Cultural Values and Career Goal of Gen-X and Gen-Y: A Conceptual Framework

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Abstract
Purpose: This article proposes a conceptual framework of influence of cultural values on career goals of Gen-X and Gen-Y.
Design/methodology/approach: An integrative literature review method was employed to identify and analyse relevant literatures. The analysis is based on Schwartz's conceptualizations of cultural values, Mayrhofer *et al.*'s definition of career goals, and Social Cognitive Career Theory. Keywords such as cultural values, career goal and generation workforce of Gen-X and Gen-Y were used in retrieving literatures found worldwide.
Findings: The author adopted 10 personal cultural values as potential predictors of career goal perceived by the generation workforce of Gen-X and Gen-Y.
Research limitations/implications: It has significance to future research in validating the proposed framework.
Practical implications: Upon validation the paper could offer practical implications for human resource managers, general managers, and employees to assist in understanding the link between cultural values on career goals particularly from the perspective of Gen-X and Gen-Y.
Originality/value: This study is a step forward in understanding influence of cultural values on career goals of an intergenerational workforce of Gen-X and Gen-Y. The paper suggests that practical human resource initiatives should address the issue of the influence of cultural values on career goals.

Keywords: Cultural value, career goal, intergenerational workforce, Gen-X, Gen-Y

Introduction
The Changing Nature of Careers and Intergenerational workforce: The Research Gap
Careers are said to have become boundaryless (Arthur and Rousseau, 1996) both in terms of theory and practice across organizations or professions (Baruch, 2004; Sullivan and Arthur, 2006). This leads to an understanding that careers are always in a constant transformation (Reis and Baruch, 2013). An implication of the boundaryless careers is the probable impact on career goals due to changes in the demographic composition in the workforce (Lyons *et al.*, 2015) and changes in cultural values (Schwartz, 2012) among generation cohorts. The co-existence of generation cohorts in the workforce further implies that generation is needed as a point of research perspective in addition to being merely a demographic variable as being criticized by Lyons and Kuron (2014). This is one of the perspectives of knowledge gaps in this article.
Careers are located at the intersection of societal history, a country's development and individual biography (Al Ariss *et al.*, 2013). At the theoretical level a thorough analysis of careers requires contributions from a great range of disciplinary perspectives such as

developmental psychology, management, economics or sociology (Al Ariss *et al*., 2013), and human resource development (Swanson and Holton, 2001; Ismail and Osman-Gani, 2011). Thus a multi- and interdisciplinary research is essential as careers are multi-faceted phenomena. One of the research gaps in career literatures is from the individual level perspective based on generation cohort. Hence, this adds to the notion mentioned above that a career study looking at perspective of individuals in the generation cohorts is necessary.

A striking change about careers is the significance of 'traditional' organizational career, which has been partly replaced by new forms of careers 'outside' organizations. Labels like newly self-employed, borderless career, one-person employer, own account self-employed or free agents have been coined to describe these phenomena (Mayrhofer and Meyer, 2001). The meaning of traditional versus transformed deal of careers by Baruch (2004, p. 13) gives implications to changes in culture values and career goals and consequently leads to another question: How do cultural values influence career goal? Implications are: First, in the traditional deal, career is chosen once at early age in career; but for the transformed deal, career choice is in series, located at different age stages or generation cohorts. Second, in the traditional deal, success is tantamount to progress in the hierarchical ladder (an objective criterion); while in the transformed deal, success is about one's inner feeling of the career (a subjective criterion). Hence, it is argued that owing to dynamism in the conceptualization of careers there would be changes on the influence of cultural values on career goals. This further enhanced the importance of the above research gap of this study.

Career goals can be defined as a primary end towards which an individual's effort is directed within a chosen profession (Colakoglu and Caligiuri, 2012, p. 264). The relationship between career and life stages based on the traditional definition of career (Super, 1990) further shows that career stages are rigidly explained based on age such as exploration for those below age 24 years, establishment for 25-45, maintenance for 46-56, and deceleration for 57 and above. This career-age pattern, however, has been transformed to a less predictive pattern when it comes to the function of age to career stages particularly after the millennium as a consequence of the co-existence of Gen-X and Gen-Y in the workplace. Clausing *et al.* (2003) asserted that embracing the diversity of a multigenerational workforce helps create a rewarding work environment. Suggestions have been made to capitalize on the unique interests of younger generations to increase creativity and productivity (Birkinshaw and Crainer, 2008) and the significance of older generation to help in knowledge sharing and transfer, and leadership.

Traditionally career goals are also defined similarly as 'career aspiration' and 'career anchors' in which career goals include expressions towards achieving managerial competence, technical functional competence, security/stability, entrepreneurial creativity, service/dedication to a cause, pure challenge, autonomy/independence and lifestyle (Schein, 1996). Later meaning of career goals has been advanced to reflect strength of an individual's intention to be active in a particular career field (Mayrhofer *et al*., 2005; Mayrhofer *et al.,* 2007).

An intergenerational workforce is a form of diversity at workplace based on generation cohorts (Christian and Moffitt, 2006), and it has the advantage because it allows an organization or workplace setting to have different skills, views and other capabilities based on age cohorts of employees. An intergenerational workforce refers to a workforce that consists of four generation cohorts of Veterans (born from 1920-1945), the Baby Boomers or Boomers (1946-1960), Gen-X (1961-1979), and Gen-Y (1980-1990) also referred to as the Millennials (Srivasanam, 2012, p. 50; Wils et al., 2011). This study, however, excludes the Veterans and Baby Boomers because in many countries they especially the former have already retired or are retiring. A relevant question arises: "How can this inevitable form of diversity within groups be capitalized on as a productive asset rather than becoming a source of conflict at workplace?" It is argued that one way to answer this question is to build knowledge of the influence of

cultural values on career goals from the perspective of the generation cohorts at workplace. This concurs with a criticism made by Lyons et al. (2015) that socioeconomic status, one of which is an intergenerational workforce, particularly silent in addressing the influence of cultural values and career goals in research around career development issues.

Mayrhofer et al.'s (2005) conceptualization of career goals is chosen in this study because it is more suitable for the current post-organizational career concept compared to the traditional meaning of career goals. Furthermore, the investigation of the influence of cultural values on career goals from the perspective of the employment after the new millennium is appropriate where there has been an influx of the Millennials with the existing senior employees. Against the above backdrop therefore the research question of this study is: "What are the influences of cultural values on career goal from the perspective of Gen-X and Gen-Y cohorts?" Therefore this study attempts to answer conceptually this research question.

Research Objectives and the Study Significance

This article aims to propose a conceptual model of the influence of cultural values on career goals as perceived by the Gen-X and Gen-Y workforce. This study is significant because i) it gives insight on the influences of cultural values on career goal resulting from the changing nature of careers; ii) it adds knowledge on the relationships of the two constructs from the perspective of Gen-X and Gen-Y employees.

This article is based on an extensive literature review using three keywords such as cultural value, career goal, and intergenerational workforce or Gen-X and Gen-Y employees. This article is organized as follows: The next section will be on theorizing cultural values and career goal based on Schwartz's (2012), and Mayrhofer et al.'s (2005) definitions, respectively, followed by the Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) as the underlying theory used in the literature analysis. The discussion then dwells on the relationships between cultural values and career goals based on the perspective of Gen-X and Gen-Y workforce after which a proposed framework of cultural values as predictors of career goals is presented. The paper ends with implications to human resource practices and research, a conclusion and recommendation for future research.

Theorizing Cultural Values and Career Goals of Gen-X and Gen-Y Workforce
Schwartz's Theory of Cultural Values

Social scientists view values as deeply rooted, abstract motivations that explain attitudes, norms, opinions and actions (Halman and de Moor, 1994). This paper adopts cultural values as advanced by Scwhartz (2012), who identifies ten motivational basic values that are grouped into four core groups: i) Openness to change (with the basic values of self-direction, stimulation, hedonism); ii) Self-enhancement (achievement and power); iii) Conservation (security, conformity, tradition); and iv) Self-transcendence (benevolence, universalism). These motivationally distinct value constructs are derived from three universal requirements of human existence: to satisfy biological needs, to achieve coordinated social interaction, and to meet social institutional demands for group welfare and survival (Schwartz, 1992). Schwartz Value Survey relates meaningfully to real behaviours such as prosocial, antisocial, environmental, political, consumer, and intellectual behaviours (Saroglou *et al.,* 2004) and has been considered in cross-cultural research (Schwartz and Rubel, 2005; Schwartz, 2006). Hofstede (1980) framework is not considered in this analysis because it has been over-researched and over-saturated in its practical meaning (Ismail and Hoo, 2014) and it is felt strongly that there is a need to go 'beyond Hofstede' (Sivakumar and Nakata, 2001; Nakata, 2009) in order to construct a newer national-culture dimensions in many countries.

A brief meaning of each value is given here. Value of self-direction can be defined as independent thought and action in choosing, creating, exploring. Specific values that represent self-direction are creativity, freedom, and curiosity. Stimulation is defined as excitement, novelty, and challenge in life. Its exemplary values include an exciting and daring life. Hedonism is defined as pleasure or sensuous gratification for oneself, enjoying life, and self-indulgence. Achievement is defined as personal success through achieving functional competence in which its exemplary values are ambitious, successful, capable, and influential. Power refers to social status and prestige, control or dominance over resources including people. The exemplary values are authority, wealth, and social power.

Security refers to safety, harmony, and stability of an individual in a society. Healthy and moderate sense of belonging are among exemplary values represent security. In high uncertainty society, people tend to work hard to control their anxiety towards life security including careers. Conformity can be perceived as a positive force that prevents acts that are perceptually disruptive or harmful. Its exemplary values include obedient, self-discipline, politeness, and honouring the elders.

The other dimension is tradition which refers to respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that one's culture or religion provides. Respect for tradition, humble, and devout are exemplary values representing tradition. While benevolence can be defined as preservation and enhancement of the people with whom one is in frequent personal contact; their exemplary values include sense of belonging and giving, and a spiritual life. The last value type is universalism which is defined as understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people regardless of socio-cultural background. Their exemplary values include broadminded, social justice, equality, world at peace, unity in diversity, and wisdom. This study will look at evidences of each cultural value and its influence on career goals as perceived by Gen-X and Gen-Y employees.

Mayrhofer's Theory of Career Goals

Since the 1980s, the career context has become more complex. Based on Bourdieu's theory of social fields (Bourdieu, 1998), career fields are seen as social arenas in which careers take place (Al Ariss *et al.,* 2013). Career goals reflect the strength of an individual's intention and desire to sustain in a particular career field. The model of career goals in this article is based on a theory by Iellatchitch *et al.* (2003) and further developed by Mayrhofer *et al.* (2007), who suggested four different fields where careers may take place. The fields are company world, which is tantamount to organizational career field, and post-organizational career fields of free-floating professionalism, self-employment and chronic flexibility. The description of each career field is given next.

Company world is the field typically reflected in, but not restricted to, the traditional organizational career. The points of entry are usually direct from vocational training, school, college, university, and promotion is up a well-defined career ladder. Such movements are generally hierarchical in nature. Employees enjoy high job security and tend to stay with the organization a long time. In return, the organization gains the loyalty of employees (Heckscher, 1995).

Free-floating professionalism can be defined as the field of specialists staying in their particular domain of expertise (Mayrhofer *et al.,* 2005) and this professionalism is exemplified by specialists working for different customers. They have relations with only several customers at a time and the relation is short term. Career success depends on one's own initiative, setting goal for oneself, technical and social competence to be considered to ensure their career goals. Individuals in this career field will have more fun time and satisfaction at work.

Self-employment (Mayrhofer *et al.,* 2005) involves individuals working in a rather stable and limited field of expertise outside organizations. Typically, these are either self-employed professionals or entrepreneurs. Individuals in this field usually have several or many customers at a time, although these customers do not change rapidly. Precisely, individuals working in this field reconstruct their work history without using the traditional career concept; they focus to the acquired output, achievement and technical know-how. Their career success is dependent on their technical competencies, maintaining good image, quantity of work, future contracts, and financial situations.

Chronic flexibility is partly similar to free-floating professionalism (Mayrhofer *et al.,* 2005) characterized by frequent changes of jobs. Individuals in the chronic flexibility field deal with many customers simultaneously. Their career goal aspires to a 'freelance' career with different projects for various clients and ever-changing work contents not only a change from one organization to another, but also from one industry to another, from being employed to self-employment, and so on. The fundamental difference between chronic flexibility and free-floating professionalism is the absence of the boundaries of a domain of expertise in the former. In this analysis, however the four types of career goal is considered as a construct.

Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT)

The influences of cultural values on career goals are examined based on Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) (Figure1). The theory postulates that the development of positive career development such as career goals depends on an individual's experiences which result from interactions between environmental and personal factors (Lent *et al.,* 1994; 2000). In this study cultural values are considered among the environmental factors. This study derives cultural values as parts of constructs that consist of background of contextual affordances (Box A) of which these cultural values are dependent on person inputs (Box B) such as age or generational cohort. The theory further describes that cultural values and person inputs will influence choice behaviour (Box C) and career goals (Box D). In addition, the perception of beneficial environmental factors (e.g., cultural values) is predicted to help the process of translating one's interests into goals, and goals into actions including careers.

More research is needed that extends the SCCT inquiry to career goals particularly from the perspective of diverse workers based on generation cohorts. Therefore, this theory is used in this analysis to look at the influence of cultural values on career goals as perceived by employees of Gen-X and Gen-Y.
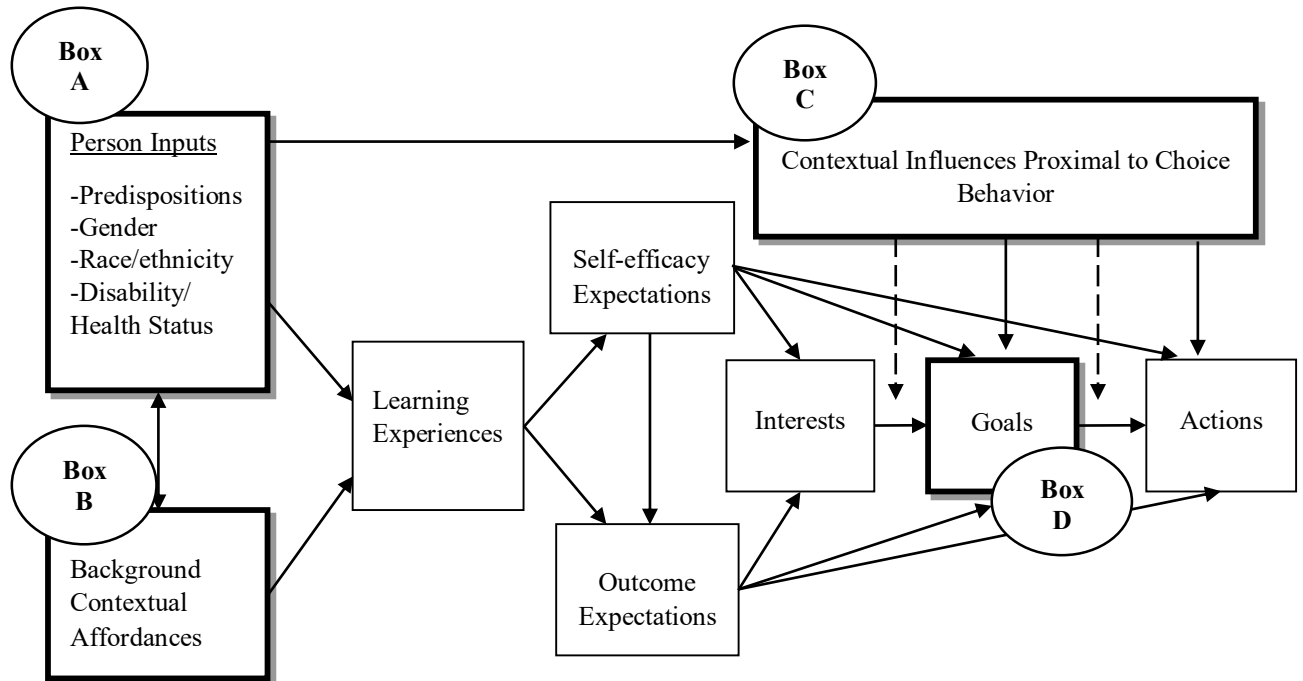
Figure 1: Model of Social Cognitive Influences on Career Choice Behaviour
Source: Lent, Brown, and Hackett (1994, p. 93; 2000)

Relating Cultural Values and Career Goals: The Perspective of Gen-X and Gen-Y

Self-direction

Mayrhofer *et al.*'s (2005) study shows that that business school graduates clearly distinguish between organisational and post-organisational career fields. Graduates with post-organisational career goals (e.g. free-floating careers) display attributes of high flexibility, leadership motivation, self-promotion/self-assertion, self-monitoring, networking and less self-consciousness. This implies that such attributes are related to cultural values of self-direction and achievement. Owing to the recentness of the study it is justifiable to imply that the graduates are in the groups of Gen-X and late Gen-Y in which the career goals are affected by some of the cultural values of self-direction, achievement, and universalism as proposed in this study. In addition, it was found that Gen-Y changes careers more frequently compared to their seniors of Gen-X and Boomers (Dries *et al.,* 2008).

Higgins (2001) stated that self-directed individuals hold a promotion focus of career goal, as they enact their careers in the quest of their aspiration fulfilment. It was also found that employees who perceive that they have a high degree of self-direction at work would show higher levels of intelligence, engagement, and self-esteem compared to those who reporting less self-direction (Schneider and Waite, 2005). While Gen-X which is portrayed by the media to have independence and autonomy (Jurkiewicz, 2000), Gen-Y valued freedom-related items more than Gen-X (Cennamo and Gardner, 2008, p. 902). Lyons *et al.* (2007) however observed a difference between Millennials and Gen X with respect to "openness to change" (self-direction and stimulation). Wendy *et al.* (2004) suggested that self-esteem would predict career planning and career exploration through the variables of career expectations and career goals differentially for young employees. Gen-X prefers to do their task on their own (Murphy *et al.*, 2010) and dependent on their skills and judgments to perform work independently (Richard, 2007). Meanwhile, the Gen-Y are more cooperative and optimistic than the other generations

because the former have high educational background or professional training, at least diploma or degree in colleges or universities (Schroer, 2008). Findings by Da Silva Añaña and Meucci Nique (2010) showed that medical students (Gen-Y) highly value stability and self-direction (freedom) for their future careers (p.164).

Based on the above background, it is proposed that:

> P_1: Self-direction influences significantly career goal of Gen-X and Gen-Y with the value of the latter is greater than the former.

Stimulation

Bandura (1986) emphasized in the social cognitive theory that individuals acquire values, skills, and standards of behaviour through basic social learning processes involving interactions with significant others (e.g., mentors, leaders). In other words they receive stimulation from the environment. Similarly, transformational leaders display various degrees of behaviours that include intellectual stimulation (Joo and Lim, 2013). Stimulation refers to excitement, novelty and challenge in life. Stimulation consists of the values of daring and exciting life. Stimulation enables others (peers or subordinates) to try new things and to think creatively in problem solving. Such behaviour motivates employees to take on challenging assignments and acquire new knowledge, skills, and abilities (Sosik *et al.*, 2004) including drive towards a better career. These findings could be applied to generation cohorts. Millennials rely very much on good teamwork with their team members (Murphy *et al.,* 2010) and would remain longer in organizations that invest and supplies sophisticated technologies such as ICT and make their jobs interesting, fulfilling and entertaining (Tan and Wan Yusof, 2013). This means that a great teamwork spirit facilitated by sophisticated technologies will stimulate a person to perform better and build more achievable goals including careers.

It is therefore proposed that:

> P_2: Stimulation influences significantly career goal of Gen-X and Gen-Y with the value of the latter is greater than the former.

Hedonism

Hedonism is believed to contribute to happiness by its positive effect on physical health of an individual (Warburton and Sherwood, 1996). It cannot be denied that pleasure seeking interferes with involvement in work and social obligations may facilitate one's performance (Veenhoven, 2003), which inevitably involves careers. Sears and Barbee (1977) involved in a follow-up study of high IQ women post-school age. At the age 60 these women were asked to rate retrospectively how important several life-goals had been for them in young adulthood. They rated six goals, one of which was to take 'joy in living', which was related to hedonism. Lim's (2012) research on life priorities and work preferences showed that hedonistic personal value measuring life priority construct is being successful in high-paying careers. Life priorities and work preferences affect career development and career aspiration in a way that extrinsic values like high pay and position increase pleasure of oneself. There is evidence that Millennials usually prefer to be casual in workplaces and expecting managers to care for their well-being as well (Gursoy *et al.,* 2008), which consequently leads to better career aspiration. Therefore, it is proposed that:

> P_3: Hedonism influences significantly career goal of Gen-X and Gen-Y with the value of the latter is greater than the former.

Achievement

Across individualistic cultures, studies generally find that individuals, such as in the U.S. are more achievement-oriented when compared to others. For example, Americans rated achievement values highest among two individualist countries: Australia and Canada (Feather, 1998). Cassidy and Lynn (1989, p. 301) revealed the need for achievement can be defined as the personal striving of individuals to attain goals within their social environment. Individuals high in need for achievement seek excellence in performance, are competitive in work activities, and enjoy seeking out solutions to difficulties and challenges (Liu *et al*, 2010, p.1435). Liu *et al*. (2010) and Ferris *et al*. (2007) further found that need for achievement was positively related to political behaviour and greater career growth. There is a positive relationship between achievement and other personal and cultural indicators such as self-esteem towards better careers (Feather, 1998; Wigfield and Eccles, 1994). Millennials show much of their capabilities in group activities, practicing instant communication and expecting feedback in their workplaces (Gursoy *et al.,* 2008) including expectation on career goals. Kaygin and Gulluce's (2013) research found there is a significant relationship between career choice and individual values by university students (presumably the Gen Y) in Turkey. The most important value is achievement, where the participants take care of the values such as "acceptance by the social environment, protection of their self-esteem, and succeeding in something to contribute to society". Thus, it is proposed that:

P4: Achievement influences significantly career goal of Gen-X and Gen-Y.

Power

To be able to influence others help achieve their career success, individual who can control or dominate over people is likely to know their own strengths and weaknesses. Thus, they are likely to be more self-confident in their ability to deliver political actions effectively (Liu *et al*, 2010, p.1435). Many have proposed an association between need for power and political behaviour (e.g., Ferris *et al*., 2007), which makes intuitive sense because political behaviour is motivated primarily by the desire to gain control over desirable resources. Political behaviour in this context may include a career goal of an individual if the individual's interest is in politics. Colakoglu and Caliguiri (2012) has reported that MBA students in high power distance societies attach more importance to the career goals of reaching the managerial level as they are more concerned with money and prestige compared to individuals in low power distance societies. Besides, we also notice that there is an association between power distance and the likelihood of Millennials to attain career goal in terms of a managerial level in the society Colakoglu and Caligiuri (2012).

From a social point of view, as habitus is produced by an individual's position in the social structure including the employment setting the result of understanding his/her place in the social structure, makes the person able to determine what is achievable or possible in life including careers (Bourdieu, 1998). Bourdieu's theory of capitals combines social, cultural, economic and symbolic resources that individuals accumulate and use. The last capital that is symbolic capital refers to the value attributed to all forms of capital in various contexts enables individuals to have power, status and influence in society to cope with the constraints and opportunities towards achieving the desired careers (Doherty and Dickmann 2009).

Thus, it is proposed:

P5: Power influences significantly career goal of Gen-X and Gen-Y.

Security

Providing employees with security (protection of stability) in terms of social support will lead employees to feel more secure in their jobs. This will also likely to engage them in their works if they are provided with a variety of conditions including learning opportunity and autonomy (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004). Family security was one of the top values for both accounting practitioners and accounting students (Lan *et al.*, 2008). Coetzee and de Villiers's (2010) research also suggests that employees, who are employed on a temporary contract basis where job security is uncertain, regard socially supportive networks and interactions with colleagues in the workplace as important motivational aspects. Dougan *et al.* (2008) found out that Gen-X have low tolerance in queuing their turn for promotions and look forward to immediate recognitions and rewards every time they did a good job due to duration of work they have undergone and financial security that goes with being in the middle-age career.

Therefore, it is proposed that:

P_6: Security influences significantly career goal Gen-X and Gen-Y with the former is greater than the latter.

Conformity

Conformity consists of the values of loyal and responsible. Conformity was positively related to organizational and occupational commitment of employees (Cohen, 2010, p.1939). A study conducted among religious people across a variety of contexts tended to attribute high importance to conformity (emphasizing submissive self-restriction) and religion (Saroglou *et al.*, 2004). Owing to Gen-X, for instance, have experienced Asian Financial Crisis in 1997, have developed low trust and quite sceptical on their organization and have very low tolerance for bureaucracy and organizational regulations, especially regarding procedures that will obligate their performance including careers (Crumpacker and Crumpacker, 2007). However there was no strong evidence about the difference of the influence of conformity on career goal of the two generation cohorts.

Thus, it is proposed that:

P_7: Conformity influences significantly career goal of both Gen-X and Gen-Y.

Tradition

Respect for the traditions (preservation of traditional practices) of the family or group may be instrumental in the decision-making process for some Native American Indians (Martin, 1995). Some of them practice non-interference in the decision-making process, but their respect for the traditions of the tribe are likely to be powerful influences on the decision-making process including what is desired in future careers. Schwartz and Huismans (1995) were the first to examine the relations of values and religiosity within the integrative framework of Schwartz's theory. Tradition was expected to be most strongly correlated with religiosity and religious groups do differ in their values and goals (Roccas, 2003, p.753). According to Steelcase Workspace Futures's (2011) study on intergenerational conflict at work, the generation cohorts have specific influences, characteristics, and workplace styles, and inevitably to career goals as careers are affected by the employees' environmental factors. The senior employees including Gen-X value work as an exciting adventure going towards personal gain and fulfillment with no time to rest. For Gen-X specifically work is a challenge and it is to be achieved within a contract, but not at the cost of social or family life, similarly Gen-Y always seek fulfilment and bring a full integration of work-life balance.

Thus, it is proposed:

> P_8: Tradition influences significantly career goal of Gen-X and Gen-Y.

Benevolence

Benevolence was positively related to organizational and occupational commitment (Cohen, 2010, p.1939). The benevolence orientation is expressed in ideals such as solidarity, cooperation, commitment, mutual trust, support, and a sense of belonging (Haj Yahia, 1997). Benevolence emphasizes the voluntary concern of other's welfare which consists of values of helpful, honest, forgiving, responsible, loyal, true friendship, and mature love (Saroglou *et al.*, 2004). Millennial generation is such a great collaborators and showing a high favour in teamwork and working with others compared to Gen-X (Dougan *et al.,* 2008).
Therefore, it is proposed:

> P_9: Benevolence influences significantly career goal of Gen-X and Gen-Y with the value of the latter is greater than the former.

Universalism

Universalism refers to understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and nature. This value combines two sub-types of concern: for the welfare of those in the larger society and world, and for the nature which consists of the value of being broadminded, social justice, racial and gender equality, world at peace, world of beauty, unity with nature, wisdom, protecting the environment. Universalism contributes to inner harmony and having a spiritual life (Sagiv and Schwartz, 1995). According to Ismail and Hoo (2014), individuals who exhibited a greater tendency to develop extensive social networks resulting from universalism were much more likely to set challenging personal career goals. Moreover, the Millennials were found to have higher tolerance in diversity compared to Gen-X because the former want this world to be a better place for everyone to live than the latter (Zemke *et al.*, 2000; Gursoy *et al.*, 2008).
It is then proposed:

> P_{10}: Universalism influences significantly career goal of Gen-X and Gen-Y with the value of the latter is greater than the former.

The summary of the proposed difference in strength on the influence of cultural values on career goal of Gen-X and Gen-Y is given in Table 1.

Table 1: Difference in Strength of Influence of Cultural Values on Career Goal between Gen-X and Gen-Y

Cultural values	Difference in strength of influence of cultural values on career goal between Gen-X and Gen-Y
Self-direction	Gen-Y > Gen-X
Stimulation	Gen-Y > Gen-X
Hedonism	Gen-Y > Gen-X
Achievement	No difference
Power	No difference
Security	Gen-Y < Gen-X
Conformity	No difference
Tradition	No difference
Benevolence	Gen-Y > Gen-X
Universalism	Gen-Y > Gen-X

The relationships between cultural values and career goals are conceptually shown in Figure 2.
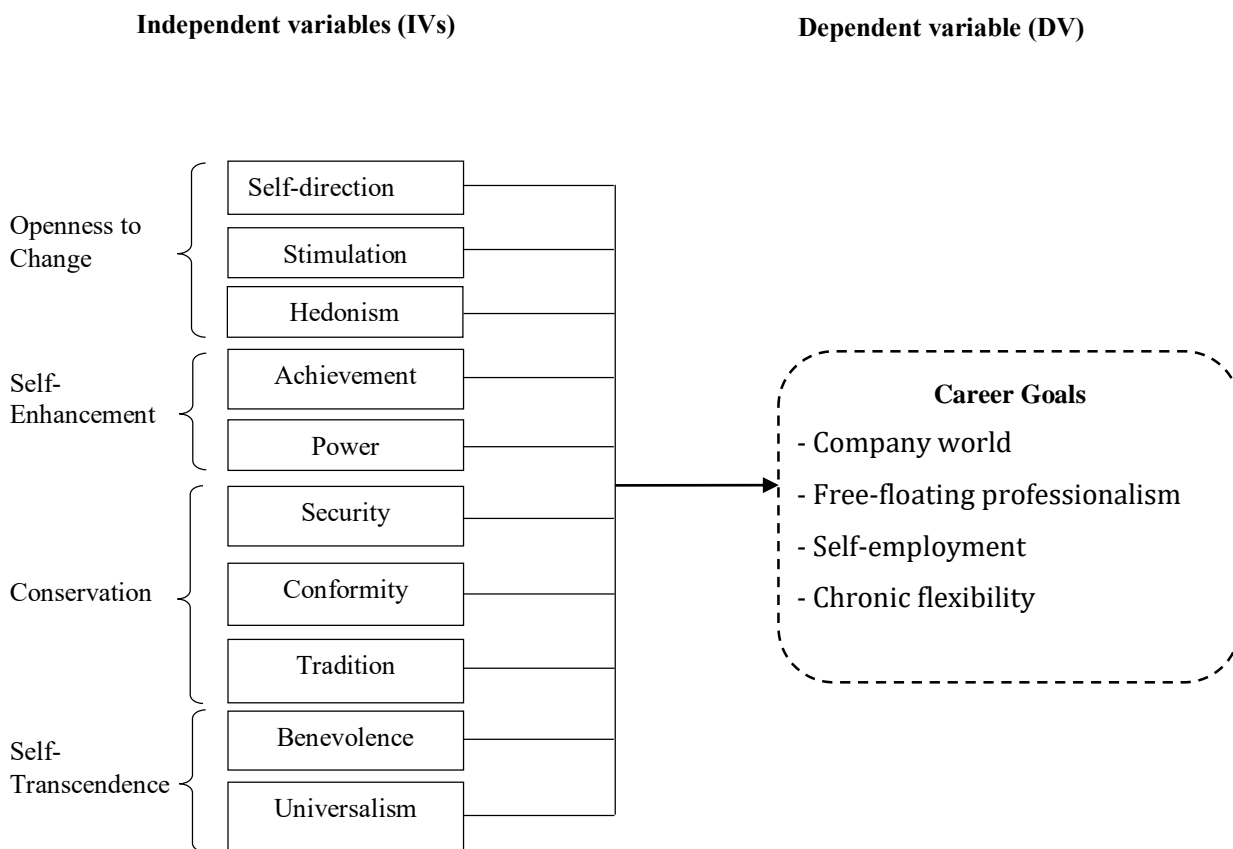

Figure 2: Proposed relationships between cultural values and career goals

Discussion and Implications to Human Resource Practices

Taking cognizance of the postulations arising from the Schwartz's (2012) Theory of Cultural Values, the Mayrhofer's (2005) Theory of Career Goals, and the SCCT (Lent *et al.,* 2000) it is believed that cultural values do have predictive influence on career goals of the employees as a whole. It is realized that the literatures supporting the proportion are limited. However, it is felt that there are variations on the predictive potentials of the variables on career goal of Gen-X and Gen-Y employees. This implies that the kinds of career opportunities the two generation cohorts are aiming for are going to require significant rethinking by organizations depending on their cultural values are managed and appreciated by managers (Lyons and Kuron, 2014). The management should be aware of the fact that employees are quite diverse based on cultural values; hence, human resource interventions such as opportunities for training and learning, knowledge sharing and transfer should be varied based on differences on the nature of influence of cultural values on career goal. Similarly, as McGuire *et al.* (2007) asserted organisational structures and workplace arrangements should be carefully considered to avoid creating generational silos; where possible, mixing of the generations is to be encouraged as a means of creating shared values and experiences, and consequently in developing their meaningful future careers.

 As such it is believed as what Clausing *et al.* (2003) asserted that embracing the diversity of Gen-X and Gen-Y workforce helps create a fulfilling and rewarding work environment. Although the differences among generational differences appear to be over-emphasized

(Birkinshaw and Crainer, 2008) and in some the differences are not clear, there likely are many benefits in harnessing the two cohorts because diversity may act as drivers of creativity and innovation within organizations.

Self-direction is said to be dominant among the Gen-Y more than the Gen-X. Hence, managers should allow for a working environment that nurtures freedom, creativity, and curiosity as the values lead to what the employees aspire in future. We further expect that generation cohorts would emphasize stimulation as an important cultural value to help them formulate career goals. Stimulation enables others to try new things and to think of old problems in new ways. Such behaviour motivates employees to take on challenging assignments and acquire new competence and abilities (Sosik *et al.*, 2004) including drives toward a better career. As the evidences show that strength of influence of stimulation on career goal for Gen-Y is greater than Gen-X, hence, management should foster this value more Gen-Y compared to Gen-X for the former to chart achievable career goal in line with their traits and capabilities.

Additionally, Gen-X and Gen-Y are said to have a desire to hedonistic behaviour because it is believed to contribute to happiness by its positive effect on physical health of an individual (Warburton and Sherwood, 1996). Therefore, hedonistic personal value should be allowed to be present among employees especially Gen-Y because life priorities and work preferences affect career aspiration and career development in a way that extrinsic values like high pay and job position increase pleasure of oneself. This concurs with Lim's (2012) research on life priorities and work preferences that showed hedonistic personal value measuring life priority construct is being successful in high-paying career employees. This holds true as what the concept of 'work-life balance' advocates.

We further anticipate that both generation cohort employees perceive similarly that cultural value of achievement-oriented influences career goals. This concurs with research by Liu *et al.* (2010) and Ferris *et al.* (2007) that need for achievement was positively related to advancement in political behaviour and greater career growth. This cultural value leads to an employee's proactive behaviour towards having a desire to be successful in future undertaking including careers. Next, based on the work of Al Ariss *et al.* (2013, p.1236) power is a dimension of an individual's agency in addition to influence that the individual has to affect changes in their lives, work and career, as permitted and legitimated by their position in webs of social and workplace relations. Hence, power implies employees' ability to shape their career choices and goals. Employers, therefore, should formulate equal initiatives to empower employees of both Gen-X and Gen-Y such as promoting learning and retraining sessions, create informal learning, knowledge sharing and transfer activities among employees; and continuously assess the outcomes of the learning.

This study further expects that providing employees with security in terms of social support will facilitate them in charting their career goals. For instance, many younger employees or those in the Gen-Y are still in the status of 'contract or temporary' based on their employment tenure in which their job security is lower compared to that of the seniors (Gen-X and Boomers). Hence, the feeling that they receive a lower salary compared to other senior employees should be compensated by other social supports provided by the work management in the forms of periodic events and social gatherings that include celebration for company's achievement, cultural festivity, and sports events which all these could facilitate greater generational interaction and cohesiveness.

We further anticipate conformity predicts career goals similarly for Gen-X and Gen-Y. This is so as Cohen (2010) found that conformity was positively related to organizational and occupational commitment. Hence, management in a variety of contexts, should place high importance to religion, and spiritual-based activities should be considered as part and parcel of

daily routines as it is strongly believed that religion and work including careers are inseparable (Krauss *et al.,* 2005).

Tradition is another cultural value that we anticipate to positively influence career goal of both generation cohorts. The difference between tradition and conformity is that the former reflects a social/religious norm that known to exist from the beginning of one society's civilization, and the latter reflects one's adherence to the norm. As we strongly believe that religion and work including careers are inseparable (Krauss *et al.,* 2005), therefore adherence to tradition would positively influence one's decision in charting his or her career goal.

Benevolence is another positive cultural value that we anticipate to influence career goal but it was perceived more by the Gen-Y compared to Gen-X. It is undeniable that benevolence is expressed in situations such as commitment, mutual trust, altruism, and a sense of belonging that are believed desirable in any group of employees particularly the junior employees. The inculcation of good values at an early stage of an employee's age is one of the current strategic managements adopted by managers as part of the corporate social responsibility or CSR initiative.

Finally universalism is a cultural value that leads toward a desire emphasizing tolerance toward uniqueness. Universalism contributes to inner harmony and having a spiritual life (Sagiv and Schwartz, 1995). Hence, it is suggested that spiritual life is encouraged in the daily life of every employee as it affects one's ability to make decision in life including a career goal. Similar to benevolence, this is a value that should be nurtured early in life of an employee's age in order to ensure that it leads to career goal of the employee.

The proposed relationship, despite its limitation of relating only the direct influence of cultural values on career goal offers groundwork for future theoretical and empirical examinations from the perspective of Gen-X and Gen-Y. This conceptual study makes a contribution to existing literature in two ways: i) It documents the career goal literature in the context of workplace with Gen-X and Gen-Y; and ii) It provides tentative answers on question how cultural values influence career goal from the perspective of the two generation cohorts. This is to respond to criticisms (Sivakumar and Nakata, 2001; Nakata, 2009) on the heavy usage of conceptualizations of cultural values by Hofstede (1980).

Conclusion and Future Research

This paper contributes to career goals literature by offering a different perspective by choosing cultural values as the predictors. It is believed the use of the SCCT by Lent *et al.* (2000) and the conceptualization of cultural values by Schwartz's (2012) and Mayrhofer *et al.*'s (2005) definition of career goals, would provide a new lens to explain cultural values as determinants of career goals from the perspective of Gen-X and Gen-Y workforce. This approach leads to the development of ten propositions of the influence of cultural values and career goal. It is recommended that a validation of the predictive power of the proposed relationships between the two sets of variables made in future research. The possible statistics to be used in the validation is the Pearson's product moment correlation technique. The relative strengths of the influence of the cultural values on career goal would be determined using multiple linear regression procedures. Also suggested in the inferential statistics is the significant differences on the levels of cultural values and career goal of the two Gen-X and Gen-Y employees could be determined using independent t-test.

This study framework and the expected magnitudes of the influence of the variables can be of value to human resource academics and practitioners as they seek to understand the dynamic relationships between cultural values and career goals from the perspective of potentially increasing generational diversity. This is especially relevant in the context of newly industrialized countries in Asia such as China, India, Malaysia, South Korea, and Singapore, as

well as developed countries such as Japan and other western countries that have an increasing number of Gen-Y (25% to 30%) by 2020 and beyond, which are heavily dependent on the younger workforce.

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