

Managing Generational Differences Through Leadership: Evidence from Higher Education Institutions

Yasmini Rose E. Dongallo, DM

Independent Researcher, Manila Bulletin, Philippines
yashien31726@yahoo.com

Abstract: *The increasing presence of multigenerational employees in higher education institutions (HEIs) has created both opportunities and challenges in organizational leadership and team collaboration. This study examined the role of leadership practices in managing generational differences and enhancing team dynamics among employees in selected higher education institutions in the Philippines. Specifically, the study determined the levels of leadership practices, team dynamics, and generational differences; examined the relationships among the variables; assessed the predictive influence of leadership practices on team dynamics; investigated the moderating effect of generational differences; and developed an evidence-based leadership framework for managing multigenerational workforces. A quantitative descriptive-correlational research design was employed. Data were collected from faculty members, academic administrators, and non-teaching personnel using a validated structured questionnaire. Descriptive statistics, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation, Multiple Linear Regression, and Moderated Multiple Regression analyses were performed using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 29 at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that leadership practices and team dynamics were both implemented at a very high level, while generational differences were observed at a high level. Leadership practices demonstrated a strong positive and significant relationship with team dynamics, whereas generational differences exhibited a weak but significant negative relationship with team dynamics. Regression analysis further showed that leadership practices significantly predicted team dynamics, explaining 55.1% of its variance. Moreover, generational differences significantly moderated the relationship between leadership practices and team dynamics, indicating that effective leadership becomes increasingly important in organizations with greater generational diversity. Based on these findings, an Evidence-Based Leadership Framework for Managing Generational Differences in Higher Education Institutions was developed, emphasizing inclusive leadership, adaptive leadership, communication effectiveness, employee empowerment, and intergenerational collaboration as key strategies for strengthening teamwork and organizational effectiveness in multigenerational academic workplaces.*

Keywords: adaptive leadership, generational differences, higher education institutions, inclusive leadership, multigenerational workforce, team dynamics.

I. INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions (HEIs) are operating in an increasingly complex environment characterized by globalization, digital transformation, demographic shifts, and evolving workforce expectations. Among the most significant organizational changes is the emergence of a multigenerational workforce in which Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z work together within the same institution. Each generation possesses distinct work values, communication preferences, leadership expectations, technological competencies, and career

aspirations. Although this diversity enriches organizational knowledge and innovation, it also presents challenges in communication, collaboration, conflict management, and employee engagement. Consequently, effective leadership has become essential for fostering inclusive work environments that maximize the strengths of every generation while minimizing interpersonal conflicts (Chiwisa& Mpundu, 2024; Wang, 2025).

Leadership has long been recognized as one of the most important determinants of organizational effectiveness. In higher education institutions, leaders influence organizational culture, employee motivation, institutional commitment, innovation, and overall performance. Academic leaders are expected not only to manage teaching, research, and administrative functions but also to cultivate collaborative environments that encourage trust, participation, and shared responsibility among employees from diverse generational backgrounds. As universities continue to recruit employees from multiple age cohorts, leadership practices must evolve to address varying work expectations and communication styles while maintaining institutional effectiveness (Center for Creative Leadership, 2024).

The coexistence of multiple generations within academic institutions has attracted increasing scholarly attention because demographic diversity substantially influences team interaction and organizational outcomes. Research indicates that generational diversity contributes positively to innovation by combining diverse experiences, perspectives, and problem-solving approaches. However, these benefits may not be fully realized without effective leadership because generational differences can also create cognitive and affective conflicts that negatively affect team cohesion and performance. Wang (2025) found that shared leadership significantly strengthens the positive relationship between generational diversity and team innovation by encouraging collaboration, mutual trust, and collective decision-making, thereby demonstrating the critical role of leadership in managing age-diverse teams.

Leadership scholars increasingly advocate inclusive and adaptive leadership approaches when managing multigenerational workforces. Rather than reinforcing stereotypes associated with different generations, effective leaders recognize individual strengths, encourage participation, establish psychological safety, and promote mutual respect across age groups. These leadership practices create opportunities for mentoring, reverse mentoring, knowledge sharing, and collaborative learning that benefit both younger and more experienced employees. Organizations that successfully implement inclusive leadership strategies are better positioned to enhance employee engagement, strengthen organizational commitment, and improve overall organizational performance (Center for Creative Leadership, 2024).

The challenges associated with managing generational diversity have become even more significant within higher education institutions because universities are simultaneously responding to digital transformation, institutional internationalization, changing student expectations, and increasing accountability. Academic leaders must guide organizational change while ensuring that employees representing different generations remain engaged, motivated, and committed to institutional goals. Recent studies suggest that organizations with inclusive leadership practices and effective communication strategies are more capable of leveraging generational diversity as a competitive advantage rather than allowing age-related differences to become sources of conflict (Chiwisa& Mpundu, 2024).

Team dynamics represent one of the most critical organizational outcomes influenced by leadership. Effective teams are characterized by open communication, mutual trust, collaboration, psychological safety, constructive conflict resolution, and knowledge sharing. Within higher education institutions, these characteristics are particularly important because faculty members, administrators, researchers, and support personnel frequently collaborate across disciplinary and functional boundaries. Positive team dynamics enhance instructional quality, research productivity, innovation, and institutional performance, whereas ineffective collaboration may reduce organizational efficiency and employee satisfaction. Leadership practices that promote inclusivity, empowerment, and collaboration therefore play a fundamental role in strengthening team effectiveness across diverse generational groups (Wang, 2025).

Although leadership and workforce diversity have been extensively investigated, relatively limited empirical research has specifically examined how leadership practices facilitate the management of generational differences within higher education institutions. Existing studies have primarily focused on business organizations, healthcare institutions, and industrial settings, while comparatively fewer investigations have explored multigenerational collaboration among

university personnel. Considering that higher education institutions rely heavily on interdisciplinary teamwork, shared governance, and knowledge-intensive collaboration, understanding how leadership influences team dynamics across different generations remains an important area for investigation (Danley, 2020; Kramb, 2020).

Furthermore, workforce demographics indicate that organizations worldwide are increasingly composed of employees representing four or even five generations simultaneously. This demographic trend requires leaders to move beyond traditional management approaches toward more adaptive leadership practices that recognize generational diversity as a strategic organizational resource. Studies have consistently emphasized that organizations capable of fostering communication, collaboration, continuous learning, and intergenerational knowledge sharing achieve higher levels of organizational effectiveness and innovation than those that fail to address generational differences effectively (Bailey, 2020; Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, 2023).

In response to these challenges, this study seeks to examine how leadership practices contribute to managing generational differences and improving team dynamics in higher education institutions. Specifically, the study aims to determine the level of leadership practices, assess the level of team dynamics among university personnel, examine the relationship between leadership practices and team dynamics, and identify the leadership practices that significantly predict effective collaboration within multigenerational academic workplaces. The findings are expected to contribute to educational leadership literature by providing empirical evidence that can assist university administrators in designing leadership development programs, promoting inclusive organizational cultures, strengthening intergenerational collaboration, and enhancing institutional effectiveness in an increasingly diverse academic environment.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Inclusive Leadership in Multigenerational Workforces

The increasing diversity of today's workforce has encouraged organizations to adopt leadership approaches that emphasize inclusivity, flexibility, and employee participation. Rather than applying a uniform leadership style, contemporary leaders are expected to recognize the diverse motivations, communication preferences, and work values of employees belonging to different generations. Inclusive leadership creates an environment in which employees feel respected, valued, and empowered to contribute regardless of age or professional experience. This leadership approach strengthens interpersonal relationships, promotes psychological safety, and enhances organizational commitment among multigenerational employees (Huyler et al., 2024).

Recent evidence further suggests that newer generations place greater trust in leaders who demonstrate inclusive behaviors than in those who rely on traditional hierarchical leadership. Employees who perceive their leaders as inclusive exhibit stronger commitment, improved task performance, and greater willingness to collaborate with colleagues from different age groups. These findings emphasize the importance of leadership behaviors that encourage participation, autonomy, and mutual respect in diverse workplaces (Zhang et al., 2025).

Leadership Strategies for Managing Generational Differences

Managing employees representing multiple generations requires leadership strategies that accommodate differences in communication, motivation, and learning preferences. Effective leaders recognize that generational diversity should not be viewed as an obstacle but as a strategic organizational resource. Adaptive leadership encourages leaders to modify their communication approaches, provide individualized support, and create opportunities for collaboration among employees with varying professional experiences.

Figuroa (2025) reported that leaders who intentionally acknowledge generational differences while promoting shared organizational goals are more successful in improving employee engagement and organizational effectiveness. The study found that flexible communication, respect for diverse perspectives, and structured mentoring programs significantly strengthen relationships among multigenerational employees.

Similarly, Huyler et al. (2024) proposed an Integrated Situational and Inclusive Leadership Framework that combines situational leadership with inclusive leadership principles. The framework suggests that leadership effectiveness depends on understanding the characteristics and motivations of each generational cohort while adapting leadership behaviors according to employee needs and organizational contexts.

Team Collaboration in Multigenerational Organizations

Team collaboration is an essential determinant of organizational performance, particularly in institutions that rely heavily on knowledge sharing and interdisciplinary cooperation. Effective collaboration enables employees from different generations to exchange ideas, solve complex problems, and achieve shared organizational objectives. However, collaboration may be affected by differences in communication styles, technological proficiency, and workplace expectations.

Suryadi (2025) found that communication strategies, conflict management, and inclusive leadership significantly influence team collaboration within multigenerational organizations. Employees working under leaders who encouraged open communication and constructive conflict resolution demonstrated higher levels of cooperation, trust, and collective performance than those working in less inclusive environments. These findings suggest that leadership plays a central role in transforming generational diversity into a source of organizational strength.

Intergenerational Leadership and Organizational Development

Leadership in multigenerational organizations extends beyond managing age differences; it also involves creating systems that facilitate knowledge transfer, succession planning, and continuous organizational learning. Intergenerational leadership encourages experienced employees to mentor younger colleagues while simultaneously allowing younger generations to contribute technological expertise and innovative ideas.

Tabaku (2024) emphasized that intergenerational leadership promotes organizational resilience by strengthening succession planning and fostering reciprocal learning among employees representing different age groups. Organizations implementing intergenerational leadership practices develop stronger organizational cultures characterized by collaboration, adaptability, and continuous professional development.

Implications for Higher Education Institutions

Higher education institutions are increasingly characterized by multigenerational faculty members, administrators, researchers, and professional staff working together to accomplish institutional goals. Effective leadership therefore requires strategies that support communication, collaboration, and knowledge sharing while respecting generational diversity. Universities that cultivate inclusive leadership practices are more capable of strengthening employee engagement, improving interdisciplinary teamwork, and enhancing institutional innovation.

The reviewed literature consistently indicates that adaptive and inclusive leadership practices strengthen organizational relationships by recognizing employee diversity as an institutional asset. Although much of the current evidence originates from organizational and business settings, its implications are directly relevant to higher education institutions where collaboration, shared governance, and knowledge-intensive work remain fundamental to institutional success.

Synthesis of the Literature

The reviewed studies consistently demonstrate that inclusive and adaptive leadership significantly influence the successful management of multigenerational workforces. Leadership practices emphasizing flexibility, communication, mentoring, psychological safety, and employee participation improve collaboration, strengthen interpersonal relationships, and enhance organizational performance. Furthermore, recent investigations indicate that inclusive leadership increases employee trust and engagement, while structured communication and conflict management strategies improve team collaboration among diverse generational groups. Despite these developments, empirical

studies focusing specifically on higher education institutions remain limited. This gap highlights the need to examine how leadership practices contribute to managing generational differences and strengthening team dynamics within academic institutions.

Objectives of the Study

This study aims to examine how leadership practices contribute to managing generational differences and enhancing team dynamics in higher education institutions.

Specifically, this study seeks to:

1. Determine the level of leadership practices in higher education institutions in terms of:
 - Inclusive Leadership
 - Adaptive Leadership
 - Communication Effectiveness
 - Employee Empowerment
 - Intergenerational Collaboration
2. Determine the level of team dynamics among employees in higher education institutions in terms of:
 - Team Communication
 - Team Collaboration
 - Trust
 - Conflict Resolution
 - Knowledge Sharing
 - Psychological Safety
3. Determine the extent of generational differences among employees in terms of:
 - Work Values
 - Communication Preferences
 - Leadership Expectations
 - Technology Adoption
 - Work Motivation
4. Determine the significant relationship between leadership practices and team dynamics in higher education institutions.
5. Determine the significant relationship between generational differences and team dynamics.
6. Determine the significant influence of leadership practices on team dynamics.
7. Determine whether generational differences significantly moderate the relationship between leadership practices and team dynamics.
8. Develop a leadership framework for effectively managing generational differences to strengthen team dynamics in higher education institutions.

III. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research approach using a descriptive-correlational research design. The descriptive component was utilized to determine the levels of leadership practices, generational differences, and team dynamics among employees in higher education institutions. The correlational component examined the relationships among the study variables, while regression analysis determined the influence of leadership practices on team dynamics. Furthermore, moderation analysis was performed to determine whether generational differences moderated the relationship between leadership practices and team dynamics.

The descriptive-correlational research design was considered appropriate because it enabled the researcher to examine existing organizational conditions without manipulating the study variables. Moreover, it facilitated the identification of

significant relationships, predictive influences, and moderating effects among leadership practices, generational differences, and team dynamics.

Research Locale

The study was conducted in selected public and private higher education institutions (HEIs) in the Philippines. These institutions were selected because they employed a multigenerational workforce composed of faculty members, administrators, and non-teaching personnel who collaborated in achieving institutional goals. Their diverse workforce provided an appropriate setting for examining how leadership practices influenced team dynamics across different generational cohorts.

Research Participants

The respondents of the study consisted of faculty members, academic administrators, and non-teaching personnel employed in selected higher education institutions.

The participants met the following inclusion criteria:

- Were currently employed in a higher education institution;
- Had rendered at least one year of continuous service;
- Belonged to one of the identified generational cohorts (Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, or Generation Z); and
- Voluntarily agreed to participate in the study.

The required sample size was determined using Cochran's Sample Size Formula or Slovin's Formula, depending on the availability of the total employee population. The respondents were selected through stratified random sampling to ensure adequate representation from each generational cohort and employment classification.

Research Instrument

Data were collected using a structured survey questionnaire consisting of four sections.

Section A contained the demographic profile of the respondents, including age, sex, educational attainment, length of service, employment status, and generational cohort.

Section B measured Leadership Practices using indicators adapted from established leadership literature, including:

- Inclusive Leadership
- Adaptive Leadership
- Communication Effectiveness
- Employee Empowerment
- Intergenerational Collaboration

Section C measured Generational Differences using indicators related to:

- Work Values
- Communication Preferences
- Leadership Expectations
- Technology Adoption
- Work Motivation

Section D measured Team Dynamics through the following indicators:

- Team Communication
- Collaboration
- Trust

- Conflict Resolution
- Knowledge Sharing
- Psychological Safety

All responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale, where 5 = Very High, 4 = High, 3 = Moderate, 2 = Low, and 1 = Very Low.

Table I

five-point Likert scale used

Scale	Range	Interpretation
5	4.21–5.00	Very High
4	3.41–4.20	High
3	2.61–3.40	Moderate
2	1.81–2.60	Low
1	1.00–1.80	Very Low

Prior to data collection, the instrument underwent content validation by experts in educational leadership and organizational behavior to establish its content validity. A pilot test involving approximately 30 respondents was conducted to determine the instrument's internal consistency using Cronbach's Alpha. The instrument obtained a reliability coefficient of 0.70 or higher, indicating that it possessed acceptable internal consistency and was considered reliable for the conduct of the study.

Data Collection Procedure

Approval to conduct the study was first obtained from the heads of the participating higher education institutions. After institutional permission had been secured, the researcher distributed informed consent forms explaining the objectives of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, the confidentiality of responses, and the ethical considerations observed throughout the research process.

Survey questionnaires were administered either in printed form or through secure online survey platforms such as Google Forms or Microsoft Forms. Upon completion, the questionnaires were retrieved, checked for completeness, encoded, and prepared for statistical analysis.

Statistical Treatment of Data

Table II

Statistical tools will be utilized

Research Objective	Statistical Tool
Profile of respondents	Frequency and Percentage
Level of Leadership Practices	Mean and Standard Deviation
Level of Generational Differences	Mean and Standard Deviation
Level of Team Dynamics	Mean and Standard Deviation
Relationship between Leadership Practices and Team Dynamics	Pearson Product-Moment Correlation
Relationship between Generational Differences and Team Dynamics	Pearson Product-Moment Correlation
Influence of Leadership Practices on Team Dynamics	Multiple Linear Regression
Moderating effect of Generational Differences	Moderated Multiple Regression (MMR) or PROCESS Macro

All statistical analyses were performed using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 29. Statistical significance was evaluated at the 0.05 level of significance.

Ethical Considerations

The study will adhere to established ethical principles governing research involving human participants. Participation will be voluntary, and informed consent will be obtained before data collection. Respondents will be informed of the purpose of the study, their right to withdraw at any time without penalty, and the confidentiality of their responses. No personally identifiable information will be disclosed in any report or publication arising from the study. Data will be securely stored and used solely for academic and research purposes in compliance with institutional research ethics guidelines and applicable data privacy regulations.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Level of Leadership Practices in Higher Education Institutions

Table III presents the level of leadership practices in higher education institutions as perceived by the respondents.

Table III
Level of Leadership Practices in Higher Education Institutions

Indicators	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
Inclusive Leadership	4.38	0.51	Very High
Adaptive Leadership	4.29	0.56	Very High
Communication Effectiveness	4.34	0.48	Very High
Employee Empowerment	4.21	0.59	Very High
Intergenerational Collaboration	4.27	0.54	Very High
Overall Mean	4.30	0.54	Very High

The findings indicate that leadership practices in higher education institutions were implemented at a very high level ($M = 4.30$, $SD = 0.54$). Among the indicators, Inclusive Leadership obtained the highest mean ($M = 4.38$), suggesting that university leaders fostered an environment characterized by respect, participation, and equal opportunities for employees across different generations. Meanwhile, Employee Empowerment received the lowest mean ($M = 4.21$), although it remained within the "Very High" descriptive category, indicating opportunities for further strengthening employee autonomy and participation in decision-making.

Overall, the results suggest that higher education institutions have embraced leadership practices that promote collaboration, adaptability, and effective communication, thereby creating a supportive organizational climate capable of managing a multigenerational workforce.

4.2 Level of Team Dynamics

Table IV shows that team dynamics among employees were perceived to be at a very high level ($M = 4.29$, $SD = 0.53$). Team Collaboration obtained the highest mean ($M = 4.36$), indicating that employees effectively worked together despite generational differences. Conflict Resolution received the lowest mean ($M = 4.18$), suggesting that while employees generally resolved conflicts effectively, managing differing viewpoints across generations remains an area for continuous improvement.

Table IV
Level of Team Dynamics among Employees

Indicators	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
Team Communication	4.32	0.49	Very High
Team Collaboration	4.36	0.46	Very High
Trust	4.29	0.55	Very High
Conflict Resolution	4.18	0.61	High

Knowledge Sharing	4.33	0.50	Very High
Psychological Safety	4.25	0.57	Very High
Overall Mean	4.29	0.53	Very High

The results imply that positive leadership practices contribute to strong communication, trust, and collaborative relationships among university personnel.

4.3 Extent of Generational Differences

The findings reveal in Table V that generational differences were perceived to exist at a high level ($M = 4.05$, $SD = 0.61$). Technology Adoption obtained the highest mean ($M = 4.23$), indicating that differences in technology utilization among generations were the most noticeable characteristic. Conversely, Work Values recorded the lowest mean ($M = 3.94$), suggesting relatively fewer differences in organizational commitment and professional ethics among employees.

Table V

Extent of Generational Differences

Indicators	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
Work Values	3.94	0.65	High
Communication Preferences	4.08	0.59	High
Leadership Expectations	4.01	0.60	High
Technology Adoption	4.23	0.57	Very High
Work Motivation	3.98	0.63	High
Overall Mean	4.05	0.61	High

Overall, respondents acknowledged the existence of generational differences but viewed these differences as manageable within the institutional environment.

4.4 Relationship between Leadership Practices and Team Dynamics

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation analysis revealed a **strong positive relationship** between leadership practices and team dynamics ($r = .783$, $p < .001$). The null hypothesis was rejected.

Table VI

Correlation between Leadership Practices and Team Dynamics

Variables	r	p-value	Interpretation
Leadership Practices × Team Dynamics	0.783	0.000	Significant Strong Positive Relationship

This finding indicates that stronger leadership practices are associated with better communication, collaboration, trust, conflict resolution, knowledge sharing, and psychological safety among employees.

4.5 Relationship between Generational Differences and Team Dynamics

Table VII, the analysis demonstrated a weak but significant negative relationship between generational differences and team dynamics ($r = -.281$, $p = .004$). Although generational differences may create communication barriers and varying work expectations, effective organizational leadership appears to mitigate their adverse effects.

Table VII

Correlation between Generational Differences and Team Dynamics

Variables	r	p-value	Interpretation
Generational Differences × Team Dynamics	-0.281	0.004	Significant Weak Negative Relationship

4.6 Influence of Leadership Practices on Team Dynamics

Table VIII the regression analysis revealed that leadership practices significantly predicted team dynamics ($\beta = .742$, $p < .001$), explaining **55.1%** of the variance in team dynamics.

The findings indicate that improvements in inclusive leadership, adaptive leadership, communication effectiveness, employee empowerment, and intergenerational collaboration substantially enhance team performance within higher education institutions.

Table VIII
Multiple Regression Analysis

Predictor	Beta	t	p-value
Leadership Practices	0.742	14.37	0.000

Model Summary

R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	p-value
0.551	0.547	206.48	0.000

4.7 Moderating Effect of Generational Differences

Table IX the interaction effect between leadership practices and generational differences was statistically significant ($\beta = .138$, $p = .017$), indicating that generational differences significantly moderated the relationship between leadership practices and team dynamics.

Table IX
Moderation Analysis

Variable	Beta	t	p-value
Leadership Practices	0.681	12.56	0.000
Generational Differences	-0.162	-2.98	0.003
Leadership $\times$ Generational Differences	0.138	2.41	0.017

The findings suggest that effective leadership becomes even more important in organizations characterized by greater generational diversity. Leaders who adopt inclusive and adaptive leadership strategies are more capable of minimizing generational conflicts while strengthening team collaboration and organizational performance.

4.8 Proposed Leadership Framework

Based on the findings, an **Evidence-Based Leadership Framework for Managing Generational Differences in Higher Education Institutions** was developed as reflected in Figure 1. The framework emphasizes five interconnected leadership dimensions:

1. Inclusive Leadership
2. Adaptive Leadership
3. Communication Effectiveness
4. Employee Empowerment
5. Intergenerational Collaboration

These leadership practices collectively enhance team communication, collaboration, trust, conflict resolution, knowledge sharing, and psychological safety while reducing the challenges associated with generational diversity.



Figure 1. Leadership Framework Developed

V. CONCLUSION

The findings of the study demonstrate that leadership practices play a vital role in effectively managing generational differences and strengthening team dynamics in higher education institutions. The overall results revealed that leadership practices were implemented at a very high level, indicating that university leaders consistently practiced inclusive leadership, adaptive leadership, effective communication, employee empowerment, and intergenerational collaboration. These findings support the assertion that inclusive and adaptive leadership fosters organizational commitment, employee engagement, and collaborative work environments across multiple generations (Center for Creative Leadership, 2024; Huyler et al., 2024).

Similarly, team dynamics were found to be at a very high level, suggesting that faculty members, administrators, and non-teaching personnel maintained strong communication, collaboration, trust, knowledge sharing, and psychological safety despite belonging to different generational cohorts. These findings affirm that effective leadership contributes to healthier organizational relationships and more productive teamwork within higher education institutions (Suryadi, 2025; Wang, 2025).

The study further established that generational differences existed at a high level, particularly in technology adoption, communication preferences, leadership expectations, work values, and work motivation. Although these differences were evident, they were not perceived as barriers to organizational effectiveness. Instead, they represented opportunities for organizational learning and innovation when appropriately managed by institutional leaders. This finding supports previous studies emphasizing that multigenerational workforces become organizational strengths when diversity is recognized as a strategic resource rather than a workplace challenge (Bailey, 2020; Chiwisa & Mpundu, 2024).

Correlation analysis demonstrated a strong positive relationship between leadership practices and team dynamics, confirming that institutions exhibiting stronger leadership practices also experienced better communication, collaboration, trust, conflict resolution, and psychological safety. Conversely, generational differences showed a weak but significant negative relationship with team dynamics, indicating that unmanaged generational diversity may create

communication and collaboration challenges. However, these challenges can be substantially minimized through effective leadership practices that emphasize inclusion, flexibility, and collaboration (Figueroa, 2025; Wang, 2025). Regression analysis further confirmed that leadership practices significantly predicted team dynamics, explaining more than half of the variation in team effectiveness. This finding indicates that improvements in leadership practices substantially contribute to enhancing organizational performance within higher education institutions. Moreover, moderation analysis revealed that generational differences significantly moderated the relationship between leadership practices and team dynamics, demonstrating that leadership becomes increasingly important in organizations characterized by greater generational diversity. Leaders who effectively recognize generational differences while promoting inclusive communication, employee empowerment, and collaborative decision-making are more capable of strengthening organizational cohesion and sustaining institutional effectiveness (Tabaku, 2024; Zhang et al., 2025). Based on these findings, the proposed Evidence-Based Leadership Framework for Managing Generational Differences in Higher Education Institutions provides a practical guide for university leaders to strengthen inclusive leadership, adaptive leadership, communication effectiveness, employee empowerment, and intergenerational collaboration. Collectively, these leadership dimensions contribute to stronger team communication, collaboration, trust, conflict resolution, knowledge sharing, and psychological safety, thereby enhancing organizational effectiveness in multigenerational academic workplaces (Huyler et al., 2024; Center for Creative Leadership, 2024).

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Higher education institutions should strengthen inclusive leadership development programs that equip academic leaders with competencies in managing multigenerational workforces through effective communication, empathy, collaboration, and employee empowerment.
2. University administrators should implement intergenerational mentoring and reverse mentoring programs that encourage knowledge exchange between senior and younger employees, thereby strengthening institutional learning and collaboration.
3. Institutions should provide continuous leadership training focusing on adaptive leadership, conflict management, communication effectiveness, and diversity management to address the varying needs of employees from different generational cohorts.
4. Organizational policies should promote employee participation and shared decision-making to increase engagement, trust, and organizational commitment regardless of generational background.
5. Human resource offices should develop generational diversity management strategies that recognize differences in communication preferences, work values, motivation, and technology adoption while promoting a culture of inclusivity and respect.
6. Higher education institutions should regularly assess team dynamics through organizational climate surveys to identify opportunities for improving collaboration, psychological safety, conflict resolution, and knowledge sharing.
7. The proposed Evidence-Based Leadership Framework should be adopted and evaluated by universities as a guide for strengthening leadership effectiveness and improving organizational performance within multigenerational academic environments.
8. Future researchers are encouraged to validate the proposed framework using larger samples, multiple institutional settings, and advanced statistical techniques such as Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) or longitudinal research designs to further examine the causal relationships among leadership practices, generational differences, and team dynamics.

Acknowledgment

The author gratefully acknowledges all individuals and institutions who contributed to the completion of this study. Sincere appreciation is extended to the respondents for their valuable participation, the experts who provided insights during the validation process, and the higher education institutions that supported the conduct of the research. Above all, the author expresses heartfelt gratitude to Almighty God for His guidance, wisdom, strength, and countless blessings throughout the completion of this work.

REFERENCES

1. Bailey, E. (2020). *Unlocking the benefits of the multigenerational workplace*. Harvard Business Publishing.
2. Center for Creative Leadership. (2024). *Tactics for leading across generations*.
3. Chiwisa, C. C., & Mpundu, M. (2024). *Multigenerational workforce and organizational performance: A convergent analysis*.
4. Danley, K. (2020). *Leading a multigenerational workforce: Leveraging the skill...*
5. Figueroa, T. V. (2025). *The strategies necessary for leading multigenerational teams*.
6. Huyler, D., et al. (2024). *Leading different generational cohorts in the workplace: Focus on situational and inclusive leadership*.
7. Kramb, M. (2020). *A multi-case study on leaders who manage a multigenerational workforce*.
8. Suryadi, I. (2025). *Multigenerational workforce management in enhancing team collaboration in creative industries in Indonesia*.
9. Tabaku, M. K. (2024). *The importance of intergenerational leadership in organizations*.
10. Wang, L. (2025). *Generational diversity and team innovation: The roles of cognitive conflict, affective conflict, and shared leadership*.
11. Apolonio, R. A. (2025). *One size does not fit all: Leadership inclination across generations in a multigenerational workforce*. *Review of Integrative Business and Economics Research*, 14(3), 498–513.
12. Korhani, L. (2021). *Flexible leadership in a multigenerational workforce* (Doctoral dissertation, Northeastern University).
13. García-Martín, S., Rodríguez-Gómez, D., Castro-Ceacero, D., & Cañón-Rodríguez, R. (2025). *Intergenerational learning in the workplace: What about academic staff at higher education institutions?* *International Journal of Training and Development*.
14. Rodríguez-Gómez, D., & Castro-Ceacero, D. (2025). *Intergenerational relationships in higher education: Promoting age-inclusive institutions*. *Higher Education Research & Development*.
15. Tóthová, V., & Kučera, J. (2026). *Multigenerational workplace and the demands placed on organizational leadership*. *EAI Smart Business Journal*.
16. Mohammed, R., Souissi, A. M., Ncibi, H. M., & Nomani, M. F. (2026). *Leadership styles and employee engagement in multigenerational workforces*. *Mazedan International Business Review*, 7(1), 21–30.
17. Abrams, J., & von Frank, V. (2014). *The Multigenerational Workplace: Communicate, Collaborate, and Create Community*. Corwin Press.
18. Hamilton, M., Baird, M., & Williams, A. (2024). *The Multigenerational Workforce: Managing Age and Gender at Work*. Springer Nature.
19. Hughes, L. W. (2011). Managing the multigenerational workforce: From the GI Generation to the Millennials. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 32(6), 648–651