GENERATION OR CULTURE?

WORK ATTITUDE DRIVERS:
AN ANALYSIS IN LATIN AMERICA AND IBERIAN COUNTRIES

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Abstract

This paper addresses the subject of work attitude drivers within the current scenario considering two influencing factors, culture and generation. Both membership of a particular generation and membership of a particular culture can affect individuals' work attitudes. The study considers these two factors in order to analyse five dimensions that are sources of work attitudes: life project, professional ethics, attitude towards authority, leadership and commitment to the company. Drawing upon a sample of almost one thousand people from various Ibero-American countries, the results show significant differences between generations and cultures, particularly when focusing on the life project. Among its conclusions, the paper points out that Latin America can not be viewed as a homogenous whole in terms of individual work attitude. On the contrary, it is characterised by a significant degree of national diversity and managers should take this into account when designing initiatives to improve employee motivation.

Keywords: Influencing factors, attitude drivers, Ibero-American countries.

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Introduction and Research Goals

Retaining and developing the talent of future corporate leaders is one of the crucial challenges currently facing global organisations. In order to successfully meet this challenge, firms need to understand their employees' key motivation factors. Firms' efficiency and current and future performance will depend on their success or failure in understanding the differences in work attitudes entailed by generation change (from Generation X to Generation Y). A large number of those born in Generation Y already form part of the workforce and coexist with Generation X members in companies. According to figures provided by Eisner (2005), approximately 30% of the workforce is Generation X and 50% are Generation Y. Consequently, studying the efficient management of this age diversity has become a highly relevant research issue. However, little is known about how these differences between generations vary across cultures (Tortoriello and Krackhardt, 2010).

There is an abundant literature that has focused on the need to find the factors that differentiate work motivation between Generation X and Y (Howe et al., 2000; Huntley, 2006; Smola and Sutton, 2002). The rationale for this is the notion that there are key differences between the values and beliefs that the members of the two generations consider most important. Ignoring this reality may lead to conflicts among the staff, hinder understanding and communication between employees, reduce productivity and citizens' satisfaction with and motivation for work (Adams, 2000; Bradford, 1993; Fyock, 1990; Jurkievicz, 2000; Kupperschmidt, 2000; Smola and Sutton, 2002; Yu and Miller, 2003). However, current knowledge of the two generations' differentiating features basically comes from qualitative experiences that lack the necessary analytic rigor to implement effective strategies in the firm (Wong et al., 2008). Membership of a generation can be defined as being part of an identifiable group that shares date of birth, age and significant events that have occurred during their development process (Kupperschmidt, 2000, p. 66).

The purpose of this paper is to identify the source of the differences in people's work motivation. Until now, research has focused on the differences between Generation X and Y in their work attitudes and values, exploring five dimensions: Life Project, Professional Ethics, Attitude towards authority, Leadership and Commitment to the company (Sloan, 2000; Zemke et al., 2000; Smola and Sutton, 2002; Cennamo and Gardne, 2008; Nacky et al., 2008; Rawlins et al., 2008; Kowske et al., 2010). However, there are recent studies that question the existence of this motivational divergence between the two generations, asking whether it is a myth or reality[1] (Reynolds, 2005). On the other hand, one of the most significant approaches used in the literature that analyses differences in work motivation is based on cross-cultural explanations (Black, 1994; Pelled and Hill, 1997; Bu and McKeen, 2000; Latifi, 2006). These authors argue that individuals' values regarding work are shaped by the national culture, with the divergences being marked by family values, cultural and social norms, education and religious beliefs (Ronen, 1985; Bigoness and Blakely, 1996; Keilor and Hult, 1999; Akthar, 2000; Vallejo, 2008). Within this scenario, our research question is 'What shapes work motivation values?.' Our study seeks, first of all, to analyse whether the attitude to work is determined by culture, generation or both. Second, we wish to perform a comparative analysis of Ibero-American countries, with the goal of showing the differences and similarities between them, building a map of work attitudes and values (Stelzl and Seligman, 2009; Vallejo, 2008) for the countries included in our analysis.

Therefore, the contribution that this paper seeks to make is to include the cross-cultural perspective in the study of attitudes towards work, which has received less attention in previous studies (Burgess-Wilkerson and Thomas, 2009). A few studies have been recently published on this subject such as "Generation X and Y and the Workplace, Annual Report 2010",[2] which address this issue in the United States, United Kingdom, China and India, and Frauke's study (2008). However, the vast majority of the existing literature about Generation X and Y and their value for advertisers and marketers focuses on Generation Xers in the United States. Only a few studies examine Generation X in other countries in the Asia-Pacific region and Europe. We know of no studies that perform a comparative study of Generation X and Y in Ibero-America.

The first part of this paper will focus on reviewing the literature on the similarities and differences between Generation X and Y identified in recent years. We will then specify the cultural factors that the literature identifies as determining people's attitude towards work in cross-cultural terms, i.e., local cultural idiosyncrasy, the concept of the family, education and religious beliefs. After formulating our analysis model and the corresponding hypotheses, we will present the methodology with which this study has been performed. After discussing the results, we outline our main conclusions and the paper's main implications for business. The goal of this research is to make a contribution from both the academic and business viewpoints to improving our understanding of what motivational tools should target in order to attract and retain talent within organisations, while taking into account both the age factor and the cultural environment (Sloan, 2000).

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[1] The generation gap: More myth than reality, 2006. *Human Resource Planning*, 29 (4): pp. 32-37.

Theoretical framework

This study draws on generational cohort theory (Inglehart, 1977), culturalist theory (Stelz and Seligman, 2009; Peters and Heusinkveld, 2010) and motivational anthropology (Pérez López, 1979) to help understand the differences between Generation X and Y in Ibero-America and other countries. According to generational cohort theory, historical events of national significance have an impact on existing social orders and value systems and thus result in new generational cohorts (Inglehart, 1977). Cohort theory is based on two assumptions. First, the socialisation hypothesis suggests that adults' values are formed during childhood and adolescence and that these basic values stay relatively stable. Social constructivist theory suggests that reality is socially constructed by individuals and groups in a dynamic process (Berger and Luckmann, 1966). It proposes that all knowledge, including everyday reality, is created by social interactions. On the other hand, culturalist theory, which arises from Hofstede's studies (1980), seeks above all to explain how the actions of organisational players are established by processes that are already assumed, with a conformity that is often unconscious. Thus, the courses of action taken by organisations are not only the outcome of a rational behavior by economic players but are also a reflection of what is "natural" and "intrinsic" to certain cultural groups (e.g., Bae et al., 1998; Ngo et al., 1998). Pérez López's anthropological theory (1985) describes motivation as the factors that lead a person to take action and can be classified into three types, depending on their origin and destination: Extrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation and transcendent motivation.

Following this theoretical framework, we review the literature on the generations' work attitudes, distinguishing the characteristics of Generation X and Y and reviewing the studies that have addressed this subject from a cross-cultural viewpoint. Our goal is to build an analysis model that will allow us to theoretically define the paper's working hypotheses and verify them empirically.

Characteristics of Generation X and Generation Y

The term "generation" can be defined as 'an age group that shares throughout its history a set of formative experiences that distinguish it from its predecessors' (Ogg and Bonvalet, 2006). Hence, it is necessary first of all to delimit the age ranges that comprise these two groups: Generation X and Generation Y. The literature proposes a number of ranges from which one must be chosen in order to perform the qualitative and quantitative empirical study. In this study, we define Generation X as those born between 1965 and 1981, while Generation Y comprises those born between 1982 and 2000 (Zemke et al., 2000; Ogg and Bonvalet, 2006; Woodruffe, 2009).

Generation X (born in 1965-1981)

Generation X is composed of the parents of Generation Y. This generation has lived through a large number of landmark events in the world's political and social history: the Cold War, the assassination of J.F. Kennedy, the oil shock, the American withdrawal from the Vietnam War, the political transition towards democracy in Spain, the admission of representatives of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations or the beginning of the Iran-Iraq war, among others. The literature defines them as slightly cynical, unskilled in the use of computers, iPods or iPhones, and somewhat individualistic. They share a certain sense of alienation, as they were the first generation to go through the trauma of their parents' divorce (Tsui, 2001).

However, this generation also has positive aspects. According to a study performed in 2005 by the University of Wisconsin's Department of Political Science, this generation has a number of key values such as diversity, a global mindset, balance and a sense of fun.

They are more conservative, more concerned about ethics and feel responsible for their family's future. They give great importance to spending time with their family and maintaining a balance between their work and family life (Hachtmann, 2008). As Wendover argued in 2002, the members of this generation are prepared for survival; they have learned all they know while they were growing up. They are polyvalent, impatient and somewhat relativistic people.

It is a generation that lives without expectations and most of its members believe that they cannot change the situation, as it is still saturated by the much more numerous previous generation. Disillusioned with their parents' values, independent, creative and individualistic (Zemke et al., 2000; Allen, 2008), they followed the first rock and heavy metal bands that emerged in the mid-60s. The lost generation fears commitment, married later than the previous generation and did not start to have children until they were about 30 years of age.

To summarise, the members of Generation X are cynical, pessimistic and individualistic (Kupperschmidt, 2000; Smola and Sutton, 2002). It has also been said that the independence and self-sufficiency of the members of this generation compared with the previous 'baby-boomer' generation makes them less likely to show loyalty towards their companies or organisations (Hart, 2006). Consequently, they are seen as willing to accept challenges outside of the company they work for, seeking higher salaries, or improved benefits and professional status. They are not characterised by respect for authority and demand constant feedback (Hays, 1999; Loomis, 2000; Hart, 2006). A balance between work and family life is very important for them and their personal values take precedence over corporate goals (Howe et al., 2000).

Generation Y (born in 1982-2000)

Generation "*Why",* as the Generation Y is also known, has contributed to the political stability that characterised the last few years of Generation X. The economic growth of recent years, among other reasons, has shaped the characteristics of this generation. The values that define it are: optimism, respect for civic duties, sociability, confidence and achievement of goals (Zemke et al., 2000).

Howe and Strauss (2000) state that the Generation Y is very proficient in the use of technology, more prosperous, better educated and ethnically more diverse than previous generations. This generation is less familiar with hierarchical structures and needs immediate feedback (Filipczak, 1994), it seeks to enjoy work and believes that equal opportunity and tolerance are very important values (Boadbridge et al., 2007). Kotler (2005) defines it as the generation "with its nerves on edge," admirers of the urban lifestyle, and idealistic.

Generation Y has grown up with technology as an important part of its life. Its members feel attracted to change and are less likely to look for security as an important part of their job (Hart, 2006). As employees, the members of Generation Y value skill development, challenges and new career opportunities. The work atmosphere is important for them and they are more likely to have a more optimistic outlook (Huntley, 2006; Smola and Sutton, 2002). Unlike the individualistic outlook of the previous generation, they are characterised by their tendency to engage in collective action and for being very sociable (Hart, 2006; Smola and Sutton, 2002; Tulganand Martin, 2001). They appreciate being given responsibilities and taking part in the decisions and actions performed by the company they work for (McCrindle and Hooper, 2006).

Work attitude values

Work attitude values can be defined as the qualities that people want their work to have (Ben-Shem and Avi-Itzhak, 1991) and which reflect a match between their needs and their satisfaction (Abboushi, 1990). Super (1993) defined work values as those objectives that each individual seeks in work in order to satisfy a need. Dose (1997) defines them as "the standards related to work and work environment used by the individuals to evaluate and assess their preferences." In this sense, the author identifies two dimensions: 1) the moral or ethical component, and 2) the degree of consensus with respect to the importance of and desire for certain values. The differences between individuals as regards their work priorities and attitudes can account for the differences in individual performance and personal satisfaction at work (Hoppe, 1990), aspects which are essential for obtaining a committed staff (Li, 2008; Randall, 1993) and preparing the organisation for change processes (Hayes and Prakasam, 1989; Li, 2008).

Differences in work attitudes between Generations X and Y

A number of authors maintain that the individuals who belong to the same generation share key aspects in life and professional experience, have a common life experience and, consequently, share a high degree of cohesion in their outlooks, attitudes and assumptions (Arsenault, 2004; Weston, 2001; Zemke et al., 2000). We have therefore delved deeper into the literature to define which features are most important for each of the two generations with respect to the labour market.

Given the relative scarcity of studies on the coexistence of these two generations in the European labour market (Ogg and Bonvalet, 2006; The FutureWork Forum, 2006; "Libro Blanco de la Juventud," 2001), we have analysed the main contributions by North American academic studies (Zemke et al., 2000; Arsenault, 2004; Davis *et al.*, 2006; Nelson, 2006; Dytchwald et al., 2006) which explore in greater breadth than the European literature the differential features between these two generations regarding work attitudes. These features are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

Attitudes of Generation X and Y in professional work

Generation X	Generation Y
- Independence in decision-making	- Individual responsibility, freedom to make decisions
- Concern for professional ethics	- Pleasant work environment that encourages social relationships
- Non-proactive attitude towards norms and organisational hierarchy	- Learning and growth opportunities
- Willingness to adapt to changes	- Cooperation and joint decision-making
- No need for constant feedback on their performance	- Constant feedback and performance reviews
- Compensation based on consistency in daily work	- Open communication and approachable managers
- Stay in the same company	- Respect from older members for their lifestyle and work
- Lower level of training, particularly in technological aspects	- Performance-based compensation
- Focus on processes and not on results	- Time and space flexibility
- Low turnover	- High turnover

Source: Casewriter, based on Arsenault (2004).

Zemke et al. (2000) synthesise these features in five basic points that reflect the differences in the two generations' attitudes towards work (Table 2): life project, professional ethics, attitude towards authority, leadership, and commitment to the company.

Table 2

Differences between generations

	Generation X	Generation Y
Life project	Sceptical	Hopeful
Professional ethics	Balanced	Decided
Attitude towards authority	Indifference	Courtesy
Leadership	Competence	Collectivism
Commitment to the company	Anti-commitment	Inclusion

Source: Adapted from Zemke et al., 2000.

Carol Hymowitz said in *The Wall Street Journal*, "In order to motivate each one of these two generations, management must renounce having one single stereotype regarding the way in which their subordinates perform" (*The Wall Street Journal*, July 9, 2007). Therefore, understanding the factors that motivate each of these groups takes on crucial importance for managers if they are to manage effectively. As Gorman et al. (2004) argue, HR practices are formulated for a traditional profile (Generation X) and managers should ask themselves what defines the new profile (Generation Y) so that they can adapt their practices and retain talent.

Cross-cultural values in the attitude towards work

The first authors who studied cross-cultural values regarding work tended to replicate Maslow, Herzberg and McClelland's theory of needs in countries other than the United States (Hofstede, 1980; Hoppe, 1990). The limitations of applying American motivation theories to other cultures were revealed very quickly (Hofstede, 1980; Hoppe, 1990; Ronen and Shenkar, 1985). It was Hofstede (2001) who clearly showed the need to take cultural differences into account when applying motivation and leadership theories (House et al., 2004). Other developments have centred on the proliferation of conceptual schema which distinguish between values on the basis of different criteria or facets. For instance, Schwart (1992) distinguishes between different values based on motivational attributes. This approach yields a relatively large set of values across different life domains, including power, security, conformity, tradition, benevolence, universalism, self-direction, stimulation, and so on.

The first of these approaches, which views national culture as the key determinant of work values (Elizur et al., 1991; Black, 1994), draws particularly from the work of Hofstede (1980, 2001). The effect of national culture on an individual's work values is founded on the view that an individual's values in life are shaped by immediate family, societal and cultural norms, values and beliefs, which form 'the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another' (Hofstede, 2001, p. 9). This collective programming, Hofstede contends, is largely found at a national level. He therefore posits that national culture will have a significant impact on (among other things) work values and behaviors. Hofstede's work has proved to be highly influential in a wide range of areas in cross-cultural business and management research (Latifi, 2006; Pelled and Hill, 1997; Roe and Ester,

1999; McSweeney, 2002; Schaffer and Riordan, 2003). In their discussion of the role of culture on organisations, Hickson and Pugh (1995, p. 90) go so far as to claim that 'it shapes everything'.

For instance, cross-cultural management research explores how national culture shapes individual values and, through them, a range of individual-level work-related goals, values and behaviors (Akthar, 2000; Bigoness and Blakely, 1996; Keilor and Hult, 1999; Ronen, 1985; Sverko, 1995). Ronen and Shenkar (1985) find that work needs, values and goals vary significantly between different cultures. It seems clear that the local culture specifies a series of work needs, values and goals that must be taken into account when applying employee management systems (Hoppe, 1990). In recent decades, new models have emerged that try to prove the differences between work values. In spite of the criticism received by Hostfede's model for intercultural research, it has traditionally been the most widely used and replicated model (Ronen and Shenkar, 1985).

There is an abundant body of literature that has identified the levels of work satisfaction and commitment across different cultures (Clugston, Howell, and Dorfman, 2000; Kanungo and Wright, 1983; Lincoln and Kalleberg, 1985; Luthans, McCaul, and Dodd, 1985; Near, 1989; Palich, Hom, and Griffeth, 1995; Sommer, Bae, and Luthans, 1996; Verkuyten, de Jong, and Mas-son, 1993). But how does the cultural component affect work attitude? Paradoxically, a considerable number of studies associate cultural values with employees' attitudes. However, it is not clear why nor what these cultural values are that have such a decisive influence on job satisfaction and organisational commitment (e.g. Luthans et al., 1985; Palich et al., 1995; Sommer et al., 1996). Randall's work (1993) provides a theoretical model that includes four cultural values based on Hofstede (1980a) and Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961). However, our argument is based on the model supported by Latifi (2006), Akthar (2000) and Vallejo (2008), which approaches attitude differences in different countries from their conception of family values, cultural and social norms, education and religious beliefs.

The cultural ties between European countries (Spain and Portugal) and the Latin American countries are due to historic reasons. Latin America has received its historical, political and cultural legacy from these two countries. This includes the transmission and assimilation of the language (Spanish and Portuguese), traditions, religion, lifestyle, etc. This is why Ibero-America is considered as a cultural unit (Vinet, 1999). The fact that these aspects are shared is related with individuals' psychological features. Some of these features were identified by Hofstede (1980), who groups Ibero-American countries in the same cluster, characterised by high levels in the dimensions distance from power and avoidance of uncertainty, and low levels in individualism, although Spain holds a middle level in this dimension. Another cultural feature pointed out for Ibero-America as a whole by Triandis (1984) is the so-called "congeniality", which implies a certain degree of conformity, willingness to share with others and skill in achieving harmony in social relations. On the other hand, as Friedrich et al. (2006) argue, the literature has usually tended to view the cultural features of certain geographical areas such as Africa, Middle East, Asia and Latin America as homogenous "cultural" blocs, ignoring the significant cultural differences existing between the countries included in these areas.

In the case of Latin America, the "myth of cultural homogeneity" among the countries comprising the continent has been maintained for decades. Sambarino (1979) tried to prove the possible existence of an identity that reflected Latin America's "singleness", pointing out that "the identity of Latin America, if it exists, must be of a historic-cultural nature." This has been characterised primarily by factors such as the existence of a single religion (e.g., Davis, 1969), the fact that these countries share similar traditions (e.g., Olien, 1973, p. 227), the partaking of

"sameness" (e.g., Olien, 1973, p. 195), or the use of similar communication patterns due to the existence of a common language. Sambarino's approach enables us to conceive Ibero-American identity from a historical and social viewpoint, i.e., culturally, in which the social order corresponds to the interpretative, estimative and normative criteria of the individuals comprising the social group.

However, this conception of the identity of Latin America has been considered rather reductionist and exclusive (Bracho, 2007) and Friedrich et al. (2006) show the cultural differences in five of Latin America's largest countries – Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Mexico – and conclude that effective corporate management is contingent upon the culture, in that it may be very effective in one Latin American country and not at all effective in another country. By way of example, the authors state that Argentina and Chile have a strong tendency to follow traditions and are known for their preference for the hierarchical structures that define their institutions. However, Brazil and Colombia prefer flat structures and tend to show admiration for modernity, with the consequent introduction of new practices, giving less weight to tradition. As Leung et al. (2005) point out, both academics and managers are aware that cultural differences have many different nuances on the different levels and dimensions that can be considered.

To conclude, we can say that the literature is confusing as regards the cultural identity both of Ibero-America and of Latin America and there is no consensus on this point in the literature. Our study will address this debate by considering the work attitudes of the individuals belonging to these different geographical areas with the purpose of determining whether they are homogenous or heterogeneous.

Analysis Model

Following from the theoretical framework set forth in the previous section, we asked ourselves four research questions:

1) Which variables do we consider form part of the concept of work attitude values?

2) How does membership of a particular generation affect this work attitude?

3) How does culture (understood as the country of origin) affect the work attitude? Here, we are interested in performing the comparisons in two categories:

      i. Ibero-America vs. rest of the world

      ii. Within Ibero-America:

            1. Spain vs. Latin America

            2. Within Latin America: differences between the different countries

4) What other factors moderate this relationship?

As regards the first question, our study adopts the work attitude concept developed by Zemke et al. (2000), with five basic variables:

Life project: The life project can be understood as an outline of individuals' goals with the steps they must take to achieve them.

Ethics: The norms or principles that guide and even determine human behavior.

Attitude towards authority: It is the manner of understanding subordinates' interaction with guidelines from higher up.

Leadership: Leadership consists of a person's ability or skill to influence, induce, encourage or motivate others to perform a certain task or achieve a certain goal.

Commitment to the company: The employee's psychological attachment to or identification with the organisation's goals.

On the basis of the theoretical development in which we have explained the differences in work attitudes between Generation X and Y, we draw the first working hypothesis from point 2:

H1. Membership of a particular generation affects individuals' attitude to work

With respect to point 3 and taking into account the cross-culturality arguments in individuals' attitudes to work, we infer the following hypotheses:

H2: Cultural origin affects individuals' attitude to work

> *H2a. The attitude to work is similar among individuals from Ibero-America and the rest of the world.*
>
> *H2aa. The attitude to work is different among individuals from Ibero-America and the rest of the world.*
>
> *H2b. The attitude to work is similar among individuals from Spain and Latin America.*
>
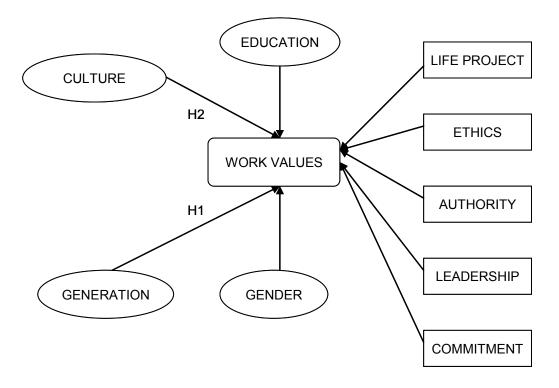> *H2bb. The attitude to work is different among individuals from Spain and Latin America.*
>
> *H2c. The attitude to work is similar among individuals from different Latin American countries.*
>
> *H2cc. The attitude to work is different among individuals from different Latin American countries.*

Finally, with respect to point 4, we recognise the existence of other factors such as gender or education that moderate these relationships.

Figure 1

Analysis model

Methodology

This paper uses a quantitative methodology. Data was collected using a structured, closed questionnaire (see Exhibit 1) which was distributed on-line. Consequently, a large-scale survey has been performed with the participation of Latin American (Colombia, Peru, Brazil and Chile), European (Spain and Ireland) and North American universities.

The sample:

The sample is composed of N=962 observations. 27% of the sample are Spanish, 64% are Latin American (11% Brazil; 13% Chile; 30% Colombia; 8% Peru and 2% from other Latin American countries), and the remaining 9% are from other countries. 61% are from Generation Y and 39% from Generation X. 50% are female and 50% are male. 56.4% are first-degree graduates, 39.4% had completed or were currently following postgraduate courses, and 4.3% had followed doctoral studies.

Variables and Measures

Dependent variable

The dependent variable is a construct which we call **work attitude values** and is composed of five observable variables, namely, life project, ethics, attitude towards authority, leadership and commitment to the company (Zemke et al., 2000). This ordinal variable is measured by a rating given by the survey respondents on a Likert scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is 'not at all important' and 5 is 'very important,' regarding the importance of the items listed in Table 6. The basic reference for measuring the variables and identifying the items is taken from Zemke et al. (2000)

Table 3
Construct: Work attitude (variables and component items)

Construct	Variable	Items
Work attitude value	**Life project**	Fixed working hours
		Security
		Deal with many people
		Intellectual stimulus
		Contribution to society
	Professional ethics	Social diversity
		Challenges and problems to solve
		Money is not the most important thing for colleagues
		Recognition based on effort and not on status
		My job allows me to balance work and family life
		Company with social initiatives
	Attitude towards authority	Respect from the boss
		Support from the boss
		Quality supervision from my boss
		My ideas are appreciated
		My boss is a good professional
	Leadership	Responsibility and freedom in decision-making
		Cooperation from the work team
		Joint decision-making
		Appreciation for my initiatives and ideas
		Feedback
	Commitment to the company	Career growth within the company
		Identification with the company's problems
		Emotional commitment to the organisation
		The company as part of my family

Independent variables

There are two independent variables: 1) Country of origin: a variable classified according to the different countries that have taken part in the study (see Table 4). This independent variable corresponds to hypothesis 2 and is related with the cultural differences in each country concerning the dependent variable (Ronen and Shenkar, 1985). This variable will have three sub-classifications in order to answer the hypotheses proposed:

- Ibero-America (i.e. Spain[3] and Latin America) and Rest of the world.

- Spain and Latin America[4].

- Latin America.

2) Generation: The second variable is the generation to which the individuals in the sample belong and has been characterised in the section describing the differential features of the generations as regards their attitude to work (Arsenault, 2004; Weston, 2001). Following the traditional classification, we have Generation X (born in 1965-1981) and Generation Y (born in 1982-2000).

Control variables

The control variables are gender (male and female), as there is an abundant literature that identifies this factor as influencing the individual's attitude to work (e.g., Schultheiss and Brunstein, 2001; Trornton et al., 1997), and education, which determines individuals' intrinsic motivation for work (e.g., Painter and Dakers, 1997; Thom, 1998; Boyle, 1999; Vanderburg, 1999; Peet and Mulder, 2004). This variable was subdivided into first degree, postgraduate and doctorate level.

Statistical method used

The following procedure will be used to analyse the data. First of all, the difference in means was determined in order to obtain an initial analysis which would enable us to observe the more obvious differences between the sample respondents and their attitudes to work depending on the generation they belong to and their country of origin, distinguishing Ibero-America vs. rest of the world, Spain vs. Latin America, gender and education. Second, a multivariant analysis has been performed with a post-hoc Bonferroni test to analyse the significant differences within the four Latin American countries analysed with respect to the study variable.

Results

The results of the difference of means are shown in Table 1. They show that for each item comprising each variable, the results differ by generation, culture, gender and education. The significant differences (Student's t test) are highlighted in yellow. This data will be discussed in the discussion section, comparing with the previous literature.

Tables 5 and 6 show the results of the post-hoc Bonferroni test of the multivariant analysis.

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[3] Portugal is not included as it was not included in the sample.
[4] Latin America: The four Latin American countries included in the sample are considered: Colombia, Peru, Brazil and Chile.

Table 4

Comparison of means showing the significant differences for the model's variables

	Generation			Country of origin						Gender			Education			Within Lt				
	G Y	G X	t	Ib	RW	t	Sp	Lt	t	V	M	t	Lic	Post	t	Chile	Colombia	Peru	Brazil	Others
Fixed working hours	3,32	2,75	6,252	3,07	3,41	-2,206	3,52	2,89	6,238	2,88	3,32	-4,880	3,30	2,77	5,609	2,67	2,84	3,74	2,63	3,39
Security	4,54	4,26	4,750	4,44	4,39	,511	4,34	4,48	-2,029	4,32	4,56	-4,231	4,52	4,32	3,298	4,31	4,57	4,68	4,32	4,39
Deal with many people	3,91	4,13	-3,480	4,01	3,76	2,077	4,00	4,02	-,195	3,98	4,02	-,674	3,90	4,14	-3,704	3,74	4,31	4,07	3,50	4,11
Intellectual stimulus	4,66	4,84	-4,667	4,73	4,71	,377	4,64	4,77	-2,539	4,70	4,76	-1,617	4,68	4,82	-3,759	4,50	4,90	4,70	4,74	4,89
Contribution to society	4,55	4,65	-1,977	4,63	4,20	3,659	4,53	4,67	-2,597	4,50	4,68	-3,837	4,59	4,61	-,324	4,44	4,77	4,74	4,60	4,83
Social diversity	3,97	4,18	-3,080	4,07	3,87	1,660	3,75	4,20	-5,793	3,92	4,19	-4,072	4,03	4,07	-,513	3,73	4,38	4,24	4,23	4,33
Challenges and problems to solve	4,37	4,60	-4,930	4,47	4,34	1,454	4,24	4,56	-5,684	4,54	4,38	3,425	4,42	4,52	-1,973	4,51	4,66	4,69	4,33	4,44
Money is not the most important thing for colleagues	3,93	4,03	-1,462	3,97	4,01	-,396	4,00	3,95	,708	3,87	4,07	-2,877	3,96	3,98	-,391	3,83	4,00	4,17	3,80	4,00
Recognition based on effort and not on status	4,54	4,57	-,772	4,58	4,24	3,315	4,53	4,60	-1,508	4,47	4,64	-3,686	4,58	4,50	1,444	4,57	4,64	4,65	4,50	4,67
My job allows me to balance work and family life	4,80	4,89	-2,782	4,84	4,70	1,726	4,84	4,84	-,037	4,77	4,89	-3,439	4,85	4,80	1,383	4,93	4,83	4,90	4,76	4,83
Company with social initiatives	4,27	4,40	-2,185	4,38	3,69	5,161	4,21	4,45	-3,675	4,14	4,50	-6,171	4,32	4,31	,219	4,19	4,60	4,54	4,33	4,44
Respect from the boss	4,87	4,90	-1,056	4,89	4,83	1,327	4,86	4,90	-1,287	4,83	4,93	-3,742	512	359	-,277	4,81	4,95	4,84	4,92	4,89
Support from the boss	4,65	4,42	5,044	4,56	4,61	-,704	4,53	4,57	-,845	4,49	4,64	-3,375	511	358	2,254	4,46	4,58	4,49	4,73	4,56
Quality supervision from my boss	4,70	4,65	1,308	4,69	4,58	1,572	4,67	4,70	-,572	4,62	4,73	-2,754	510	358	,998	4,63	4,71	4,73	4,70	4,89
My ideas are appreciated	4,81	4,82	-,247	4,82	4,74	1,339	4,72	4,86	-4,096	4,79	4,84	-1,400	512	357	,066	4,86	4,89	4,79	4,82	4,89
My boss is a good professional	4,85	4,78	2,014	4,83	4,76	1,390	4,83	4,83	,086	4,75	4,90	-4,700	512	358	1,648	4,76	4,86	4,87	4,81	4,78
Responsibility and freedom in decision-making	4,60	4,74	-3,644	4,66	4,54	1,800	4,52	4,72	-3,700	4,69	4,61	-3,742	4,63	4,68	-1,321	4,67	4,76	4,70	4,63	4,89
Cooperation from the work team	4,74	4,83	-2,622	4,79	4,59	2,821	4,73	4,82	-2,405	4,72	4,83	-3,375	4,77	4,78	-,474	4,82	4,84	4,89	4,70	4,89
Joint decision-making	4,30	4,23	1,061	4,27	4,26	,162	4,21	4,30	-1,345	4,19	4,37	-2,754	4,27	4,29	-,465	4,28	4,38	4,33	4,18	3,72
Appreciation for my initiatives and ideas	4,65	4,64	,374	4,66	4,55	1,485	4,57	4,69	-2,310	4,60	4,71	-1,400	4,67	4,64	,502	4,70	4,73	4,71	4,58	4,56
Feedback	4,47	4,55	-1,583	4,51	4,43	,936	4,36	4,57	3,399	4,49	4,51	-4,700	4,46	4,56	-1,858	4,39	4,57	4,74	4,66	4,61
Career growth within the company	2,75	2,70	,564	2,75	2,58	1,357	2,85	2,70	1,682	2,66	2,80	-1,866	2,80	2,60	2,431	2,29	2,79	2,99	2,71	3,11
Identification with the company's problems	3,55	3,80	-3,678	3,71	3,01	5,588	3,48	3,80	-3,983	3,71	3,59	1,711	3,68	3,64	,519	3,58	3,95	4,04	3,50	3,89
Emotional commitment to the organisation	2,94	2,99	-,516	2,98	2,80	1,267	2,75	3,07	-3,564	3,05	2,88	2,113	2,93	3,01	-,875	3,09	3,11	2,97	3,02	3,00
The company as part of my family	3,22	3,23	-,060	3,28	2,72	3,835	2,90	3,43	-5,771	3,30	3,16	1,605	3,30	3,21	1,049	3,23	3,69	3,82	2,78	3,00
N (valid)	582	366		866	86		249	617		472	471		513	359		126	292	73	104	18
N (valid) Total		948			952			866			943			872				613		

Table 5

Comparative means with respect to work attitude within Latin America

	Within Lt				
	Chile	**Colombia**	**Peru**	**Brazil**	**Others**
Fixed working hours	2.67	2.84	3.74	2.63	3.39
Security	4.31	4.57	4.68	4.32	4.39
Deal with many people	3.74	4.31	4.07	3.50	4.11
Intellectual stimulus	4.50	4.90	4.70	4.74	4.89
Contribution to society	4.44	4.77	4.74	4.60	4.83
Social diversity	3.73	4.38	4.24	4.23	4.33
Challenges and problems to solve	4.51	4.66	4.69	4.33	4.44
Money is not the most important thing for colleagues	3.83	4.00	4.17	3.80	4.00
Recognition based on effort and not on status	4.57	4.64	4.65	4.50	4.67
My job allows me to balance work and family life	4.93	4.83	4.90	4.76	4.83
Company with social initiatives	4.19	4.60	4.54	4.33	4.44
Respect from the boss	4.81	4.95	4.84	4.92	4.89
Support from the boss	4.46	4.58	4.49	4.73	4.56
Quality supervision from my boss	4.63	4.71	4.73	4.70	4.89
My ideas are appreciated	4.86	4.89	4.79	4.82	4.89
My boss is a good professional	4.76	4.86	4.87	4.81	4.78
Responsibility and freedom in decision-making	4.67	4.76	4.70	4.63	4.89
Cooperation from the work team	4.82	4.84	4.89	4.70	4.89
Joint decision-making	4.28	4.38	4.33	4.18	3.72
Appreciation for my initiatives and ideas	4.70	4.73	4.71	4.58	4.56
Feedback	4.39	4.57	4.74	4.66	4.61
Career growth within the company	2.29	2.79	2.99	2.71	3.11
Identification with the company's problems	3.58	3.95	4.04	3.50	3.89
Emotional commitment to the organisation	3.09	3.11	2.97	3.02	3.00
The company as part of my family	3.23	3.69	3.82	2.78	3.00
N (valid)	126	292	73	104	18
N (valid) total	613				

Table 6

Differences within Latin America

Life project				
	Chile	Colombia	Peru	Brazil
Chile		Security Deal with many people Intellectual stimulus Contribution to society	Fixed working hours Intellectual stimulus Contribution to society	Intellectual stimulus
Colombia			Fixed working hours	Deal with many people
Peru				Fixed working hours Security Deal with many people

Professional ethics					
	Chile	Colombia	Peru	Brazil	Other Latin American countries
Chile		Social diversity Company with social initiatives	Social diversity Company with social initiatives	Social diversity	
Colombia				Challenges to be solved Company with social initiatives	
Peru				Challenges to be solved	

Attitude towards authority					
	Chile	Colombia	Peru	Brazil	Other Latin American countries
Chile		Respect from the boss		Support from the boss	

Leadership					
	Chile	Colombia	Peru	Brazil	Other Latin American countries
Chile			Feedback	Cooperation from the work team Feedback	
Colombia					Joint decision-making
Peru				Cooperation from the work team	Joint decision-making

Commitment to the Company					
Peru	Chile	Colombia	Peru	Brazil	Other Latin American countries
Brazil		Career growth within the company The company as part of my family	Career growth within the company The company as part of my family	The company as part of my family	
Other Latin American countries			Identification with the company's problems	Identification with the company's problems	
Peru				Identification with the company's problems	

Discussion and Conclusions

The human resources staff has a great responsibility in making this transition as smooth as possible. It is their obligation to take the situation to senior executives and address it in terms of a business issue, not as a human resources issue.

Concerning the first hypothesis analysed, in which it was said that membership of a particular generation influences individuals' attitude towards work, the results given in Table 4 enable us to conclude that there are differences. The largest significant differences are to be found in the conception of the life project (5 items). In this variable, Generation Y gives priority to aspects related with *extrinsic motivation* such as having fixed working hours and job security, while Generation X gives greater importance to intrinsic issues such as dealing with more people and the intellectual stimulus given by their work, and the transcendent motivation given by their work's contribution to society. In this sense, we can say that Generation Y is more sceptical than Generation X about the future, as Zemke et al. (2000) said. The importance given by Generation Y members to "having their own personal time" is because "They don't live for work... they work to live." This is illustrated by a statement published in the press by a young Generation Y person.

> *My dad works in the hotel industry, and that is a 24-hour job. He has always worked really hard. A lot of the time he could not take holidays or spend time with us. I appreciate what he did, but I don't want that to be my life. I don't want work to be so full-on that you cannot enjoy your family. I want to find a balance.*[5]

There are also significant differences in the aspects we have defined as dimensions of professional ethics. In this case, it is Generation X that gives more importance to aspects such as working in a diverse environment, having challenges and problems to solve, work-family balance and the social projection of the company they work for. At present, the debate is focused on whether the current economic crisis will change Generation Y's traditionally demanding attitude. Generation X's ethical commitment is greater than that of Generation Y in these aspects, confirming what the previous literature says about the existence of a generation gap in business ethics between the two generations (Longenecker and Moore, 1988). Authors such as Freestone (2004) also highlight the aberrant ethical behaviors of Generation Y members and justify it by the negative effect of this generation's indiscriminate use of Internet. As regards the attitude towards authority, the need for the boss's support is clearly greater for Generation Y members, who also give much greater importance to quality supervision. These individuals are more accustomed to protection and a sensitivity analysis has been conducted of the reports and feedback they receive (Papamichail and French, 2002). The individualistic nature of the Generation X members is apparent in the different importance they give to independence and freedom in decision-making. However, according to our results, Generation X members also place greater value on teamwork, challenging what the literature has usually said about these two parameters, which many authors use to characterise Generation Y (Hart, 2006; Smola and Sutton, 2002). Table 7 shows the ranking of each of the components of the two generations' work attitude. It can be seen that both generations put 'respect from the boss' as the first factor and 'career growth within the company' as the last factor. It can therefore be said that the most important motivational factor is the need for managers to show respect for their subordinates. As Welch (2010) says:

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[5] *The Observer* Sunday, 25, May 2008.

"Employees need respect. One of greatest complaints that nearly every employee has about their boss is a perceived lack of respect. Most employees feel their bosses don't respect their privacy, their ability, and their personal lives (yes, employees have a life outside of work). As such, employers should go out of their way to show respect to each employee in the organisation. Remember that respect tends to be reciprocated; as such, showing respect to employees is one of the most effective ways to win their respect and loyalty".[6]

However, it seems that practically no-one values career growth within the company although, in relation to career aspirations, Schein (1987) has examined individual's internal careers and explains that individuals hold a wide variety of career interests denominated career anchors (Van Maanen and Schein, 1979; Schein, 1996).

Table 7

Ranking by generations

R		Generation Y		Generation X			R
1		Respect from the boss	4.87	Respect from the boss	4.90		1
2		The boss is a good professional	4.85	Work-family balance	4.89		2
3		My ideas are appreciated	4.81	Intellectual stimulus	4.84		3
4		Work-family balance	4.80	Cooperation from work team	4.83		4
5		Cooperation from work team	4.74	My ideas are appreciated	4.82		5
6		Quality supervision	4.70	The boss is a good professional	4.78		6
7		Intellectual stimulus	4.66	Responsibility and freedom to make decisions	4.74		7
8		Appreciation for initiatives and ideas	4.65	Contribution to society	4.65		8
9		Support from the boss	4.65	Quality supervision	4.65		9
10		Responsibility and freedom to make decisions	4.60	Appreciation of initiative and ideas	4.64		10
11		Contribution to society	4.55	Challenges and problems to solve	4.60		11
12		Security	4.54	Recognition of my efforts	4.57		12
13		Recognition of my efforts	4.54	Feedback	4.55		13
14		Feedback	4.47	Support from the boss	4.42		14
15		Challenges and problems to solve	4.37	Companies with social initiatives	4.40		15
16		Joint decision-making	4.30	Security	4.26		16
17		Companies with social initiatives	4.27	Joint decision-making	4.23		17
18		Social diversity	3.97	Social diversity	4.18		18
19		Money should not be most important	3.93	Deal with many people	4.13		19
20		Deal with many people	3.91	Money should not be most important	4.03		20
21		Identification with company's problems	3.55	Identification with company's problems	3.80		21
22		Fixed working hours	3.32	The company as part of the family	3.23		22
23		The company as part of the family	3.22	Emotional commitment to organisation	2.99		23
24		Emotional commitment to organisation	2.94	Fixed working hours	2.75		24
25		Career within the company	2.75	Career within the company	2.70		25

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[6] Source: http://www.articlesbase.com/ – Top 5 Reasons Why Employees Hate Their Bosses (And What Bosses Can Do About It).

The effect of gender is also highly significant. Women's attitude towards work reveals higher levels than men's in all the items except two. This may be due to the major social changes that have taken place as regards women's entry in the labour market, although there is considerable debate on this subject in the literature (see Ags et al., 2005). However, as Sokolowska (1965) says, gainful employment is an inseparable attribute of male personality and this could be related with the fact that men are more likely than women to want to have challenges and problems to solve and to be more closely identified with the company's problems.

The culture variable that appears in hypothesis 2 sheds light on the influence of the country of birth, and the culture one inherits is another significant variable that helps us map individuals' different attitudes towards work.

When comparing Ibero-America (Ib) with the Rest of the World (RW), it is to be highlighted that the only dimension that has a significantly high score for RW compared with Ib is that of fixed working hours. This is also found for Spain compared with Latin America. This can be explained by the still meagre but growing body of regulation concerning work conditions in Latin America. Thus, for example, while working hours is regulated in Spain in the collective bargaining process, in recent decades regulation of the job market has become one of the most controversial issues of political debate in Latin America.

On the other hand, there is greater appreciation in Ibero-America than in the Rest of the World and in Latin America than in Spain for the company's contribution to society and its social initiatives. CSR has taken on growing importance in Latin America because, in one way or another, companies are increasingly aware of their close relationship with society. After the failure of state paternalism, the corporate sector found itself at the centre of civil society's expectations and it was society itself that started to demand greater participation and social commitment from the company. Thus, the company has ceased to be a closed system, concerned only with generating profit, to become an open system, much more influenced by social needs and requirements.[7] Nevertheless, part of this paternalism remains alive through the attitude prevailing both in Ibero-America and in Latin America according to which the company is viewed as part of the family.

If we take a look at the differences between individual countries, Colombia's results appear consistent with results from a national value survey done in (2006[8]). For Colombians, respect for parents and authority figures is very important but it is also very important that there be reciprocity in the relationship (p. 74). The items related to emotional commitment and the company's involvement in social initiatives might be explained by the high value that Colombians place on work. According to the value survey mentioned above, work is a 'very important' issue for Colombians; work is a duty to society and it is necessary for personal development. Considerable importance is also placed on Appreciation for my ideas and Intellectual stimulus (pp. 39, 44). The results also suggest a relationship between these factors and the Peruvian people's attitudes, which can be explained mainly by the country's history and the milestones that have marked its inhabitants. Thus, upon looking at the variables that define the work attitude value, the highest scores in the Life project variable are to be found in the Fixed working hours (3.74) and Security (4.68) items, which indicate a high risk aversion.

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[7] Opinion of Patricia Debeljuh, research professor at the Centro de Estudios Avanzados (CEAV), Universidad Argentina de la Empresa (UADE), published by Formapyme (www.formapyme.com).
[8] Our Identity: Colombians Value Study, Raddar, 2006.

For the Ethics variable, the highest scores are obtained for Challenges and problems to solve (4.69) and Recognition based on effort not on status (4.65), which may be understood as a drive and/or determination to do something worthwhile but with personal recognition value added. Peruvians are an enterprising people, but appreciate help and have an underlying need to be guided. This translates into the Attitude towards authority variable, where Peru scores 4.73 in wishing quality supervision and 4.87 in having a good professional as a boss, both results being related to the desire for security. The Leadership variable confirms this result as the highest scores are obtained for Cooperation from the work team (4.89) and Feedback (4.74). Brazil's profile is closer to Colombia's (3 items) than to Peru's (6 items). Regarding the variables involved, there were some differences concerning their nature. Compared with Chile, there were more differences in Leadership, while the differences with Colombia were concentrated on Professional Ethics and those with Peru were related with the Life Project. These differences can be important for strategic positioning and the performance of organisational management processes in these Latin-American countries.

Implications for Corporate Strategy and Policy-Making

The primary goal pursued by this paper has been to advance a more nuanced view of factors and forces that explain the recent picture in Latin America regarding work attitudes and values. Focusing on the analysis performed within Latin America, Figure 7 gives the ranking, in order of decreasing importance, of the attitudes and values that are rated highest by the people in this geographical region. However, Table 8 clearly shows a multitude of significant differences in attitudes towards work in the four countries analysed. We think that the information given in this table may be of great value to corporate managers of companies present in these four countries to help them adapt their motivation systems to local priorities. This diversity – due to cultural differences within Latin America – offers a wealth that most necessarily be known in order to effectively manage this diverse workforce with its different motivations.

Table 8

Ranking in Latin America: Attitude towards work

R		Latin America	
1		Respect from the boss	4.90
2		My ideas are appreciated	4.86
3		Work-family balance	4.84
4		The boss as a good professional	4.83
5		Cooperation from the work team	4.82
6		Intellectual stimulus	4.77
7		Responsibility and freedom to make decisions	4.72
8		Quality supervision	4.70
9		Appreciation of initiative and ideas	4.69
10		Contribution to society	4.67
11		Recognition based on efforts and not on status	4.60
12		Support from the boss	4.57
13		Feedback	4.57
14		Challenges and problems to solve	4.56
15		Security	4.48
16		Company with social initiatives	4.45
17		Joint decision-making	4.30
18		Social diversity	4.20
19		Deal with many people	4.02
20		Money is not the most important thing for colleagues	3.95
21		Identification with the company's problems	3.80
22		The company as a part of the family	3.43
23		Emotional commitment to the organisation	3.07
24		Fixed working hours	2.89
25		Career growth within the company	2.70

As one of this paper's main contributions, it helps clarify that respect for subordinates is viewed as the most important item by both generations. The least interesting item seems to be career growth within the company, which is considered to be an antiquated attitude by the respondents.

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