time). As Macapagal et al., (2013) have suggested, proximity is vital in friendship building. However, these social encounters do not necessarily need to be face to face. This is extremely true in the present age where social media plays a crucial role to foster IG communications (Napoli, 2014). Further, social medial also provides them another platform to air their concerns regarding IG relationships, making it available to a more general audience and open to more varied interpretations. Because all contents posted online share the qualities

of persistence, replicability, scalability, and searchability the posts become available to a wide range of audiences who could make different interpretations and could lead to context collapse (Couros & Hildebrandt, 2015).

Finally, the study shows that cohort generations influence IG relationship building although no marked differences had been observed between the GenX and Baby Boomers. This is consistent with a very recent publication of Salvosa and Hechanova (2020) that there are only two generations in the Philippine workforce: the technology and the political generations. This could be because GenX and Baby Boomer cohorts were framed using the western milestones which are not applicable to the Philippine context. It has to be recognised that Filipinos are characterised by a very strong family value (Bongco & Abenes, 2019, Macapagal et al., 2013). This value appears to nullify some of the important distinguishing characteristics of these two cohorts which were defined by competitiveness and focus on work of the Boomers (Boysen et al., 2016) that led to high divorce rates and children who are distrustful of institutions (CBS, 2017).

Nonetheless cohort differences had great influence in the IG development process. Unlike age and experience-based generations, it is more challenging for generations to understand diversity from this level because this is not something that they would experience or expect to experience themselves. Hence, this is often the cause of intergenerational misunderstandings. Older cohort express frustrations that the younger cohort of teachers do not exhibit the same behaviours that they did when they were young and new teachers (Sir Paul, older adult). They missed the fact that these teachers are different because while they shared the same life cycle and experience effects, they had different period and cohort effects. Further, Millennials are also described as bolder and more confident at expressing themselves (Sir Paul, Ma'am Capricorn, older adult). However, since giving way to the older colleagues are seen as a sign of respect, Millennials' confidence at expressing themselves especially in IG relationship conflicts could be perceived negatively. This is consistent with the (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010), which indicated that younger generations' communication style are typically misunderstood as disrespectful. Sledge (2016), however, suggested that this could be the result of the helicopter parenting. Millennials' parents style of hovering over their kids led to their familiarity with the authority figures. Further, it has to be recognised that the Millennials' impressionable years emphasized critical thinking and communication skills (Jerald, 2009; Cortez, 2016). It is significant to note however, that cohorts' expertise in different aspects contribute richly in IG learning (IGL) such as technology and innovations (Millennials) and relationship with parents and tested pedagogies (older cohorts). This supports the reciprocal nature of IGL (Tempest, 2003).

Smooth IG Relationship Building Theory: Processes

Figure 2 shows how smooth IG relationship is built in the Filipino basic education school. A multi-generational teacher community is a rich resource that supports teachers' personal and professional development. However, accessing such resources could be hindered by barriers such as intergenerational gaps, seniority-based culture, and isolating school structures

and programmes. Nonetheless, these barriers could be overcome if the desirable IG values are in place to support the development of the IG relation building process. These values are empathy, sensitivity, open and welcome mindset, sharing and respect. Nonetheless, the nature of opportunities and type of strategies adopted by the teachers influence the depth of relationship that may be built with their multigenerational colleagues. If teachers are presented only with necessity-based opportunities and they opt for necessity-based strategies, they are likely to develop a relationship with colleagues as outsider (*ibang-tao*). Hence, the nature of interactions with them are limited to *pakikitungo* (transaction with), *pakikisalamuha* (interaction), *pakikilabok* (participating), *pakikibagay* (conformity), and *pakikisama* (going along with). On the other hand, if the teachers are presented with IGR opportunities based on *pakikipagkapwa* (treating people as human beings), which goes beyond professional interactions, they have the chance to develop a closer bond as *hindi ibang-tao* (one-of-us). This gives them chances to engage in all levels of social interactions including *pakikipagpalagayang-loob* (being-in-rapport with) and *pakikisangkot* (getting involved with). Nonetheless, teachers' choice of strategies and personal decisions would ultimately decide the depth of relationship that could be built. This choice, however, is not available for those who are only presented and opted for with necessity-based opportunities and strategies. It could be seen, therefore that the process of IG relationship building among Filipino teachers are affected by factors which are external and internal to the teachers.

However, regardless of the depth of relationship, these values, along with opportunities and strategies could develop smooth IG relationship among multigenerational colleagues. While this covers a while range of surface level interactions from civility to unity exhibited by both *ibang tao* (outsider) and *hindi ibang tao* (one-of-us), the assumption in this theory is that the smooth relationship goes beyond the surface of these interactions. It covers the underlying intention for IG relationship building which is characterised by respect.

Ultimately, this smooth IG relationship shall serve to unlock a wide range of resources for multigenerational teachers' professional development including learning, work collaboration, and support. This also include resources of expressive nature such as expressive content such as physiological, emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being, personal development, and personal connections. Deeper personal connections, however is only available for those teachers who choose to develop a deeper smooth IG relationship with colleagues.

Nonetheless, whether or not teachers will access these resources will be their own choice. This runs parallel with the illustration of Siemens (2005) in the Connectivist Learning Theory emphasising the importance of the pipe to access to the sources of learning. Whether or not the teacher will benefit from the available resources, however depends on his/her personal decision to turn on the valve.

Smooth IG Relationship Building Theory: Theoretical Propositions

This grounded theory puts forth the following theoretical proposition:

1. Multigenerational teacher community offers a wide range of resources for professional and personal development of teachers, and access to these resources is unlocked by smooth IG relationships.
2. Smooth IG relationships are hindered by generational gaps, seniority and isolating structures and programmes of the schools.
3. IG values are important to ensure that smooth IG relations do not have underlying tensions beyond the surface interactions.
4. The quality of opportunities and strategies influence the nature of relationships that could develop among colleagues.
5. Development of smooth IG relationships among colleagues is influenced by the school culture, Filipino social relations, gender differences and IG diversity.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Teachers are bombarded by a number of global and local changes. These changes present both challenges, as well as opportunities. Intergenerational diversity in schools is one of such changes. It present challenges in the form of IG conflicts, gaps and seniority. However, it could not be denied that the same IG diversity provides rich resources for teachers' personal and professional development, thus providing cheaper, nearer and more context-based professional development opportunities for multigenerational teachers. This emphasises effective ways by which multigenerational teachers in the same community could learn from each other in multidirectional ways so that every generation has the chance to contribute and to grow at the same time. Nonetheless, maximising these rich IG resources are only possible with a smooth IG relationship among the multigenerational teachers. Regardless of the depth of relationship, teachers who possess IG values, presented with opportunities, and take on necessary strategies could tap on these resources through smooth IG relationship that is founded on mutual respect to a fellow human being and professional.

It is evident, however that the process is facilitated by a lot of factors. Some of these factors are internal to the teachers such as the choice of strategies and interaction level with colleagues. There are, however, some aspects of the IG relationship building process which are external to the teachers such as the school structure and programmes and overall culture. For instance, the organization of teachers into groups (per grade level or specialisation), availability of common rooms, class programme scheduling, provision of opportunities to work together, and other supportive programmes are outside the teachers' control. Nonetheless, it is quite evident that the lack of proximity poses a challenge in building smooth IG relationships. Teachers indeed, find ways to interact with colleagues if pushed

by necessity or desire to establish bond through other means such as the online social media platforms. However, with Filipino social communications being highly characterised by indirect forms of communication which makes *pakikiramdam* (shared inner perception) crucial in Filipino IG communications, this is could lead to some miscommunications.

Schools have different contexts, and structures. Further, most of the time, the generational demography of the faculty is challenging to manage, especially in private schools where turn-over rate is high. Nonetheless, schools could design programs that would assist teachers to bridge the physical distance created by the school structures and programs through more intentional programs and initiatives. These could include programs that would develop the IG values of respect, empathy, sharing, and open-mindedness. The school could also take more conscious effort in providing common space or time for teachers through the allotment of faculty rooms and common breaks. Finally, it is vital for the schools to design opportunities for multigenerational teachers to work together to correct their possible prejudices and explore appropriate strategies to relate with their multigenerational colleagues, and hence maximise the resources just waiting to be tapped.

Further, this study also recommends the exploration of developing a Community of Practice (CoP) as a CPD programme for teachers. This provides a cheaper and more contextualised opportunities for teachers to engage in CPD that is multidirectional. Nonetheless, two important issues need to be addressed for an effective “CoP as CPD Programme.” These issues are: (1) IGR leaves some members in the periphery; and (2) Seniority must be challenged to ensure generationally inclusive systems and multi-directionality in the negotiation of knowledge.

Finally, as new generations of teachers join the workforce, it is important for pre-service teacher education institutions to prepare the teachers to this IG reality in the workplace. This paper also recommends that for new teachers to build smooth IG relationship with their multigenerational colleagues, the TEI could capacitate the pre-service teachers with the necessary IG skills (e.g., *pakikiramdam* or shared inner perception) and values.

LIMITATIONS

This theory that was developed to explain the Intergenerational relationship building process among Filipino teachers was grounded on the data collected from basic education schools in the Central Luzon region. As a culturally diverse country, this paper recognises that the different cultures in the other region of the country affects their IG building processes.

Specifically, this study covered only three types of basic education schools in the Philippines. Hence, this theory’s explanation of the process is contextualised only on the following types of schools: public elementary school, public secondary school and secondary school within a private college. Further, it will be observed that the schools involved in the study were

all school of big population with 60 faculty members or more. Inclusion of big schools only was not intentional to the study but a natural consequence of the researchers' attempt to ensure that both sexes will be represented in all generations across the schools. Due to the high feminisation of teaching in the Philippines, locating schools with male and female teachers for each of the three generations led the researchers to schools with big populations. Hence, findings did not capture the dynamics of IG relationship building in multigenerational schools with smaller teacher populations.

Finally, the APCE model for understanding IG diversity sets the greatest limitation to this study. The layers of differences based on the participants' age, period, cohort and experience define their actual generations. Hence, change on any of these layers are expected to affect their overall generational characteristics.

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