



## DIFFERENCE IN PERCEIVING ROLE OF MAN AND WOMEN AMONG GEN X AND GEN Z IN CURRENT SOCIETY

Devasmita Karmakar, Dr. Rupali Chandola

Assistant Professor  
Lovely Professional University

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** With changing time the perspective and the outlook towards the gender roles have shifted a lot. Earlier times as patriarchy used to persist in the society superior roles were played by men but with the progression these superior gender roles are becoming less prominent and views towards the traditional roles specification are changing. This study investigates the perspective and attitude towards the gender role of man and women among the generation "X" and generation "Z".

**Material and method :** The sample taken into consideration consists of 60 participants out of which 30 belongs to generation X and other 30 belongs to generation Z. The Gender Role Belief Scale developed by Kerr & Holden(1996) was used for the purpose of data collection.

**Results:** The result suggests that there is no significant difference on the views of gender role beliefs among Gen X and Gen Z. Both are inclined towards traditional gender role beliefs.

**Conclusion:** It can be concluded that although there is a huge gap between Gen X and Gen Z there is not significant difference in perception of gender role beliefs. This could suggest that despite the passage of time and changes in cultural and social norms, there may be certain aspects of gender role beliefs that remain relatively stable across generations.

**KEYWORDS:-** gender role, Generation X, Generation Z, traditional beliefs.

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### INTRODUCTION

Gender roles refer to the societal and cultural expectations of how men and women should behave based on their biological sex. This outlook becomes more evident after marriage when the society expects men to be the bread winner and women to take care of the household and children. This practice of playing specific roles in the society is persistent since years and several factors can be related to it such as biological differences, financial challenges, cultural barriers and even evolutionary processes. Since a very young age a boy or a girl child is put

through many such situations; a boy is asked to "Man Up" or is shamed by saying "Men don't cry" and a girl is asked to help with the chores or not to laugh or eat like man. Also many women after marriage are admired more if they quit their jobs and take full charge of the house work and men get more high regard or respect when they bring more money to the household. These roles vary across cultures and time periods and have evolved over time due to a range of factors, including changes in the economy, the rise of feminism, and advancements in technology. One way to understand how

gender roles have evolved is by examining the attitudes and beliefs of different generations towards gender and gender roles. This paper will explore the beliefs and perspective of Generation X and Generation Z towards gender roles.

Generation X, born between 1965 and 1980, grew up during a time when traditional gender roles were still prevalent. Men were often seen as the breadwinners, while women were responsible for household duties and child-rearing. On the other hand, Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2012, has grown up in a world that is more accepting of diverse gender identities and is more supportive of gender equality. As a result, there is a growing body of literature that suggests that Generation Z has more progressive attitudes towards gender and gender roles compared to generation x. In a study done by Martin, A.E (2003) explores how the idea of gender relativism whereby gender specified as men and women changes as a function of context. The exploratory study by Stars Library(2016) examines gender disparities in religion among Millennials, Generation X, and Baby Boomers using cross-sectional survey data from the 2012 and 2014 General Social Survey. Goldberg, R. E. (2018) conducted a study that explores gender-role attitudes among unmarried adolescents aged 16–19 in Egypt, a society characterized by distinct and often segregated roles for men and women. A study on gender role beliefs and willingness to change among middle adults by Theja Bhargavi (2022) states that majority of the respondents had feminist gender roles and middle adults with traditional gender roles are not willing to change. Piotrowski, M., Yoshida, A., Johnson, L., & Wolford, R. (2019) in a study based on Gender Role Attitudes An Examination of Cohort Effects in Japan found that For both sexes, attitudes towards wife work and a gender-based division of labour were much less traditional among generations born before

1960. However, sentiments among younger cohorts born in 1960 and after were not significantly different from those of the 1950s group. Gentry, J. W., & Harrison, K. (2020) on the article Exploring gender identity, socialization, and internationalist in Generation Z explores the impact of gender identity and socialization on Generation Z individuals, as well as how inter-sectional affects their perceptions of gender. The authors argue that understanding the complex ways in which gender intersects with other identities and social factors is crucial for creating more inclusive and equitable workplaces. Parker, K., Igielnik, R., & Mitchell, T. (2023, March 2) on the article “On the Cusp of Adulthood and Facing an Uncertain Future: What We Know About Gen Z So Far” stated that Gay and lesbian couples being permitted to marry is a good thing for our society, according to roughly half of Gen Zers (48%) and Millennials (47%). In comparison, barely one-third of Gen Xers and roughly one-quarter of Boomers (27%) believe this is a positive thing. Gen Z and Millennials are less inclined than earlier generations to believe that single mothers raising children on their own is harmful for society.

## METHODOLOGY

### OBJECTIVE

The objective of the present study are

- To assess the view of Generation “Z’ and Generation “X” on specific gender roles beliefs.
- To assess any kind of contrast exists among the thinking patterns and views of Gen "X" and Gen "Z"
- To assess how much acceptance is shown by gen "X" and gen "Z" on the changing gender role beliefs in the current society.

## HYPOTHESIS

On the basis of the review of literature of the fore-mentioned objectives the following hypothesis are formulated:

1. Gen “Z” shows more acceptable and positive outlook towards the shift in the traditional gender roles .
2. Gen “X” shows rigidity towards accepting feminist gender roles and are more inclined towards traditional gender roles.

## SAMPLE

The study conducted has a sample size of 160 people of age group varying from 11-26 years (Gen Z) and 43-58 years (Gen X). The sample was distributed equally between the two generations, with 60 Gen Z and 60 Gen X participants. The participants taken into consideration were from different parts of Punjab. The current study only included candidates who were willing to participate. Each group was asked to provide honest responses based on their true convictions.

## TOOLS

A wide range of research tools are available, each with its own method of describing and validating data. Various instruments are required for the collecting of various types of information for distinct processes under investigation. The following tool is used for the current study:

### GENDER ROLE BELIEFS SCALE (GRBS, KERR & HOLDEN, 1996)

The GRBS is a tool consisting of 20 items, which can be completed using pen and paper, and is designed to evaluate gender role beliefs. Respondents are asked to rate each item on a 7-point Likert scale (ranging from 1=strongly agree to 7=strongly disagree), and higher scores indicate a tendency towards traditional

gender role attitudes. The scale has been validated through a study that involved 150 items related to gender role beliefs, as well as participants' reactions to descriptions of two beliefs one with traditional gender roles and other with feminist beliefs. The results showed that the GRBS has convergent validity. Researchers (Kerr & Holden, 1996) also used the mean scores obtained from the GRBS to differentiate between participant groups with varying gender role attitudes. A one-way ANOVA revealed significant differences among three criterion groups . The study also found that there were frequent differences in gender role beliefs between males and females. Males are more conservative than females in terms of gender role ideology, as expected. GRBS scores were used to classify individuals into more or lower usage of gender role stereotyping (Kerr & Holden, 1996). The scale also had test-retest reliability (four-week interval) of .86 and alpha reliabilities in the mid 80.

## PROCEDURE FOR DATA COLLECTION

The research protocol included numerous measures aimed at ensuring that ethical standards were followed throughout the investigation. The present research study's participants are selected utilising both convenient and purposive sampling methods. The Gender Role Belief Scale (GRBS) established by Kerr and Holden in 1996 was distributed evenly across two groups: Gen X (43-58 years) and Gen Z (11-26 years). Each group included 60 participants, and a total of 120 responses were gathered. Proper instructions were delivered, and any related questions were addressed. The confidentiality of responses provided by participants is assured.

## RESEARCH PROBLEMS

The following research problems were faced during the study:

1. Cross-cultural differences: Gender role beliefs can vary significantly across cultures, and it can be difficult to ensure that research instruments are appropriate for use across different cultural contexts.
2. Age differences within generations: Even within a particular generation, there can be significant age differences, which can impact gender role beliefs. For example, older members of Gen X may hold more traditional beliefs, while younger members may have more progressive views.
3. Internationalization: Gender roles are not the only factor that shapes individuals' beliefs and attitudes. Other factors, such as race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation, can also play a significant role. This can make it challenging to isolate the specific impact of gender roles on individuals' beliefs.
4. Social desirability bias: Participants may provide responses that they perceive to be socially acceptable or desirable, rather than their actual beliefs or attitudes. This can be especially challenging when asking about sensitive or controversial topics, such as gender roles.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table.1

Gender	No. Of participants	Percentage
Male	62	52%
Female	58	48%
Total	120	100%

Distribution of participants on the basis of gender:

Table 1 represents the distribution of participants on the basis of the genders that were taken into consideration out of which 52% are male and 48% are female. Therefore due to uneven distribution of the genders, comparison between the male and female are not done in this study.

Table 2.

Level of Education	No. Of participants	Percentage
School level	12	10%
U.G	62	52%
P.G	43	35%
Doctorate	3	3%

Table 2 represents the different levels of education of the participants. It shows that 10% of the participants has school level education, 52% participants has undergraduate level education, 35% has post graduate level education and 3% has doctorate level education. Thus it signifies that different level of education can affect the criteria of perceiving men and women significant roles.

Table 3

Group (A)	Sample (N)	Age (years)	Mean (x)	Standard Deviation	T value
Gen Z	60	11-26	70.97	16.670	0.655

According to Table 3 the scores obtained suggest that the younger generation Gen Z is more inclined to the traditional gender roles based on the mean score of 70.97

which is on the higher side of the range. Therefore the hypothesis 1 that states Gen "Z" shows more acceptable and positive outlook towards the shift in the

traditional gender roles is rejected and alternative hypothesis shows there is no significant difference in the perception of the Gen Z in comparison to Gen X rather they are more rigid towards specification of gender roles. The standard deviation of Table 4

16.670 indicates that the responses are dispersed throughout a wider range due to people's differing perspectives on the issue.

Group (A)	Sample(N)	Age(years)	Mean(x)	Standard Deviation	T value
Gen X	60	43-58	69.20	12.603	0.655

According to Table 4 the scores obtained suggest that the older generation Gen X show greater preference towards societal duties assigned to specific gender and are less open to the gender role shift based on the mean value of 69.20 which shows higher inclination towards traditional gender roles as it is on the higher side of the range. Therefore hypothesis 2 that states Gen "X" shows rigidity towards accepting feminist gender roles and are more inclined towards traditional gender roles stands correct and justifies the data. The standard deviation of 12.60 represents the distribution scores in an account that majority of the participants responded in the same range of the scores.

### CONCLUSION

Traditional gender roles refer to the societal expectations and norms surrounding the behavior, attitudes, and responsibilities assigned to individuals based on their biological sex. These roles tend to be binary, with men and women expected to conform to specific roles and behaviors. On the contrary feminist gender roles challenge traditional gender roles by advocating for equal rights and opportunities for individuals of all genders. Feminist gender roles seek to dismantle the idea that certain behaviors, attitudes, and responsibilities are inherently associated with being male or female, and instead promote the idea that individuals should be free to express their

gender identity and pursue their goals without societal barriers. These research tried to measure the perception of gender roles among the Gen X and Gen Z members on the basis of the current society by analyzing their level of rigidity towards traditional gender roles and acceptability towards changing feminist gender roles. The participants taken into consideration through both purposive and convenient sampling were 160 individuals among them 60 participants belong to Gen X and the rest 60 participants belong to Gen Z. The satisfied Package for social science (SPSS) is used for the data analysis and result formation. The obtained result shows that although there is a gender role shift during the generational change but there is no significant difference between the views of Gen X and Gen Z on specific gender roles. Both Gen X and Gen Z are inclined towards traditional gender role beliefs which could suggest that despite the passage of time and changes in cultural and social norms, there may be certain aspects of gender role beliefs that remain relatively stable across generations.

### IMPLICATIONS

The research that demonstrated no substantial variation in gender role attitudes between Generations X and Z might have numerous implications. It might imply that, despite social developments towards increased tolerance

and diversity, gender role views have remained mostly stable over these generations asking the study's limitations into account, more advancements in research can be applied. Further researches can be done on the other factors like family, gender identity that are affecting the gender role beliefs in certain generations.

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