

Generational Differences in Leadership and Motivation: A Multilevel Study of Federal Workers

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Abstract : The research on generational expectations about leadership is developing, but little scholarship exists on this topic for public sector organizations. Given the size of the federal workforce, this research study fills an important gap in the knowledge base and will inform public organizations how to approach managing and leading a multigenerational workforce. The research objectives of this study are to explore leadership preferences and motivation within generations and to determine whether these qualities differ by type of federal agency (e.g., law enforcement, human services, etc.). This paper will review the research on generational differences, expectations, and leadership with a focus on studies of public organizations. Using hierarchical linear modeling (HLM), this study will examine how leadership and motivation vary by generation in the federal government workforce, controlling for other demographic characteristics. The study will also examine whether generational differences impact satisfaction and performance. The study will utilize the 2019 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey.

Keywords : multigenerational workforce, leadership, generational differences, federal workforce

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