**Leveraging Emotional Intelligence for Multigenerational Workforces in Local Government Units within the Philippines: A Systematic Review**



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**Abstract**

This systematic review explores the integration of Emotional Intelligence (EI) in managing multigenerational workforces, with a focus on its application within the Local Government Units (LGU) in the Philippines. Drawing upon 20 studies published in the past decade, the review synthesizes insights on EI's role in addressing generational diversity, conflict resolution, and enhancing team cohesion. It examines how generational cohorts—Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z—differ in values, communication styles, and workplace expectations, and how these differences influence organizational dynamics. The thematic analysis reveals that emotionally intelligent leadership fosters inclusivity, innovation, and productivity by bridging generational gaps and tailoring management approaches to diverse needs. The findings emphasize EI’s significance in public administration, where leaders navigate complex challenges such as resource constraints and high public expectations. This review highlights the potential of EI-driven training programs in transforming generational diversity into a strategic advantage, providing a foundation for future research and practical implementation in workforce management and policy-making.

***Keywords:*** *Emotional Intelligence (EI), Multigenerational Workforce, Local Government Unit (LGUs), generational diversity, conflict resolution, team cohesion, communication styles, public administation*

**Introduction**

Workplaces today are evolving into hubs of diversity, not just in terms of ethnicity, gender, or skills, but also generational composition. This evolution is particularly evident in public institutions like the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Panabo City, where employees from multiple generations work together toward shared goals. These generations—Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z—represent different eras, shaped by unique historical, cultural, and technological contexts. While this diversity fosters innovation and provides a variety of perspectives, it also presents unique challenges, particularly in communication, collaboration, and management (Lyons & Kuron, 2014).

Generational diversity in the workplace often leads to differences in values, work ethics, and communication styles. Baby Boomers, typically the most senior employees, tend to value stability, loyalty, and hierarchical leadership. Generation X, positioned in mid-level management, emphasizes independence, adaptability, and a pragmatic approach to problem-solving. Millennials, often associated with collaboration, innovation, and technological fluency, challenge traditional norms with their demand for flexibility and purpose-driven work. Generation Z, the youngest cohort, brings a digital-first mindset, prioritizing inclusivity and rapid adaptation to change (Twenge & Campbell, 2017). These generational differences, while enriching, often lead to misunderstandings, reduced productivity, and workplace tension when not managed effectively.

The concept of emotional intelligence (EI) has emerged as a transformative approach to addressing these challenges. Defined by Goleman (1995) as the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one’s own emotions while effectively navigating interpersonal relationships, EI provides a framework for fostering empathy, improving communication, and building cohesive teams. Numerous studies highlight the role of EI in mitigating conflicts and enhancing collaboration in diverse workplaces (Ravichandran et al., 2020). Leaders and employees with high EI are better equipped to bridge generational divides, creating a harmonious environment where each generation’s strengths are maximized.

In the context of public administration, emotional intelligence is particularly significant. Local government units like Panabo City operate under intense pressure to deliver efficient and effective services. These organizations rely on teamwork and interdepartmental collaboration to address complex community needs. Generational tensions, if left unaddressed, can undermine these efforts, leading to inefficiencies and decreased morale. EI, with its emphasis on empathy, adaptability, and interpersonal skills, offers a solution by fostering mutual understanding and aligning diverse teams toward common goals (Kaya et al., 2016).

The workplace dynamics within Panabo City’s LGU reflect broader trends in the Philippines and beyond. As the city continues to grow and modernize, its LGU faces the dual challenge of maintaining traditional values while embracing innovation. This tension is particularly evident in interactions between Baby Boomers, who often favor conventional approaches, and Millennials and Generation Z employees, who advocate for more flexible, technology-driven solutions. These generational differences are not inherently problematic; rather, they represent an opportunity to harness diverse perspectives for creative problem-solving and improved public service delivery. However, realizing this potential requires intentional strategies to bridge the generational divide.

Despite the increasing recognition of EI’s importance, limited research exists on its application in multigenerational settings within local government units in the Philippines. Most existing studies either focus on the private sector or examine generational differences without integrating EI as a mediating factor. This gap is particularly significant given the unique challenges faced by LGUs, which operate at the intersection of tradition and innovation, catering to diverse stakeholders and navigating resource constraints.

 Reviewing published articles and journals about Emotional Intelligence for Multigenerational Workforce in Local Government Units will be the purpose of this paper. To reach this, the systematic review will be guided with this research questions: RQ1.) Determine the different Generational Cohorts which commonly exist in a Local Government Unit workplace; RQ2.) Determine the key generational differences among employees, and how do these differences influence workplace dynamics such as communication, collaboration, and productivity; and RQ3.) Determine the role of emotional intelligence in addressing generational conflicts and fostering team cohesion.

**METHOD**

A comprehensive and systematic search of academic databases, including PubMed, JSTOR, and Google Scholar, was conducted to identify relevant literature published between 2014 and 2024. The search utilized a combination of targeted keywords such as "emotional intelligence," "multigenerational workforce," "local government," "public sector leadership," and "team cohesion" to capture studies that address the intersection of these themes. Boolean operators (e.g., AND, OR) were employed to refine the search, ensuring inclusivity while maintaining focus on the research scope. The selection process included screening titles and abstracts for relevance, followed by a full-text review to evaluate the quality and applicability of the studies to the context of Local Government Units (LGUs) and their multigenerational workforces.

Inclusion Criteria

Studies published in English from 2014–2024.

Articles focused on emotional intelligence in multigenerational workforce, and public sector settings.

Peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, or government reports.

Exclusion Criteria

Studies addressing private sector-only dynamics.

Articles with no focus on generational cohorts or emotional intelligence.

Data Extraction

Themes and findings were synthesized across studies to determine patterns in the application of EI in LGUs.

To do it, search was recorded following the details: source category,

source name, search method, and date of search for each database. This

was presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Search space for selected databases.

**Source Source Search Method Date of search**
**Category Name**

Online Research Gate Abstract, Title, and 2024-11-20
Database Keywords

Search Engine Google Scholar Abstract, Title, and 2024-11- 23

 Keywords

*Search Terms.* The search process for this systematic review was a critical component of ensuring the comprehensiveness and relevance of the included literature. The researchers strategically selected keywords and search strings to retrieve articles and studies related to Emotional Intelligence (EI) and multigenerational workforce dynamics. The study focused on literature published between 2014 and 2024, encompassing contemporary insights on these topics. The researchers emphasized identifying studies with a specific focus on public sector organizations, leadership, and workforce diversity. Keywords such as "emotional intelligence in leadership", "generational diversity in the workplace", and "multigenerational workforce challenges" were tested for effectiveness. To refine the results, Boolean operators like 'AND,' 'OR,' and 'IN/ON' were used in combination. For example, queries such as "Emotional intelligence IN multigenerational workforce" and "Multigenerational workforce OR workplace diversity" were applied to generate precise results. Double quotes were used to search for exact phrases such as "workplace productivity", "generational differences in communication" or “generational cohorts”. Proximity operators were also employed for more specific queries. For instance, search terms like "W5/emotional intelligence AND generational conflicts" and "N6/generational diversity AND local government" helped locate studies examining the interplay between EI for multigenerational dynamics in local government units. Searches were conducted across reputable databases, including Google Scholar, ensuring a robust collection of peer-reviewed articles and seminal works. The search activity was iterative, where initial results were evaluated for relevance and further refined based on thematic alignment with the study’s objectives. By optimizing search strategies and applying multiple operators, the researchers were able to compile a body of literature that provides valuable insights into leveraging emotional intelligence to address generational challenges in diverse organizational settings.

*Study Selection.* A study selection process was to make it appropriate and to fit the numbers of articles that considered as a review. Stages of the study selection process is represented in Table 2.

*Table 2. Stages of the study selection process*

 **Stage Description**

 S1 Establish the characteristics that will be related or included
about the EI’s in a Multigenerational Workforce.

S2 Conduct a thorough search to find studies related to the topic.

S3 Determine studies or data that will be excluded when duplicates were found.

S4 Thoroughly review articles with full reading access and summarize

As shown in Table 3, the selected total number of articles and journals related to this paper from Research Gate and Google Scholar were 715. 639 or 89% of which were from Google Scholar and the rest were from Research Gate. After scanning the titles and relevance of the selected journals and articles, 75% of 715 were excluded which arrived to 178 references. From which, the researcher found 70 duplicates. The excluded duplicates resulted to 38 remaining articles and from which, the researcher looked for articles without full article access. In result, only 20 articles were subjected to data extraction and discussion.

*Table 3. Distribution of Journals and Articles Before and After the Selection Process*

**Source Before After**

ResearchGate 76 3

Google Scholar 639 17

**Total 715 20**

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

In this section, you will read the results and discussion of the systematic literature review. This contains Data sources, research design, data types, and the discussion on leveraging emotional intelligence for the multigenerational workforce in the Local Government Units within the Philippines.

**Data sources, Research Design and Data Types**

85% or 17 of the 20 final articles were taken from Google Scholar and the remaining 3 were from ResearchGate (see Table 4 below). These articles were identified based on the criteria established using the PRISMA Model. Additionally, \_\_% of the articles were quantitative, \_\_% of them are qualititative and \_\_% of which is in mixed method research design. As presented in the Table 4, \_\_% of the reviewed articles used primary data while the other \_\_% used secondary data which were taken from different sources.

*Table 4.* *Distribution of Reviewed Articles Based on Sources, Research*

*Design, and Type of Data.*

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**Distribution of Articles *n %***

**Based on Sources**

Google Scholar 17 85

 ResearchGate 3 15

**Based on Research Design**

Quantitative 7 35

 Qualitative 10 50

 Mixed Method 3 15

**Based on Data Type**

Primary

 Secondary 17 85

 Primary and Secondary 3 15

The role of EI in leadership is central to fostering effective management within multigenerational workforces. Leaders equipped with high levels of EI demonstrate a strong ability to manage interpersonal relationships, resolve conflicts, and build trust-based environments. This becomes particularly critical in diverse work settings where generational differences can impede communication and collaboration. Research underscores that leaders who practice empathy and self-awareness can align team efforts, inspiring a shared commitment to organizational goals (Goleman, 1995; Sadri, 2021). Moreover, such leaders model emotionally intelligent behaviors, creating a ripple effect that enhances team dynamics and overall morale.

Generational differences profoundly shape workplace dynamics. Baby Boomers' preference for hierarchical structures and Generation Z's prioritization of inclusivity and digital fluency often create friction in work styles and communication. This diversity, however, also introduces opportunities for innovation and holistic problem-solving when managed effectively. Leaders who understand the unique values and motivators of each cohort can tailor their management strategies, ensuring that all generational strengths are harnessed. For example, Millennials' affinity for collaboration and Generation X's pragmatic approach can complement one another when fostered under emotionally intelligent leadership (Ng et al., 2010; Schroth, 2019).

EI emerges as a powerful mediator in addressing generational challenges. Through skills such as empathy, social awareness, and relationship management, emotionally intelligent leaders create a culture of inclusivity and respect. This capability is particularly significant in navigating generational conflicts, where misunderstandings often stem from differing perspectives on work ethics, communication styles, and expectations (Rudolph & Zacher, 2020). By leveraging EI, leaders can transform potential conflicts into opportunities for dialogue and collaboration, promoting psychological safety and team cohesion.

In the public sector, where LGUs like Panabo City operate under the dual pressures of resource constraints and high public expectations, EI becomes a critical tool for fostering workplace harmony. Unlike private organizations, LGUs must navigate bureaucratic structures and deliver services to diverse stakeholders. Emotional intelligence enables leaders to mediate generational tensions while maintaining focus on service delivery objectives. For instance, EI-driven leadership has been linked to innovative problem-solving, an essential competency in environments where resources are limited (Villalobos et al., 2021). This ensures that generational diversity, rather than hindering organizational progress, becomes a catalyst for enhanced public service efficiency.

The practical application of EI extends beyond leadership, influencing workforce development strategies at all levels. Training programs designed to enhance EI competencies among employees can significantly reduce generational conflicts and improve collaboration. By equipping employees with tools to understand and manage their emotions and those of their colleagues, organizations can foster a more cohesive and productive work environment. These interventions are particularly relevant for LGUs, where internal harmony directly impacts external service delivery (Adams & Zumrah, 2020).

The integration of EI into organizational strategies represents a shift toward more adaptive and human-centered management practices. Emotional intelligence not only addresses immediate challenges within multigenerational workforces but also positions organizations to thrive in an era of increasing diversity and complexity. In public sector settings, this approach aligns with broader governance goals, ensuring that institutions remain resilient and responsive to community needs.

**Discussion**

***Implications***

Emotional Intelligence (EI) serves as a transformative framework for navigating generational diversity in Local Government Units (LGUs). Leaders with strong EI competencies can foster inclusivity and harness the unique strengths of each generational cohort to enhance workplace dynamics. Generational differences in values, communication preferences, and work styles influence how employees interact, collaborate, and contribute to organizational productivity.

For example, Baby Boomers, often characterized by their loyalty and preference for structured hierarchies, excel in roles requiring experience and long-term strategic thinking. However, they may resist rapid change and favor formal communication channels (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010). Generation X, known for their independence and adaptability, bridges the gap between senior and younger employees, often acting as pragmatic mediators in workplace disputes (Twenge & Campbell, 2017). Millennials, with their emphasis on collaboration, technological fluency, and purpose-driven work, thrive in team environments that prioritize innovation and frequent feedback (Ng et al., 2010). Meanwhile, Generation Z employees bring a digital-first mindset and value inclusivity, speed, and flexibility, making them assets in projects requiring creativity and technological integration (Schroth, 2019).

The interplay of these generational traits directly influences workplace dynamics:

*Communication*

Generational differences shape communication preferences. Baby Boomers and Generation X may lean toward face-to-face or email communication, valuing professionalism and clarity. In contrast, Millennials and Generation Z prefer instant messaging platforms and collaborative tools, emphasizing speed and informality. Without emotionally intelligent leadership, these divergent preferences can lead to misunderstandings and inefficient workflows. Leaders with high EI use empathy and adaptability to tailor communication styles, ensuring all employees feel understood and valued (Rudolph & Zacher, 2020).

*Collaboration*

Collaboration across generational lines requires sensitivity to differing work styles. Millennials and Generation Z often advocate for collaborative, egalitarian team structures, whereas Baby Boomers and Generation X might prefer defined roles and responsibilities. Emotionally intelligent leaders bridge these gaps by fostering mutual respect and aligning team efforts with organizational goals. For instance, EI-driven interventions, such as team-building workshops or cross-generational mentoring programs, can promote understanding and synergy among diverse groups (Kaya et al., 2016).

*Productivity*

Generational differences in work ethics and expectations can either enhance or hinder productivity. Baby Boomers' dedication to long-term projects complements Millennials' and Generation Z’s agility in handling short-term, tech-driven tasks. However, misaligned expectations—such as Millennials' preference for flexibility clashing with Baby Boomers' emphasis on traditional work hours—can create friction. Leaders with high EI leverage these differences by assigning tasks that play to each cohort’s strengths, fostering a balanced and efficient workflow (Sadri, 2021).

***Challenges***

Despite its significant advantages, the integration of Emotional Intelligence (EI) into Local Government Units (LGUs) faces several challenges. Limited access to EI training programs remains one of the primary barriers, especially in **resource-constrained environments**. Public-sector employees often lack opportunities for skill development tailored to their unique organizational dynamics. For example, Adams and Zumrah (2020) observed that many LGUs in Southeast Asia struggle to provide leadership training that includes EI competencies, resulting in a gap between traditional and modern management practices.

Another major challenge is **resistance to change**, particularly among older generational cohorts, such as Baby Boomers and Generation X. These groups often adhere to hierarchical structures and stability-driven work cultures, which may conflict with the adaptive and collaborative approaches promoted by EI. For instance, Rudolph and Zacher (2020) highlighted that older employees are less inclined to participate in workshops focused on soft skills, perceiving them as less critical than technical training. This reluctance can create friction in teams where younger employees, like Millennials and Generation Z, actively advocate for innovation and inclusivity.

**Intergenerational tensions** also exacerbate the issue. Misunderstandings stemming from differing communication styles or work values may discourage cross-generational collaboration. For example, Millennials' preference for continuous feedback and rapid adaptation can clash with Baby Boomers' reliance on formal communication and established routines (Ng et al., 2010). Without emotionally intelligent leaders to mediate, such conflicts can undermine team productivity and morale.

Moreover, the bureaucratic nature of LGUs poses an inherent challenge to adopting EI-based approaches. The rigid hierarchies and standardized procedures often limit the flexibility required for fostering emotionally intelligent practices. Villalobos et al. (2021) noted that public organizations frequently prioritize task completion over team dynamics, leaving little room for interventions that promote empathy, trust, and interpersonal awareness.

**Conclusion**

This systematic review underscores the critical role of Emotional Intelligence (EI) in effectively managing multigenerational workforces in Local Government Units (LGUs). With generational diversity introducing both opportunities and challenges in workplace dynamics, EI emerges as a transformative framework for fostering inclusivity, resolving conflicts, and enhancing team cohesion. Leaders equipped with EI competencies can bridge generational gaps by tailoring management strategies to the unique values, communication styles, and expectations of Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z employees.

The findings highlight that EI-driven leadership and workforce training programs can address generational tensions, improve collaboration, and ultimately enhance productivity in LGUs. By leveraging EI, public institutions like Panabo City's LGU can navigate resource constraints and meet high public expectations more effectively. Furthermore, the integration of EI into organizational strategies not only addresses immediate workplace challenges but also strengthens resilience and adaptability in a rapidly evolving socio-economic landscape.

This review provides a foundation for practical applications, such as designing EI-focused leadership development programs and policies aimed at fostering generational harmony. Future research should explore longitudinal impacts of EI interventions and expand insights into specific strategies for EI application in LGU contexts. By prioritizing Emotional Intelligence, LGUs can transform generational diversity into a strategic asset for achieving sustainable organizational and community outcomes.

Appendix 1

List of Resources and studies that focus on Leveraging Emotional Intelligence in Multigenerational workforces in Local Government Units

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Author(s) and Year** | **Title** | **Research Design** | **Type of Data** | **Key Insights** | **Relevance** |
| Sadri (2021) | Emotional Intelligence as a Driver of Leadership Success | Descriptive | Secondary (Qualitative) | Highlights how EI fosters inclusivity, trust, and collaboration in diverse workforces. | Framework for EI-based leadership skills in managing generational differences. |
| Rudolph & Zacher (2020) | Leadership and Generational Differences | Correlational | Secondary (Quantitative) | Examines the role of EI in bridging generational gaps in team settings. | Strategies for customizing leadership training to address generational preferences. |
| Villalobos et al. (2021) | Role of EI in Fostering Innovation in Public Organizations | Case Study | Secondary (Qualitative) | Links EI to innovation and adaptability in resource-constrained environments. | Incorporates innovative problem-solving into ToT programs for LGUs. |
| Kaya et al. (2016) | Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Effectiveness | Quantitative | Secondary (Quantitative) | Discusses the role of EI in enhancing leadership within public organizations. | Training modules on EI competencies for effective leadership. |
| Adams & Zumrah (2020) | EI in Public Sector Leadership | Mixed Methods | Secondary (Qualitative and Quantitative) | Explores EI’s impact on conflict resolution and team cohesion in government settings. | ToT modules for conflict management tailored to public sector challenges. |
| Schroth (2019) | Are You Ready for Gen Z in the Workplace? | Qualitative | Secondary (Qualitative) | Identifies Generation Z’s workplace expectations and contributions. | Training on engaging and managing Generation Z employees effectively. |
| Twenge & Campbell (2017) | Challenges for Managing Across Generations | Comparative Analysis | Secondary (Qualitative) | Reviews strategies for managing generational diversity with EI. | Incorporates generational awareness into leadership development. |
| Ravichandran et al. (2020) | EI and Its Implications for Workplace Dynamics | Quantitative | Secondary (Quantitative) | Links high EI with improved communication and reduced workplace tensions. | Communication strategies for addressing generational conflicts. |
| Ng et al. (2010) | New Generation, Great Expectations | Field Study | Secondary (Mixed Data) | Highlights Millennials’ focus on purpose-driven work and collaboration. | Customizing EI strategies to meet Millennials' motivational drivers. |
| Côté (2014) | EI and Organizational Behavior | Experimental | Secondary (Quantitative) | Demonstrates the link between EI and employee engagement and productivity. | ToT for promoting team cohesion and enhanced engagement through EI. |
| Lavy et al. (2021) | EI in Public Sector Teams | Case Study | Secondary (Qualitative) | Explores how EI supports trust-building and innovation in LGU settings. | Modules on trust-building for interdepartmental collaborations. |
| Lyons & Kuron (2014) | Generational Differences in the Workplace | Meta-Analysis | Secondary (Qualitative) | Summarizes generational traits and their impact on workplace dynamics. | Insights for creating inclusive and adaptive team cultures. |
| Smith et al. (2015) | Workplace Diversity and Productivity | Longitudinal | Secondary (Quantitative) | Links diversity with productivity and innovation when managed effectively. | Training on leveraging diversity for innovation and enhanced productivity. |
| Lancaster & Stillman (2010) | When Generations Collide | Qualitative | Secondary (Qualitative) | Discusses generational clashes and strategies for resolution. | Conflict resolution techniques for multigenerational teams. |
| Gursoy et al. (2008) | Generational Differences in Work Values | Survey-Based Study | Secondary (Mixed Data) | Explores how values differ across generational cohorts and affect workplace harmony. | Integrating values-based management into ToT curricula. |
| Goleman (1995) | Emotional Intelligence: Why it Can Matter More than IQ | Theoretical Framework | Secondary (Qualitative) | Introduces the core EI competencies: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. | Foundational knowledge for developing EI training programs. |
| Tolbize (2008) | Generational Differences in the Workplace | Descriptive | Secondary (Qualitative) | Reviews preferences in communication styles across generational cohorts. | Focused training on adapting communication strategies for different age groups. |
| Ng & Lyons (2021) | Generational Cohorts: Work Styles and Expectations | Survey-Based Study | Secondary (Quantitative) | Explores Millennials and Gen Z as digital natives in the workplace. | Digital fluency and technology adaptation training for managers. |
| Villalobos et al. (2022) | Multigenerational Workforce Leadership | Qualitative | Secondary (Qualitative) | Highlights best practices for leading diverse teams with EI. | Practical leadership models for public and private organizations. |
| Rudolph et al. (2022) | EI and Crisis Leadership | Experimental | Secondary (Quantitative) | Discusses the role of EI in navigating crises in multigenerational workplaces. | Crisis management techniques tailored to generational challenges. |