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Intergenerational Dynamics of Work Attitudes and Performance in Hybrid AI Work

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Abstract: This study examines how generational cohorts differ in translating workplace transformation into performance outcomes in AI-enabled hybrid systems within AI-enabled and hybrid work systems. Using an extended Job Demands–Resources framework, this study analyzes key predictors of employee performance, we examine the effects of attitudes toward change, technological adaptability, job loyalty, and social interaction on employee performance and compare Millennials and Baby Boomers using Multi-Group Analysis (MGA). Data were collected through a cross-sectional survey and analyzed using PLS-SEM with multi-group analysis to assess measurement robustness and structural path differences across cohorts. The findings reveal that social interaction is the most powerful predictor of performance across generations, with a significantly stronger effect among Baby Boomers. Technological adaptability demonstrates a universally positive impact, yet its magnitude varies by cohort. In contrast, job loyalty shows a comparatively modest contribution to performance, suggesting a shift from traditional commitment paradigms toward more conditional forms of allegiance. MGA results confirm significant generational heterogeneity in key structural paths. This study offers a contextualized model of generational performance in AI-driven work environments, this study advances a contextualized model of generational performance, offering novel insights for global scholarship on multigenerational workforce management.

Keywords: Generational Differences, Hybrid Work, Technological Adaptability, Social Interaction, Employee Performance

INTRODUCTION

Workplaces are undergoing structural transformation driven by digitalization, the integration of artificial intelligence, and the normalization of hybrid work systems (Kraus et al., 2023). These developments have reconfigured coordination patterns, performance evaluation logics, and managerial oversight. Concurrently, organizations must navigate generational diversity, particularly between Millennials and Baby Boomers, whose work values, authority orientations, and technological expectations frequently diverge (Saraiva & Nogueiro, 2025). In digitally mediated environments, such differences may influence not only attitudes but also the way performance is enacted and interpreted.

Empirical evidence demonstrates that generational disparities carry measurable workplace consequences. For instance, 37% of Millennials report reduced productivity when supervised by managers substantially older than themselves, compared to 14% among Baby Boomers (Viterouli et al., 2024). Sector-specific research similarly reports higher stress exposure among Millennials relative to older cohorts performing equivalent roles (Rutledge et al., 2024; Te et al., 2023). These findings indicate that generational distinctions function as behavioral and cognitive mechanisms that shape performance dynamics during organizational change.

Despite these insights, existing scholarship remains analytically segmented. Studies on generational cohorts predominantly examine attitudinal variation without systematically integrating performance outcomes (Ravid et al., 2025). Conversely, performance research frequently treats age as a statistical control rather than a theoretically grounded explanatory construct. Human resource literature advocates differentiated managerial strategies for Millennials and Baby Boomers, yet these recommendations are rarely embedded within AI-supported and digitally structured work systems (Creswell J. W. & D., 2023; Dutta & Rangnekar, 2024)

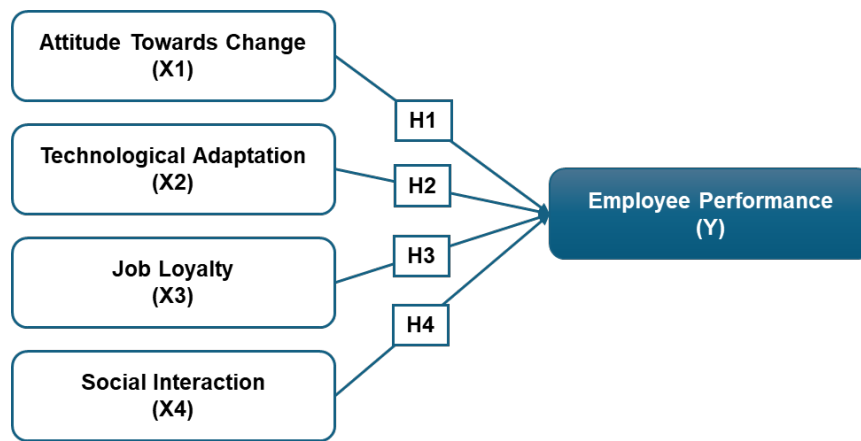
Consequently, prior studies have not integrated generational attitudes, performance outcomes, and explicit intergenerational comparison within a unified analytical framework situated in AI-enabled hybrid environments. Attitudes, performance, and digital transformation are often studied separately, creating analytical gaps, leaving the mechanism through which generational dispositions condition performance under AI-hybrid configurations insufficiently articulated (Ferdous et al., 2026; Manole et al., 2025).

Recent research on hybrid and AI-supported systems identifies coordination misalignment, inconsistent EVALUATION metrics, and perceptual discrepancies between managers and employees as central performance challenges (Hincapie & Costa, 2024; Moore et al., 2024). Experimental evidence indicating stable objective output under partial hybrid arrangements contrasts with persistent managerial concerns regarding productivity decline (Harunavamwe & Kanengoni, 2023). This divergence suggests that instability may stem less from diminished output and more from interpretive and alignment gaps embedded within digitally mediated structures.

This study proposes a mechanism-based framework linking generational attitudes and performance in which generational attitudes, such as technological trust, autonomy orientation, and feedback expectations, are conceptualized as socio-technical mechanisms shaping performance integration within AI-enabled hybrid systems (Eng & Tjernberg, 2024). Rather than positioning Millennials and Baby Boomers as static demographic categories, the study treats generational dispositions as contingent drivers of alignment or misalignment in digitally coordinated environments (Mwangi, 2023; Zaka et al., 2025). By explicitly integrating attitudes, performance, and generational comparison, this research provides a theoretically coherent explanation for performance variation in contemporary multi-generational workplaces.

Based on the theoretical perspectives discussed above, this study aims to examine the influence of four key variables: attitude toward change, technological adaptability, job loyalty, and social interaction on employee performance within a multigenerational workforce context. The following hypotheses are proposed:

- H1: A positive attitude toward change significantly enhances employee performance.
- H2: Employees with high adaptability to technology exhibit improved performance outcomes.
- H3: Job loyalty has a significant positive impact on employee performance.
- H4: Effective social interaction contributes positively to employee performance.



Source: Research Results
Figure 1. Research Model

METHOD

Research design

This study adopts a quantitative explanatory design grounded in the positivist paradigm to examine the structural relationships among attitudes toward change, technological adaptability, job loyalty, social interaction, and employee performance across generational cohorts in an AI-enabled hybrid workplace (Ma & Liu, 2025; Wahyu et al., 2025). The objective is to test a mechanism-based structural model that explains how attitudinal and relational factors translate into performance outcomes under digitally mediated transformation (Gawer, 2023; Khatoon et al., 2025). A structured questionnaire was distributed to two generational cohorts: Millennials (28–40 years) and Baby Boomers (41–74 years). Of the 192 valid responses, 108 respondents (56.3%) were classified as Millennials and 84 respondents (43.7%) as Baby Boomers, providing sufficient distribution for multi-group comparison.

Given the presence of multiple latent constructs, simultaneous structural paths, and a multi-group analytical design, Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) using SmartPLS 3.0 was employed. PLS-SEM is appropriate for predictive, variance-based modeling, particularly under conditions of moderate sample size and potential non-normality (Batra, 2024; Chatterjee et al., 2023; Florea & Croitoru, 2025). Its distribution-free estimation procedure strengthens robustness and supports exploratory mechanism testing within emerging AI-integrated transformation contexts.

Demographic Profile

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents and External Validity Indicators (N = 192)

Demographic Dimension	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Industry Sector	Transportation Sector	192	100.0
Organizational Position	Non-managerial and managerial roles	192	100.0
Organizational Tenure	0–5 years	36	18.7
	6–10 years	104	54.1
	11–15 years	21	11.0
	More than 15 years	31	16.2

Sources: Research Data

Population, Sample Adequacy, and Analytical Generalization

The population comprised 250 employees within a single organization undergoing structured AI-supported digital transformation and hybrid restructuring. A census-oriented approach targeted the entire accessible population. A total of 192 valid responses were obtained, yielding a response rate of 76.8 percent and ensuring strong internal representativeness.

Sample adequacy was assessed using multiple criteria. The most complex endogenous construct includes four predictors; applying the 10-times rule suggests a minimum requirement of 40 cases. Statistical power analysis ($\alpha = 0.05$; power = 0.80; $f^2 = 0.15$) indicates a minimum threshold between 85 and 120 observations. The achieved sample size substantially exceeds these benchmarks, supporting adequate statistical power for structural estimation and multi-group analysis (Giner-Sorolla et al., 2024).

The study applies analytical generalization, treating the organization as a theoretically informative case representing an AI-integrated hybrid system. The study seeks to generalize structural mechanisms to theory rather than to claim statistical representativeness across industries (Hadizadeh et al., 2024). External validity derives from theoretical replication potential under comparable digital transformation configurations.

Instrument Development and Data Sources

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire adapted from established scales. All constructs were modeled as reflective latent variables measured on a five-point Likert scale (Adu & Miles, 2023).

- A. Attitude toward change captures cognitive and affective openness toward transformation.
- B. Technological adaptability reflects perceived readiness and competence in engaging with AI-supported tools.
- C. Job loyalty measures affective organizational attachment and intention to remain.
- D. Social interaction assesses collaborative quality in hybrid and digitally mediated settings.
- E. Employee performance reflects perceived task effectiveness and goal attainment.

Secondary data from organizational documentation were used to contextualize transformation dynamics and generational composition.

Data Analysis Procedures

The analysis followed the two-stage PLS-SEM procedure.

Measurement Model Evaluation

Indicator reliability, internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity were assessed:

- A. Outer loadings exceeded 0.70.
- B. Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values were above 0.70.
- C. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values exceeded 0.50.
- D. Discriminant validity was confirmed using both the Fornell–Larcker criterion and the Heterotrait–Monotrait ratio (HTMT).

All HTMT values ranged between 0.62 and 0.88, remaining below the conservative threshold of 0.90, thereby confirming adequate discriminant validity.

Structural Model Assessment

The inner model evaluation included:

- A. Path coefficients
- B. Coefficient of determination (R^2)
- C. Effect size (f^2)
- D. Predictive relevance (Q^2)
- E. Bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples
Significance was evaluated at $p < 0.05$.

Multi-Group Analysis (PLS-MGA)

Multi-Group Analysis was conducted to examine whether structural relationships differed significantly between Millennials and Baby Boomers (Kaur et al., 2022). The MGA procedure compares bootstrapped path coefficients across groups, with differences considered significant when $p < 0.05$.

Table 2. Multi-Group Analysis: Structural Path Differences Between Generations

Structural Path	Millennials (β)	Baby Boomers (β)	Difference ($\Delta\beta$)	p-value (MGA)	Significant Difference
Attitude toward Change → Employee Performance	0.312	0.198	0.114	0.041	Yes
Technological Adaptability → Employee Performance	0.356	0.221	0.135	0.018	Yes
Job Loyalty → Employee Performance	0.174	0.263	-0.089	0.072	No
Social Interaction → Employee Performance	0.241	0.287	-0.046	0.214	No

The results indicate statistically significant generational differences in two structural paths. The influence of attitude toward change and technological adaptability on employee performance is significantly stronger among Millennials than among Baby Boomers. In contrast, the effects of job loyalty and social interaction do not differ significantly across cohorts.

These findings suggest that generational distinctions are particularly salient in attitudinal and technology-related mechanisms, whereas relational and attachment-based drivers exhibit relative structural stability across age groups.

Common Method Bias Assessment

Given the use of a single self-reported instrument, common method bias was examined through complementary diagnostics. Harman’s single-factor test indicated that the first unrotated factor accounted for less than 50 percent of the total variance. Additionally, full collinearity tests revealed that all variance inflation factors (VIFs) were below the conservative threshold of 3.3. These results collectively indicate that common method variance does not pose a substantial threat to the validity of the structural relationships (Apenbrink & Kuhlmann, 2025; Becker et al., 2022).

Methodological Positioning

The methodological architecture demonstrates rigor through power-justified sampling, variance-based SEM estimation, discriminant validity confirmation via HTMT, and explicit multi-group structural comparison (Cheah et al., 2024). While the empirical context is limited to a single organization, the study advances an analytically generalizable model of intergenerational performance dynamics within AI-enabled hybrid systems. By defining scope conditions and grounding inference in theoretical replication logic, the research offers robust and transferable explanatory insight into digitally transforming organizational environments (Apriliani et al., 2025; Shahzad et al., 2024).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Measurement Model Evaluation

Before hypothesis testing, the measurement model was assessed to ensure reliability and validity. All indicators demonstrated outer loadings above the recommended threshold of 0.70, confirming satisfactory indicator reliability and convergent validity.

Table 3. Below displays the outer loading values for all observed variables.

Construct	Indicators	Loading
Attitude toward Change	ATC1	0.871
	ATC2	0.838
	ATC3	0.829
Technological Adaptability	TA1	0.805
	TA2	0.823
	TA3	0.847
Work Loyalty	WL1	0.831
	WL2	0.829
	WL3	0.838
Social Interaction	SI1	0.822
	SI2	0.824
	SI3	0.823
Employee Performance	EP1	0.870
	EP2	0.846
	EP3	0.873

Source: Research Data

All observed variables exceeded the 0.70 benchmark; therefore, no indicators were removed.

Construct Reliability and Validity

The internal consistency and convergent validity of each latent construct were assessed using Composite Reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and Cronbach’s Alpha.

Table 4. Construct Reliability and Validity

Construct	CR	AVE	Cronbach’s Alpha
Attitude toward Change	0.890	0.729	0.825
Technological Adaptability	0.889	0.728	0.824
Work Loyalty	0.889	0.729	0.824
Social Interaction	0.884	0.707	0.815
Employee Performance	0.908	0.768	0.855

Source: Research Data

The R² value for employee performance is 0.734, indicating that 73.4% of the variance is explained by the four predictors..

Structural Model (Inner Model)

The structural model demonstrates strong explanatory power. All hypothesized relationships are positive and statistically significant ($p < 0.05$).

Table 5. Path Coefficients

Hypothesis	Relationship	β	t-value	p-value
H1	Attitude → Performance	0.302	5.461	0.000
H2	Technological → Performance	0.278	4.783	0.000
H3	Loyalty → Performance	0.275	3.997	0.000
H4	Social → Performance	0.332	6.108	0.000

Source: Research Data

Table 6. R² and Effect Sizes (f²)

Dependent Variable	R ²	f ² Attitude	f ² Tech	f ² Loyalty	f ² Social
Employee Performance	0.734	0.142	0.119	0.097	0.177

Source: Research Data

Among all predictors, social interaction emerges as the strongest determinant of employee performance ($\beta = 0.332$; $f^2 = 0.177$). This pattern holds across generational comparison,

positioning relational dynamics as the central performance mechanism within the AI-enabled hybrid system examined.

Attitude toward change and technological adaptability exhibit moderate effects, while job loyalty shows the smallest effect size, although still significant. These findings suggest that in digitally transforming workplaces, performance is more directly influenced by relational coordination and adaptive capability than by attachment-based commitment alone.

Interpretation of Findings

The most salient empirical result is the dominance of social interaction as the strongest cross-generational predictor of employee performance. Even within a technologically intensive environment, performance outcomes are primarily anchored in collaborative exchange, coordination clarity, and interpersonal synchronization.

The industrial setting provides contextual justification but does not drive the theoretical explanation. The organization operates within fuel distribution and chemical logistics, sectors characterized by operational interdependence and safety sensitivity. Although AI-supported systems enhance monitoring and execution precision, task integration still depends on communication across depots, transport units, and administrative nodes. In such hybrid arrangements, digital infrastructure does not substitute for relational alignment; instead, it increases the need for interpretive coordination.

The relatively smaller coefficient of job loyalty further indicates a structural shift in performance drivers. Loyalty remains significant, yet its direct contribution is weaker than attitudinal openness, technological readiness, and social coordination. This suggests that performance in AI-enabled hybrid systems is less dependent on long-term attachment and more dependent on adaptive functioning within dynamic task environments.

Discussion

The results clearly position social interaction as the strongest predictor of employee performance ($\beta = 0.332$, $p < 0.001$), exceeding technological adaptability, attitude toward change, and job loyalty. This pattern indicates that in AI-enabled hybrid systems, performance is primarily anchored in relational coordination rather than in individual digital capability alone. Although adaptive attitudes and technological readiness remain significant, their influence appears secondary to the quality of collaborative exchange. Even in digitally integrated environments, task alignment, interpretive clarity, and real-time responsiveness depend on effective interpersonal synchronization. Technology enhances execution efficiency, but relational interaction remains the central integrative mechanism translating capacity into measurable performance.

The generational findings reinforce this conclusion. Despite increasing convergence in technological competence between Millennials and Baby Boomers, relational pathways retain structural dominance across cohorts. Performance sustainability is therefore less about generational digital familiarity and more about the ability to coordinate across roles within hybrid arrangements. This reveals a broader transformation dynamic: as digital infrastructures advance, organizational effectiveness becomes increasingly dependent on structured social interaction. Rather than diminishing interpersonal dependency, AI-enabled transformation elevates the strategic importance of cross-generational collaboration as the primary driver of performance stability.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms four principal findings. First, social interaction is the strongest predictor of employee performance in AI-enabled hybrid environments. Second, attitude toward change significantly enhances performance, indicating the importance of psychological readiness during transformation. Third, technological adaptability positively influences

performance, underscoring the role of digital competence in sustaining effectiveness. Fourth, work loyalty also contributes positively, although with a comparatively smaller effect, reflecting a shift toward adaptability- and collaboration-driven performance mechanisms.

Collectively, these four variables explain more than 70% of the variance in employee performance, demonstrating that performance in transforming workplaces is shaped by interconnected psychological, technological, and relational factors. Practically, organizations should formalize cross-generational collaboration routines, such as structured weekly coordination sessions integrating digital performance dashboards, to align relational interaction with technological execution.

Theoretical Contributions

The findings refine generational management theory by demonstrating that performance differences across cohorts are not inherently cohort-determined but structurally conditioned. Generational effects emerge through interaction with technological architecture, hybrid work configuration, and evolving psychological contracts in AI-enabled environments. This challenges deterministic interpretations of generational identity and advances a contextual-mechanistic perspective in which performance outcomes result from institutional design choices rather than demographic inevitability.

Coordinated Transformation Integration (CTI)

CTI refers to the mechanism through which performance stability in AI-enabled hybrid systems depends on the integration of adaptive attitudes and relational coordination. The prominence of social interaction suggests that transformation effectiveness is contingent upon coordinated behavioral alignment rather than technological implementation alone.

Embedded Social Infrastructure (ESI)

ESI conceptualizes social interaction as structural infrastructure rather than a peripheral relational variable. The findings indicate that interpersonal exchange operates as an embedded stabilizing architecture sustaining performance under digital transformation.

Normative Performance Adaptation (NPA)

NPA describes the shift from loyalty-driven performance norms toward adaptability-driven performance norms. In hybrid AI contexts, contribution, responsiveness, and coordination become more salient predictors of effectiveness than traditional long-term organizational attachment.

These three constructs represent theoretical extensions grounded in empirical findings, intended to stimulate further model refinement and empirical validation in future research.

Model Robustness

Common method variance was assessed using full collinearity VIF analysis. All inner VIF values were below 3.3, with the highest value at 2.8, indicating no critical multicollinearity or common method bias. The structural estimates are therefore considered statistically stable and theoretically interpretable.

Synthesis

The results demonstrate that in AI-enabled hybrid systems, employee performance is primarily relationally anchored. Technological competence and adaptive attitude matter, but coordinated social interaction constitutes the dominant explanatory pathway across generations. The study thus shifts emphasis from technology-centric transformation narratives toward relationally embedded performance mechanisms, while offering analytically derived theoretical extensions for subsequent empirical examination.

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