Generation Z: the new kids on the block

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Conflicts of interest

I have no relevant conflicts of interest to disclose
Objectives

• Differentiate characteristics of Millennial and Generation Z learners

• Discuss the impact of Gen Z students' preferences and tendencies on medical education

• Outline potential strategies for better engaging Gen Z health professions students
What is a generation?

• Group of individuals born and living in roughly the same period

• Length 15-45 years (~20 years)

• Shared experience of world events, popular culture, and technology during formative years has common influence on adult behavior:
  • Perspectives
  • Preferences
  • Expectations
  • Communication
Discussions of “generations” represent generalizations.

One generational perspective is not “right” or “wrong.”

This talk does not represent advocacy for change.
Characteristics of generations

- Reeves TC, Oh E. In: Handbook of Research on Educational Communication and Technology 2014:819-828
- Williams KC, Page RA. J Behav Studies Bus. 2011 ; 3:1-17
Major generations involved in medical education

- Traditionalists (b. ~1920-1945, emeritus faculty)

- Baby Boomers (b. ~1945-1965, senior faculty)

- Generation X (b. ~1965-1980, early-mid career faculty)

- Millennials (b. ~1980-2000, students/residents and early faculty)

- Generation Z (b. ~2000-2015?), soon-to-be medical students)
Traditionalists

- “Silent generation”
- Major world events: WWII, Great Depression, Korean War, Space Race
- Technological advances: Sputnik, color TV, polio vaccine

- Core values: Patience, loyalty, hard work
- Views on authority:
  - most senior is leader
  - rules are always to be followed
- Work ethic: “Work to live”
- Motivation: Recognition of seniority
Baby boomers

- “Me generation”
- Major world events: Vietnam, civil rights, JFK assassination, Cold War
- Technological advances: Cassette tapes, Atari
- Core values: equal rights, equal opportunity
- Views on authority:
  - Most accomplished is the leader
  - Rules are good until they conflict with desires or needs
- Work ethic: “workaholic”, career forms identity
  - “Live to work”
- Motivation: Recognition of accomplishment
Generation X

- “Latchkey generation”
- Major world events: end of Cold War, MTV, Challenger explosion
- Technological advances: Cell phones, personal computers, VCRs

- Core values: Independence, open communication, distrust of institutions
- Views on authority:
  - Leader demonstrates they can perform
  - Rules should help get the job done
- Work ethic: Independence, balance
  - “Work is a means to an end”
- Motivation: Flexibility to define own schedule/rules, balance with outside life
Millennials

• “Generation Y”
• Major world events: O.J. Simpson trial, Y2K, Columbine
• Technological advances: Internet, CD/DVDs

• Core values: collaboration, technology integration, input and feedback in all settings
• Views on authority:
  • Leader is the person facilitates the group and should always listen
  • Rules should make sense
• Work ethic: Balance with home life, comfortable with collaboration
  • “Work to have fun”
• Motivation: Balance, being part of a dynamic team, giving back to others
How accurate a description for you?
Millennials-- where do our current learners come from?
We reap what we sow...

"You get five minutes between soccer and piano? What do you do with all that free time!?!?"
Understanding origins of some millennial attitudes

• Highly scheduled—playdates, organized extracurricular activities

• Input into family environment

• Helicopter (or lawn mower) parenting

• Participation in the team the most important thing

• "You can be anything you want to be"

• Technology as a part of a life

- Howe N. School Admin 2010; 67(1):18-23
- Stillman D, Gen Z Work. 2017
Understanding origins of some Millennial attitudes

- Highly scheduled – playdates, organized extracurricular activities
- Input into family environment
- Helicopter parenting
- Participation in the team the most important thing
- "You can be anything you want to be"
- Technology as a part of a life
- Need clear, explicit expectations
- Authority figures should listen to their feedback, no off limits topics
- Immediate, specific feedback and crisis support
- Collaboration
- High self esteem
- Electronic communication preferences
Debunking Millennial myths

59% are driven by competition, compared with 50% of baby-boomers

58% compare their performance with their peers (48% for other generations)

41% of millennials do what their manager tells them “even when they can’t see the reason for it” (30% of baby-boomers, 30% of Generation X)

63% feel responsible to care for an elderly parent (55 percent of Boomers)

>50% are willing to work long hours and weekends to achieve career success.

At least one third work every day of vacations

Sources: Economist, Forbes, Nielsen surveys
Generation Z: the medical student of 2030
Generation Z ≠ Millennials
"Generation Z"

- A.k.a. Post-Millennials, Pivotal, iGen, Plurals, Founders, Homeland Generation

- Born 1995-2000 to present

- Largest percentage of U.S. population
  - 4:10 consumers

- >$44 billion/yr discretionary spending, influence ~$200B

- Hawkins BD. NEA Today July 2, 2015
- https://www.auction.com/blog/new-retail-development-concept-targets-generation-z/
Demographics

- Non-Hispanic White: 53%
- Asian: 5%
- African American: 14%
- Hispanic: 23%
- 2 or more races: 5%

Source: U.S. Census, ACS 2011-13 3 Year Estimates

(4X increase)
(doubled)

Taken from: www.mediapost.com
Background

• Post 9/11 society

• Events
  • Great Recession
  • Political polarization
  • Mass shootings/terrorism
  • Multiple foreign wars
  • Strides for equality (gay marriage, African American president)

• Media more concentrated on negativity

www.millennialmarketing.com
Gen Z parents

• Raised by Generation X
  • Helicopter parenting --> "CIA parenting"
  • Technology fluent
  • Sharing in trends

• Espousing own tendencies
  • Independence
  • Teaching how to deal with failure
  • Skepticism with the system --> "find your own way"
    • Crafting personalized majors
    • Entrepreneurism

Source: Stillman D, Gen Z at work
Views vs. Millennials

• More pragmatic, skeptical
  • "Least likely to believe in American Dream"
  • Expect to work harder and pay dues
  • More risk averse/frugal

• Equality is non-negotiable

• High confidence
  • 20% more interested in being at the top of their field

Source: https://www.ecampusnews.com/2018/08/16/higher-ed-leaders-generation-z/2/
Gen Z and Technology
"Phigital" (n.)-- state where every aspect of the physical world has a digital counterpart and are equivalent

Source: Stillman D, Gen Z at Work. 2017
Technology and Gen Z

• Always known internet and social media

• >50% spend more than 9 hours on electronic media

• >75% with smartphones
  • Access every 7 minutes
  • “FOMO”

- Ford T. 5 tips for teaching generation Z in college. 2015! Tophatblog.com
Technology and Gen Z

google (verb)
Videos, videos, videos

- Average of 68 videos per day
- 95% of Gen Z use YouTube daily, 50% “cannot live without it”
- 66-85% regularly use YouTube for “How to” information

Sources: University Professional and Continuing Education Association
https://geomarketing.com
Content creators

• “Curated self”

• 65% regularly create content all forms of social media

• At least 25% post videos weekly (26% of Boomers/Gen X have never posted one)

Sources:  www.visioncritical.com
www.millennialmarketing.com
Gaming

- Average 1.21 hours daily

- Customizability, online rewards, immediate feedback

- Multiplayer options most popular

Communication preferences

How would you say you communicate most with your friends and family?

- Generation Z (Under 18) (8%)
  - Phone Calls: 22%
  - Text/SMS: 37%
  - Mobile messaging apps: 15%
  - Social Media: 20%
  - Email: 5%

- Millennials (18-34) (28%)
  - Phone Calls: 24%
  - Text/SMS: 45%
  - Mobile messaging apps: 16%
  - Social Media: 14%
  - Email: 1%

- Generation X (35-54) (34%)
  - Phone Calls: 36%
  - Text/SMS: 45%
  - Mobile messaging apps: 6%
  - Social Media: 9%
  - Email: 4%

- Baby Boomers (55+) (30%)
  - Phone Calls: 53%
  - Text/SMS: 27%
  - Mobile messaging apps: 3%
  - Social Media: 5%
  - Email: 12%

Source: Civic Science
Weighted according to U.S. Census figures for gender and age, 13 and older. 109,552 responses from 8/26/16 to 8/25/17.
Social media preferences

Generation Z’s Glossary of What Digital Communication and Social Media Means to Them

Email – Talking to old people without a stamp.

Facebook – Where my parents think I am at. My alter ego.

Instagram – Where my real pictures are (that I don’t want my parents to see).

YouTube – My primary TV and source to stream everything.

Snapchat – No permanent record of my conversations with my closest friends.

Twitter – My reason to complain and to listen to my friends complain.

Source: University Professional and Continuing Education Association
Lessons learned from our predecessors
Preferences per the business community

- Customization of consumed products
- Convenience: on-demand, low barrier access to all information
- “Bite-sized” chunks of information
- Seamlessly transition from personal to work/educational activities
Preferences from the business community

- Personal relationships a priority
- Face-to-face communication (in person or online) preferred over email
- Feedback is critical
  - giving, receiving, and reviewing
  - Immediate, frequent

Source: www.accenture.com
From undergraduate experience: learning trends

- Tendency for “DIY”, multichannel information gathering
- Era of pushed information and “hyperlinks” may impact ability to form conceptual connections
- Relative difficulty distinguishing fact from opinion online
- Higher tendency to task-switch
  - 90% of college students text during class, 70% texted 12X/class
  - 66% of college students using laptops for non-class activities
  - Decreased ability to attend to single source (“8 second filter”)

Sources:
Time, May 14, 2015
Potential strategies to connect with Gen Z
Curriculum for Gen Z

- Skills to stress
  - Linkage of concepts
  - Framing of questions
  - Vetting of online content
  - Providing and responding to feedback
Pedagogy for Gen Z

Image credit: davidsmith.wordpress.com
Give me a clip, not a book

Preferences for YouTube, apps & videos translates to preferred ways of learning

GenZ is more likely to prefer YouTube or Apps to Millennials, who prefer printed books for learning.

- Videos most preferred method of information acquisition
- 1 out of 3 regularly watch lessons on line
- <50% prefer printed material

Sources: https://www.pearson.com
https://www.readyeducation.com
Your resources may not be primary…
But... guidance may be needed

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Gen Z and online educational resources

- Strategies
  - Increased awareness of what is utilized
  - Instruction on vetting content
  - Curating resources
  - Incorporation into lessons
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#### Question:

Q: If you are NOT in non-required class, where are you usually and what are you doing during lecture time? (select up to 3)

- A: Always attend non-required class
- B: At home not studying
- C: At home studying
- D: On campus in the Michael Stewart Center studying
- E: On campus in another building (College of Pharmacy, McGaugh Library, etc.) studying
- F: At a family/friend/significant other’s house not studying
- G: At a family/friend/significant other’s house studying
- H: At a public place off campus (coffee shop, public library, etc.) not studying
- I: At a public place off campus (coffee shop, public library, etc.) studying
- J: Doing other activities (i.e. exercising, groceries, etc.)

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#### Question:

Q: Which of the following resources do you most regularly use to review/learn lecture material? (select up to 3)

- A: Notes you took from lecture
- B: First Aid for the USMLE Step 1
- C: Other review book (BRSS, Pathoma book, Rapid Review, etc.) (Please list in Notes/Feedback)
- D: Textbooks required by syllabi
- E: Textbooks not required by syllabi (Please list in Notes/Feedback)
- F: Self-made flashcards (paper flashcards, Anki, Quizlet, etc.)
- G: Pre-made flashcards (Zanki, Brainchallenger, Pepper, Lightyear, etc.) (Please list in Notes/Feedback)
- H: UWorld Qbank questions and explanations
- I: Other Qbank questions and explanations (USMLErX, Kaplan, AMBOSS, etc.) (Please list in Notes/Feedback)
- J: Pathoma video series

#### Description:

General Lecture Behavior 8
Pedagogy for Gen Z

Take away vs. integrate devices

• Use of social media

• Gamification

• Student-created content

Pedagogy for Gen Z

- Establishing personal relationships of importance
  - Live experiences/interactions

- Lessons emphasizing practicality and personal experiences

- Incorporation of reflection activities

- Less group-work oriented than Millennials
  - Individual/self-directed learning combined with group activities

Sources: [www.pearson.com](http://www.pearson.com) - Hope J. Get your campus ready for Generation Z. Dean Provost. 2016; 17(8):1-7
Communicating with Gen Z

- Trends noted:
  - Prefer short, frequent messages
  - Scheduled in person interactions important (not necessarily in “meatspace”)

- “Go where they are”
  - Online office hours
  - Announcements via group texts/social media

Sources: Hope J. Get your campus ready for Generation Z. Dean Provost. 2016; 17(8):1-7
https://www.leadsquared.com/how-higher-education-communicates-with-gen-z/
Feedback

• Used to real-time, customized indicators of progress in prior education

• Semiannual/end of experience reviews more difficult to interpret
  • Task by task?

• Strategies
  • Dashboards
    • Frequent, quick communications (email, short conversation)
    • "Soundbites"

Source: Stillman D. Gen Z at Work. 2017
Recruiting Generation Z

• Top concerns:
  • Job market (88%)
  • Student debt (66%)

• Perform extensive research (including students’ social media)

• Respond best to personalized marketing

• Looking for
  • Technology incorporation
  • Customization of educational course/career journey
  • Ability to pursue "side interests"

Sources: [https://www.forbes.com/](https://www.forbes.com/)
Stillman D. Gen Z at Work. 2017
Summary

• Gen Z and Millennials are different

• Gen Z learners will likely:
  • Demand technology use/integration but in concert with relationship with educators
  • Utilize multiple outside resources (yours might not be primary) and need assistance with vetting content
  • Seek means to receive, give, and review real time feedback

• They may prefer:
  • Instruction with video components
  • Blending with social media
  • Group work, as long as it is blended with an individual component
What’s next?

Source: https://medium.com/@katytomaeq/what-happened-to-our-kids-19854f53fbae
University of Nebraska Medical Center

BREAKTHROUGHS FOR LIFE.