



Examining the meaningful work level of generation X and generation Y teachers

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Abstract. In the 21st Century, the increase in expectation of education has required a series of more complex roles, responsibilities and competences in the teaching profession. Teachers who are the most strategic factor in educational effectiveness, their generation differences and level of motivation are one of the important variables in the success of the institutions. The purpose of this study was to reveal the level of meaningful work in Generation X and Generation Y teachers, and its relationship with various variables. According to this purpose reliable and valid measurement tool was also developed. This study was designed in a descriptive survey model and carried out with the participation of 267 teachers with quantitative method. Data were analyzed by descriptive statistics, t-test and one way analysis of variance (ANOVA), exploratory factor analysis, split half reliability test. It was found that meaningful work levels of teachers are high and generation X teachers find their work relatively more meaningful than Generation Y. There was a significant difference between the opinions of teachers' on meaningful work level based on city and school type variables. Internal moral values are relatively more effective on teachers' meaningful work experiences than external financial-material values. It was also revealed that meaningful work scale is reliable and valid questionnaire.

Keywords: Meaningful work, teacher, X and Y generation, motivation, career values

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INTRODUCTION

Globalization, advancing information technologies and the alterations occur in the professions and styles of performing professional duties require the employment of individuals with a high-potential and performance. However, increasing the performance of the new generation of workforce, motivating them and ensuring their commitment are considerably difficult tasks. The most crucial problem of the present-day organizations is the tendency of talented and high-qualified employees to leave the working environment wordlessly when they feel upset, and the subsequent losses of cost (Kaye & Jordan-Evans, 2007). A wide-scale research study that included a large number of employees from 143 different countries established that only %13 of the employees have work commitment, work satisfaction and motivation; %63 of them do not have work commitment and do not make any efforts to fulfill their objectives in the workplace and are not active employees (as cited in Baklaieva, 2016, p.8). According to Bremner and Carriere (2011), besides money and rewards, professional life should provide an inner purpose for an individual and a sense of meaning which is consistent with the system of values. The new generation of employees demand fulfillment of purposes and expectations, work excitement, autonomous and improving work conditions in their relationship with work, besides financial earnings. In a sense, employees need intrinsic rewards and motivators to be content, productive and successful as much as extrinsic rewards (Adams, 2012). The concepts of meaning and meaningful work are explored in the literature given that they are psychological structures that provide deep intrinsic motivators for a work commitment. The search of meaning is one of the main needs of human beings, and today, employees search of meaning and purpose in their work more than before (Holbeche & Springett, 2004; Martela, 2010).

Based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the individual's work has an effective and central role in life, both for meeting basic and high-level needs (Chalofsky & Krishna, 2009). Work might be a source of anguish, burden and boredom, yet it might also be a source of joy, energy

and satisfaction (Wrzesniewski, 2000). There is an inevitable relationship between work and the meaning of life. The search for meaning at work, that occupies a great amount of time and space in our lives, and the meaning of life are intertwined concepts (Edwards, 2005). Employees' search of meaning and purpose at work and their discontent at workplaces (Baklaieva, 2016) are explained by motivation, satisfaction, organizational commitment and differences among generations. According to Frankl (1959), the "search for meaning" is the primary motivation in life. The reason for individuals to search for meaning and purpose is related to their preference of work which is based on extrinsic criteria such as income and status rather than intrinsic signals; and accordingly, experiencing discontent and dissatisfaction due to the disharmony with their "self" even if they become successful their work (Clark, 1999-2000; as cited in Imel, 2002, p.237).

Meaningful Work

In the literature on organizational behavior, the concept of 'meaningfulness' is defined as "deeper level of intrinsic motivation" and an "instrument" of work satisfaction and work commitment. It is described as "deriving a deeper level of satisfaction from the accomplishment of that task and an intrinsic, deeper level of motivator to performing a task" (Chalofsky & Krishna, 2009, p.194). It is also explained as the "realization of one's potential and purpose at which a person's passions, strengths, and core values interact synergistically in his or her work" (Lief, 2009). Meaning is one of the three levels of satisfaction: extrinsic, intrinsic, and something even deeper (Chalofsky & Krishna, 2009).

When individuals have a "meaningful work" they want to perform their tasks productively, show a commitment to his or her work and organization, they might be more ethical and professional and feel satisfied (Chalofsky, 2010). Employees show their performance and potential when they find personal meaning and purpose at work (Srivastava & Bhatnagar, 2008). They work for long hours without getting extra payments, exhibit adaptation and positive social relationships and they provide the outcomes of the organization with the quality of their work (Steger, Dik & Duffy, 2012). Certain research studies revealed that for individuals who have a meaningful work-life, financial income has less importance in comparison to the impact of meaningful work (Bunderson & Thompson, 2009). Meaningful work includes giving priority to self-satisfaction based on self-values, and using the full capacity, talents, and skills, rather than expecting financial gains (Miller, 2008). Meaningful work is the "status of the one's passions, values, and strengths individual's reflecting on one's past, current, or aspired-to activities in a synchronous way (Lief, 2009, p.1384).

Having a meaningful work-life is related to individual and environmental components. According to the "integrated wholeness" model, a meaningful work consists of four constituents: a sense of self, sense of balance, work itself and sense of contribution (Chalofsky 2003; Miller, 2008). According to Rosso, Dekas and Wrzesniewski (2010), there are four dimensions of meaningful work. The 'inner self' is the most important source of meaningful work. It consists of individuals' values, motivations, and beliefs. The second source is 'others' and consists of work colleagues, leaders, groups, communities, and families. The third source is the 'context of work' that includes the design of the tasks, organizational mission, financial context, and non-work dimension and social culture. Steger, Dik and Duffy (2012) presented a Three-Dimensional Compound Model which states that meaningful work of individuals is compounded from: a) personal meaningfulness, b) meaning-making through work (connecting the meaningfulness of his or her work to the meaningfulness of his or her life); and (c) greater good motivations (making an impact on others through the meaning of work). The model developed included study conducted by Morin (2008) with 1632 participants who were working in four different organizations which were operating in four different sectors showed that individuals find meaning in their work and improve their physical and mental health if they have positive perceptions toward their work (daily activities); work under proper conditions (health and safe physical conditions, good relationship among employees) and establish positive relationships as a result of their work (managers, colleagues, clients etc.).

The importance of meaningful work, as an intrinsic motivator has a direct and positive relationship with “organizational commitment” and “job satisfaction” (Willey, 2017). The research study conducted with 574 employees revealed that meaningful work is strongly connected with employee commitment, exhaustion, job satisfaction and leaving work (Fairlie, 2011). Meaningful work is one of the essential components of a deeper level of intrinsic motivation and organizational commitment (Chalofski & Krishna, 2009). The relationship between the meaning and motivation in the context of industrial psychology was highlighted in Hackman and Oldham’s (1975) “Job Characteristics” model. This model explains the impact of job extension and job enrichment programs implemented in the 1950s on employees. According to the model, a job has five different dimensions including skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback and an individual experiences different psychological situations according to each characteristic of the job. The given situation enables an individual to be motivated for the job and exhibit positive and terminal behaviors that have a positive impact on himself or herself and the workplace (as cited in Bilgic, 2008, p.67). According to this model, when three components including skill variety, task identity, task significance come together, an individual experiences meaningful work (Hackman & Oldham, 1980).

Employees with a meaningful work-life increase the deep motivation, job satisfaction, productivity, high-performance, keeping key employees in the organization, job commitment and effective management of change (Barsh, Cranson & Craske, 2008; Cartwright & Holmes, 2006; Herman & Gioia, 1998). Meaningful work and working environment are also effective to keep employees with high performance and potential in the organization (Brown et. al, 2001). A study conducted in South Africa with 513 teachers who aged 19-65 found that calling orientation, work design and relationship with colleagues were correlated with meaningful work (Fouché, Rothmann & van der Vyver, 2017). According to another study conducted with different groups of employees, individuals who produce job crafting and job resources optimize their personal adaptation to work and experience their work meaningfully (Tims, Bakker & Derks, 2015). At the same time, relevant studies on the issue have revealed that there is a negative relationship between meaningful work and employees’ burnout levels (Bremner & Carrière, 2011).

Motivation of Teachers and Generational Differences

As it was explained, meaningful work has an impact on employee commitment and job satisfaction as a deeper level of intrinsic motivation. In comparison to the old generations, employees of the present-day have a greater demand for jobs that appeal to their intrinsic meaning (Chalofsky, 2010). The factors that motivate employees for work and affect job satisfaction vary from generation to generation. A generation is defined as “a group of individuals of similar ages who affect various critical factors and affected by these factors, and who share common experiences” (Arslan & Polat, 2016). Generation X refers to people born between the years ranging from 1965 to 1979 and Generation Y refers to people born between the years ranging from 1980 and 2000 (Bucuta, 2015). Generations have common and different characteristics, and their diverse expectations and perceptions have an impact on the business world (Akdemir et al., 2013). The Generation Y, who switch jobs quickly and frequently, work to live rather than live to work, pursue a work-life balance and who are not easily committed, has become a part of the business life in place of the Generation X employees who have a tendency to work in the same job and organization until the retirement (Li & Devos, 2008). While the Generation X employees show common characteristics such as commitment to the organization, staying in the job for years, social sensitivity, high work motivation, and respect to the authority (Akdemir et al., 2013, Mengi, 2012); Generation Y employees are creative, innovative, demanding for meaningful work, high rewards and work-life balance, and ready to leave the organization when their demands are not satisfied (Akar, 2015).

Previous research has established that teachers from different generations show different attitudes in working life. A study conducted with primary school teachers showed that there was an intergenerational conflict between instruction methods and class management approaches (Arslan & Polat, 2016); and another study revealed that managers of low-seniority

teachers showed less ethical leadership behaviors and managers of high-seniority teachers showed more ethical leadership behaviors (Konak & Erdem, 2015). A study conducted in the context of higher education reported that Generation X academics found Generation Y students' learning orientation inadequate, and Generation Y students perceived Generation X academics as individuals with leadership skills, who are determined, helpful/friendly and understanding yet also as strict and non-libertarian (Mücevher & Erdem, 2018). In contemporary organizations, three different generations work together (Arslan & Staub, 2015), and therefore, factors and values that motivate teachers and generational differences in working styles emerge as important subjects of management.

On the other hand, some conditions require teachers to carry out different roles than the previous generation, to diversify their skills, show high motivation, commitment and performance in line with the competencies in their fields. The alteration of skills that should be acquired by students has had an impact on the teacher competencies required for educating students who have skills of the 21st century. A generation ago, in many countries, it was assumed teachings provided by the teacher would be used for lifelong and fixed curriculums took place in the center of education. However, today, the content can be reached via search engines and information is digitalized, and therefore, teachers should be capable to manage complex ways of thinking and profoundly understand students' motivations, emotions, and out-of-class experiences (Schleicher, 2012). A number of international studies conducted on both teacher and learner skills and competencies pointed out to the alteration occurred in contents and pedagogical approaches due to the impact of technology (Bachy, 2014). The Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) combines theory and practice in terms of efficiency of education in the 21st century, and assumes that learning can be realized when a teacher effectively uses three types of information: content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and technology knowledge, and reflects this assumption on teacher education models (Koehler & Mishra, 2009). Teachers have an important role in teaching 13 different skills named as 21st-century skills and presented under the titles: learning and innovation, life and career skills with information and media technologies (Eryılmaz & Uluyol, 2015; Sayın & Seferoglu, 2015; Schleicher, 2012). Teachers from different generations should be intrinsically motivated and committed for their profession, in a way to reflect on individuals and organization success, to be able to carry out these roles effectively. The transformations in the learning and teaching approach have diversified teachers' tasks and fields of responsibility, and expanded them with competencies such as using technologies with pedagogical components, paying attention to personal differences of students, and teaching 21st century skills to them. In this sense, analyzing teachers' motivations, and job and organizational commitments has a key importance given that teachers will ensure the efficiency of education and guide students who will acquire 21st century skills.

In the context of human resources practices, meaningful work plays an important role in ensuring the efficiency of teachers and educational organizations, since it is a criterion for selecting individuals who are qualified for the job and a deeper level of intrinsic motivator for organizational commitment. In the scope of personnel motivation practices, it is also an organizer for job design implementations. While designing jobs, the need for improvement, which is among the main needs of employees, should be also taken into consideration besides knowledge, skills and talents (Fairlie, 2015).

In teaching profession, intrinsic motivation comes to the fore, even more than it does for other professions, due to the nature of the work. However, in the recent years, studies on conflict, mobbing, cynicism, and burn out in teachers have pointed out to the problems concerning job satisfaction, motivation and organizational commitment. A study conducted with 515 teachers showed that emotional burnout and insensitivity levels were increased for older teachers (Cemaloglu & Sahin, 2007); teachers with higher levels education had higher levels of burn out (Tümekaya, 2016); and teachers experienced isolation in working life at a low level and social isolation was experienced more frequently (Tabak & Argon, 2018). The studies on motivation level found that teachers' motivation was at the medium level; and their altruistic and intrinsic motivation were higher (Akman, 2017; Ekinci, 2017); job motivation predicted

organizational identification (Akman, 2017); organizational justice increased job motivation and performance; and there was a positive relationship between job motivation and organizational commitment (Oran, Guler & Bilir, 2016). The findings showed that teachers had a medium level of motivation and mostly, their intrinsic motivation was manifested rather than their extrinsic motivation. In this period of time the expectations from teacher roles and education have been increasing and therefore there is a need to highlight studies that will eliminate factors that will negatively affect job satisfaction levels and increase these levels (Filiz, 2014). It is important to increase the meaningfulness level of teachers from different generations and to provide meaningful work environment to them in order to keep the qualified teachers in the organization, by providing internal motivation to ensure job satisfaction and organizational commitment. From this perspective, it is important to examine the concept of meaningful work as an intrinsic motivation for teachers from different generations, and its relationship between relevant variables; and developing an measurement tool for determining the level of meaningful work.

The main purpose of this study was to reveal the level of meaningful work in Generation X and Generation Y teachers, and its relationship with various variables. For this purpose, the study also aimed to develop an measurement tool to determine the level of meaningful work. In line with this main purpose; the sub-objectives of the study were:

1. Are the measurement tool developed for assessing the level of meaningful work valid and reliable ?
2. How are the opinions of participants on finding their work meaningful ?
3. Are there a significant difference in the level of meaningful work based on generation, gender, city and types of school variables?
4. How are the opinions of Generation X and Generation Y teachers on their career values ?

METHOD

The study was conducted by using the descriptive survey model given that the objective was to examine the relationship between the actual level of meaningful work in the context of teachers from different generations and various variables. Descriptive methods aim to reveal the actual status of a problem that is going to be examined. The main feature of these methods is to study an existing situation within its own conditions explicitly (Sonmez & Alacapinar, 2011).

Study Group

The study group of the study consisted of 267 teachers who were working in 15 different public schools located in the central districts of Ankara and Yozgat during the 2015-2016 academic year. The study was carried out in the central districts of a metropolitan city (Ankara) and in a province (Yozgat). The reason for the given situation was to create an opportunity to compare the level of teachers' opinions - who were working in a low-population province which is relatively disadvantaged in terms of success rates in central exams, and in a metropolitan city-on finding their work meaningful. In the selection of the study group, the criteria for the participants were determined as follows: actively working in primary, secondary or high schools located in central districts, to be born between the years 1964 and 2000, and voluntarily participating in the study. The demographic characteristics of the participants is showed in Table 1.

Table 1 shows that half of the participants (%50,4) belonged to Generation X, and the other half belonged to Generation Y (%49,6). The distribution of the participants according to the gender showed that %53 of the participants were females, and %47 of the participants were males. In terms of the type of school, the majority of participants were working in high schools.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the participants

Variable	Category	N	%
Gender	Female	141	53
	Male	126	47
Generation	X Generation (1964-1979)	133	50,4
	Y Generation (1980-2000)	131	49,6
City	Ankara	140	48
	Yozgat	127	52
	1 - 5 years	196	75
Seniority	6 - 10 years	37	14
	11 - 15 years	14	6
	16 - 20 years	6	2
	21 - 25 years	7	3
	Primary School	75	28
Type of School	Secondary school	75	28
	High School	116	44

Data Collection Tools

Data for this study collected by using the 40-item data collection tool which consisted of Personal Information Section and two scales, developed by the researcher. The data collection tool consisted of three sections (Personal Information section, Meaningful Work Level Scale and the Values Affecting Meaningful Work Scale). In the first section, there were 10 items about participants personal information such as age, seniority level, branch and period of service; the "Meaningful Work Level Scale" included 16 items to determined the level of employees to finding their work meaningful; and the "Values that Affect the Meaningful Work Scale" included 14 items to determine the values that affect meaningful work. In the data collection process, the required approvals were obtained from Yozgat Provincial Directorate for National Education. In the collection of the data, implementation approval was received and participants were included in the study on a voluntary basis. The data collection tool included information on the purpose of the study, the contact address for obtaining information, the confidentiality of participants' personal information and the use of the data for scientific purposes. In the data collection process, the teachers who collaborated in both provinces were informed about the research and data collection process that would be highlighted in the data collection through meetings. In the analysis of the data, 34 forms that were incorrect, deficient or improper for analysis were excluded.

Data Analysis

In the analysis of the data on participants levels of finding their work meaningful and values that affect meaningful work, descriptive statistics including arithmetic mean, standard deviation and percentage; in the comparison of opinions regarding meaningful work (Generation X and Generation Y) according to the variables of gender and city (where teachers worked) t-test; and according to school type one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used. In the analysis, the significance level was accepted as $\alpha = 0.05$. In the study, exploratory factor analysis, Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficient and split-half reliability tests were used for the validity and reliability analysis of the measurement tool developed for determining the level of meaningful work and effecting values.

RESULTS

The main purpose of this study was to reveal the level of meaningful work in Generation X and Generation Y teachers, and its relationship with various variables. In line with this objective, the presentation of the results started with the validity and reliability analysis of the measurement tool given that the measurement tool was required to be developed.

The measurement tool draft form consisted of three sections. In the beginning, the first section consisted of 10 items to determine personal information; the second section consisted of 20 items scaled as five-point Likert type to assess the level of meaningful work, and the third section consisted of 17 items scaled as four-point Likert type to assess the values that affect finding work meaningful. The validity and reliability analysis of the measurement tool were applied separately for the second (Level of meaningful work draft form) and the third sections (Values that affect finding work meaningful draft form).

Meaningful Work Level Scale

The scale was a Likert Type measurement tool. For the preparation of the instrument, literature was reviewed, and item pool and scale draft form were developed by making use of the studies conducted by Treadgold (1997); Steger, Dik and Duffy (2012). For the content validity of the scale, opinions of five domain experts were received and re-organizations were made according to their feedbacks. The participants were asked about their levels of finding work meaningful and how relevant the given statements were for their relationships with work by marking the options «completely disagree», « disagree », «slightly agree», «agree», «completely agree». The appropriateness of the data was examined using Kaiser Meyer Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's Test for the exploratory factor analysis applied for analyzing the construct validity of the scale. The KMO coefficient was found as ,951, and the results of the Bartlett Test was found significant ($X^2=2855,500$, $df=120$, $p<.000$). According to these findings, it was decided that the data set was appropriate for the exploratory factor analysis. After applying the given procedure, exploratory factor analysis was applied with 20 items. It is suggested to determine the item-factor loading value above ,30 in the case that a stronger construct and scale are targeted (Secer,2013). Therefore, it was decided to keep items in the factors and the lower limit of the factor loading value was accepted as .45. In the analysis the varimax rotation technique was applied. The rotation enables the researcher to obtain more and clear information about the nature of constructs as it includes rotation of factors axes by measuring the locations of the variables in the factor space (Cokluk, Sekercioglu & Buyukozturk, 2010). In exploratory factor analysis, item3, item11, item12, item13 were excluded from the scale since it has overlapping items and they did not show desired factor loading value. As a result of the exploratory factor analysis, it was found that the scale had a one-factor construct consisted of 16 items, and explained % 56,72 of the variance. To test the reliability of the Meaningful Work Level Scale consisted of 16 items, Cronbach alpha and split-half reliability analysis were applied, and the Cronbach alpha coefficient of the Meaningful Work Level Scale was found as ,94. According to the criteria accepted in the evaluation of Ozdamar (2004), the scale is highly reliable when the alpha coefficient is between $.80 \leq \alpha \leq 1$. Moreover, a split-half reliability test was applied, and the Spearman-Brown correlation value was found as $r=.91$, and the Guttman Split-Half correlation value was found as $r=.90$. This value showed that the split-half reliability test results of the scale was ,91.

Table 2 shows the item-factor loading value range obtained for the Meaningful Work Scale, explained variance and cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficients. The results showed that the total variance explained by the "Meaningful Work Level Scale", used for determining the level of meaningful work, which was consisted of 16 items and had the eigenvalue of 9,07, was found as % 56,72. The findings showed that the scale was a valid and reliable assessment instrument.

Table 2. *Meaningful work scale item-factor loading values and item total correlation results*

No	Items	FLV	Item-Total Correlation
1.	I have a job which I find meaningful	,747	,70
2.	My job contributes to my personal development	,690	,64
3.	I think that my work contributes to the meaning of my life	,744	,70
4.	I am satisfied with the things that make my job meaningful	,691	,72
5.	I make a positive change with my job	,762	,58
6.	My job helps me to understand myself better	,736	,56
7.	I think that my job has a satisfying purpose	,772	,73
8.	My job helps me to make the world that I live in more significant	,786	,75
9.	My job serves an important purpose	,656	,60
10.	If I could go back in time, I would choose this job again	,794	,75
11.	I feel a deeper level of job satisfaction at the end of the day	,776	,74
12.	I always do my work devotedly and with joy	,791	,75
13.	I feel like I have the job that fits me the best	,819	,78
14.	I feel like I am integrated with my work	,809	,77
15.	I would do my work devotedly without any expectations of money or and success	,689	,64
16.	My job is compatible with my principles and values in life	,768	,73
Total Explained Variance : %56,72			
Eigenvalue: 9,07			
Alpha: ,94			

Values that Affect the Meaningful Work Scale

The validity and reliability analysis of the “Values that Affect the Meaningful Work Scale” draft form included 17 items in the beginning. The draft form developed for the opinions about items was scaled as a four-point Likert type. The participants were asked to scale the items concerning the factors that affect the level of meaningful work by choosing «Non» «Low Level» «Medium Level» «High Level». In the scope of the validity studies, opinions of field experts were taken and literature was reviewed. In the construct validity analysis of the scale, the KMO coefficient was calculated as .941 and the results of the Barlett Test were found significant ($\chi^2=, 2516,152$ $df=136$, $p<.000$). According to these findings, the construct validity of the scale was found appropriate for the exploratory factor analysis. As a result of the first analysis, it was seen that the scale was combined in three factors which had eigen values above 1, and the item15, item6, item12 were overlapping and below the required ,45 factor loading value. These items were excluded from the scale, the results of the Varimax rotation technique and scree plot findings showed that the construct explained %64 of the variance in two factors. The first factor consisted of 12 items that had factor loading values between ,69 and ,88, the eigenvalue of the factor was 7,64, and the explained variance was % 49,40. The second factor consisted of two items. The total variance explained by the scale, which was consisted of 14 items, which had factor loading values between ,83 and ,88, in two sub-dimensions, was % 64,13, the total explained variance was % 14,73 and the eigen value was 1,33. In the reliability analysis of the scale, the Cronbach alpha coefficient was found as ,93. According to Secer (2013), the generally accepted alpha coefficient value is ,70 and above. The result of the split-half reliability test showed that the Spearman-Brown correlation value was $r=,86$, Guttman Split-Half correlation value was $r=,86$, the split-half reliability level was ,86 and the scale had a two-factor construct. The 1st factor was named “Intrinsic Moral Values” and the 2nd factor was named “Material Values”.

The main purpose of the study was to reveal the opinions of Generation X and Generation Y teachers on the level of meaningful work. In this direction, Table 3 shows the distribution of ‘Participants’ level of finding their work meaningful’ related to the second sub-objective of the study.

Table 3. *Distribution of participants' level of finding their work meaningful*

No Madde	X Gen		Y Gen		Total		
	\bar{X}	S	\bar{X}	S	\bar{X}	S	
1. I have a job which I find meaningful	4,48	,75	4,52	,61	4,50	,68	
2. My job contributes to my personal development	4,36	,79	4,28	,92	4,32	,86	
4. I think that my work contributes to the meaning of my life	4,22	,83	4,11	,84	4,17	,83	
5. I am satisfied with the things that make my job meaningful.	4,20	,77	4,17	,76	4,19	,76	
6. I make a positive change with my job.	4,02	,86	3,85	,88	3,93	,87	
7. My job helps me to understand myself better	4,11	,82	4,02	,92	4,06	,87	
8. I think that my job has a satisfying purpose	4,22	,85	4,25	,78	4,23	,81	
9. My job serves an important purpose	4,58	,68	4,45	,74	4,51	,71	
10. If I could go back in time, I would choose this job again	3,89	1,19	3,75	1,20	3,82	1,19	
11. I feel a deeper level of job satisfaction at the end of the day	3,85	,93	3,55	,97	3,70	,96	
12. I always do my work devotedly and with joy	4,01	,92	3,75	,91	3,88	,92	
13. I feel like I have the job that fits me the best	4,02	,91	3,89	,95	3,96	,93	
14. I feel like I am integrated with my work	4,13	,87	3,90	,87	4,02	,87	
15. I would do my work devotedly without any expectations of money or and success	4,02	,95	3,74	,96	3,88	,96	
16. My job is compatible with my principles and values in life	4,22	,84	4,20	,73	4,21	,79	
Total	N = 267	4,16	0,86	4,03	0,86	4,09	0,87

Table 3 shows that according to the participants' opinions ($\bar{x}=4,16$), teachers' level of meaningful work was "high". According to the total score means, there was no difference between the Generation X ($\bar{x}=4,16$) and Generation Y ($\bar{x}=4,03$) teachers level of finding their work meaningful. The first three items that both generations participated at most were: "My job serves an important purpose" [Generation X ($\bar{x}=4,58$), Generation Y ($\bar{x}=4,45$)]; "I have a job which I find meaningful" [Generation X ($\bar{x}=4,48$), Generation Y ($\bar{x}=4,52$)]; "My job contributes to my personal development" [Generation X ($\bar{x}=4,36$), Generation Y ($\bar{x}=4,28$)]. On the other hand, while "having a meaningful work" had the prior importance for Generation Y; for Generation X "having a job that serves an important purpose" had the first place.

The item that was participated by Generation X and Generation Y teachers the least was "I feel a deeper level of job satisfaction at the end of the day" [Generation X ($\bar{x}=3,85$); Generation Y ($\bar{x}=3,55$)]. Other items that were participated the least included "I always do my work devotedly and with joy" [X Generation ($\bar{x}=4,01$); Y Generation ($\bar{x}=3,75$)] and "If I could go back in time, I would choose this job again" [X Generation ($\bar{x}=3,89$); Y Generation ($\bar{x}=3,75$)]. Generation X and Generation Y teachers participated to the "experiencing job satisfaction" the least. Generation Y experienced relatively less job satisfaction in comparison to Generation X. Furthermore, the statements; "Working with joy" and "If I could go back in time, I would choose this job again" were the statements that both generations participated the least.

The third sub-objective of the study was to examine whether the opinions of the participants on the level of meaningful work differentiated the variables gender, city, generation and type of school. The results of the t-test and the one-way analysis of variance are provided below. The t-test analysis results on the level of meaningful work based on gender, generation and city variables are showed in Table 4.

Table 4. T-test results on the level of meaningful work based on gender, generation and city variables

Variables	Categories	N	\bar{X}	S	sd	t	P
Gender	Female	141	66,63	10,12	265	1,71	,087
	Male	126	64,43	10,86			
City	Ankara	140	64,07	10,90	265	2,51	,012
	Yozgat	127	67,28	9,84			
Generation	X Gen	135	66,58	10,70	265	1,55	,122
	Y Gen	132	64,59	10,26			

Table 4 shows that there was a significant difference in participants' opinions on the level of meaningful work based on the city variable [$t(265)=2.51;p<.05$], there was no significant difference based on the gender [$t(265)=1.71;p>.05$] and generation variables [$t(265)=1.55;p>.05$]. The mean scores of the city variable demonstrated that the mean scores of the teachers who were working in Yozgat ($X =67,28$) was higher than teachers who were working in Ankara ($X =64,07$). In other words, teachers who were working in Yozgat were more positive about their level of meaningful work than the teachers who were working in Ankara. On the other hand, while there was no significant difference based on the generation variable, the mean scores of Generation X teachers regarding meaningful work-life were higher than Generation Y.

The one-way analysis of variance results performed for comparing participants' opinions on the level of meaningful work based on the type of school are showed in Table 5.

Table 5. The one-way analysis of variance results on the level of meaningful work based on the type of school

Variables	Categories	N	\bar{X}	S	sd	F	P	Significant Difference (Scheffe)
Type of school	1. Primary	75	68,41	8,57	2,263	9,83	,000	1 - 2
	2. Secondary	75	61,34	11,98				2 - 3
	3. High school	116	66,51	9,91				

Table 5 shows that there was a significant difference between the participants' opinions on the level of meaningful work based on the type of school [$F(2,263) = 9,83; p<.05$]. The results of the Scheffe Test demonstrated that there was a significant difference between the opinions of teachers who were working in primary ($\bar{x} =68,41$), secondary ($\bar{x} = 61,34$), and high schools ($\bar{x} =66,51$). According to these results, the secondary school teachers' meaningful work levels were more negative in comparison to the teachers working in primary schools and high schools. Primary school teachers were the participants who had the highest level of meaningful work-life.

The fourth sub-objective of the study was to examine the opinions of participants on career values. The distributions of Generation X and Generation Y teachers' opinions on career values that effect 'finding their work meaningful' are presented in Table 6.

Table 6 shows that Generation X teachers participated in the items; "Serving an important purpose with my work" ($\bar{x} = 3,76$) "Making a contribution for people and the world" ($\bar{x} = 3,69$), "Felling like I am integrated with my work" ($\bar{x}=3,67$) at most. On the other hand, Generation Y teachers participated in the items "Having a job that is compatible with my values and principles" ($\bar{x} = 3,70$); "Serving an important purpose with my work" ($\bar{x} = 3,64$), and "The harmony between my life goals and job" ($\bar{x} = 3,59$) at most. In this dimension, both Generation X and Generation Y participated in the item "Making a difference with my work" the least.

Table 6. Distributions of Generation X and Generation Y teachers' opinions on career values

F	No	Item	Generation X		Generation Y		Total	
			X	S	X	S	X	S
	1.	Feeling like I am integrated with my work	3,67	,52	3,49	,69	3,58	,61
	2.	Serving an important purpose with my work	3,76	,44	3,64	,61	3,70	,53
	3.	Using my talents and skills	3,66	,53	3,55	,58	3,61	,55
	4.	Making a contribution for people and the world	3,69	,50	3,55	,60	3,62	,56
	5.	Having joy and excitement during work	3,60	,57	3,55	,66	3,58	,62
	6.	Making a difference with my work	3,45	,64	3,33	,67	3,39	,65
	7.	Learning and self-improvement	3,61	,54	3,53	,64	3,57	,59
1.	8.	Having a job that is compatible with my values and principles	3,69	,53	3,70	,56	3,70	,54
	9.	Having a deeper level of motivation and excitement toward my work	3,54	,61	3,51	,64	3,52	,62
	10.	The harmony between my life goals and job	3,55	,65	3,59	,63	3,57	,64
	11.	Having a job that I devote myself mentally, physically and spiritually	3,59	,57	3,49	,69	3,54	,63
	12.	Expressing myself with my work	3,53	,60	3,50	,64	3,51	,62
2.	13.	Having enough income to maintain my life	3,11	,65	3,30	,70	3,21	,66
	14.	Having job security to guarantee my life	3,44	,61	3,46	,66	3,45	,65
Total N = 267								
1. Intrinsic moral values			2. Material values					

In the Material values dimension, both Generation X and Generation Y participated in the items “Having enough income to maintain my life” [X Generation (\bar{x} =3,11; Y Generation (\bar{x} =3,30)]; and “Having job security to guarantee my life” [X Generation (\bar{x} =3,44; Y Generation (\bar{x} =3,46)]. Participation of the Generation X participants in the item “Having enough income to maintain my life” was at a “medium” level, and it was at a “high” level for Generation Y. The low level of participation in the values included in the material dimension, particularly the “medium” level of participation of Generation X, can be interpreted as the teaching profession is an important source for ensuring a meaningful work-life as an intrinsic motivator.

DISCUSSION and CONCLUSIONS

The main purpose of the study was to determine the level of Generation X and Generation Y teachers' levels of finding their work meaningful. Based on the results, Generation X and Y teachers found their work meaningful at a high level. Similarly, the study conducted by Willey (2017) with teachers who were working in international schools indicated that teachers found their work meaningful. For Generation X, having a job that serves an important purpose was had the highest priority, and for Generation Y, having a meaningful has prior importance. Meaning has a feature of providing a deep sense for individuals in terms of providing benefit to a whole, society, and humanity, besides providing benefits to oneself (Barsh, Cranson & Craske, 2008; Miller, 2008). The given situation can be also regarded as a feature that stems from the fact that Generation X has a work attitude towards greater social objectives, and Generation Y has a work attitude towards more personal objectives. According to Topgul (2015), social and volunteer work is an integral part of Generation X, and the most important motivation factor for Generation Y is providing them an opportunity to improve themselves (Hill, 2002). On the other hand, the finding, that showed that the role of work for contributing to the self-improvement of both Generation X and Generation Y teachers, was one of the statements that teachers participated in at most, and this situation revealed the contribution of providing opportunities of self-improvement in the meaningfulness of work. Meaningful work includes the themes about improvement such as self-realization and social impact, therefore, it is a variable that provides an opportunity in the field of human resources for ensuring employee commitment (Fairlie,

2011). It can be suggested to take the necessary precautions that provide improvement and opportunities for improvement in the profession of teaching and to enhance in-service training provided for teachers, career planning in line with current needs, and horizontal/vertical promotion systems.

This study revealed that even Generation X experienced less job satisfaction in comparison to Generation Y, the participation rate of teachers in “having job satisfaction” was the lowest. Furthermore, other expressions that teachers participated the least included “having joy during work” and “If I could go back in time, I would choose this job again”. These results revealed the importance of the working environment and the environmental factors that affect meaningful work. Because, the fact that teachers participation rates in “having job satisfaction” and “having joy during work” were low, although they had a “high” level of opinion that indicates that work has a greater aim, point out to the importance of environmental factors that affect their meaningful work-life and motivation. The study of Kose et al. (2018), found that the most common factors that demotivate teachers were general policies, and external factors related to parents and managers. Similarly, another study showed that situations that affected teacher motivation negatively included administration, system and parent-related issues, and the situations which boosted teacher motivation at most included personal situations such as liking the job and gaining social respect (Erturk & Aydın, 2017). Furthermore, the meaning of work is associated with characteristics of the working environment such as the structure, culture, rules and process, management style and payments and rewards of work (Guevera & Ort, 1996). In the model developed by Morin and Dassa (2006), meaningful work consists of five dimensions including improvement and learning conditions, the benefit of work, quality of relationships at work, autonomy, and moral correctness. Briefly, the meaning is the connection established in the context of individuals' inner worlds and external worlds, namely workplaces (Cartwright & Holmes, 2006).

The research study conducted with participants from the public and the private sector on job satisfaction related to meaningful work examined the meaningful and job satisfaction factors. While the factors of job dissatisfaction included lack of control while managing the work, lack of institutional attachment, and lack of work-life balance; the factors that affected social job satisfaction included providing social benefit through work, social activities of the institution, creativity of job, self-improvement, creating change in society through work and social communication established through work (Sharaf, 2013). Another research study revealed that support of management and relationship with colleagues also had an impact on job satisfaction (Kiran & Sungur, p.2018). From this perspective, it can be argued that the opportunities and management process mediate between employees' status of finding their work meaningful and job satisfaction levels. The findings of the proposed study which showed that teachers low participation to ‘job satisfaction’, ‘working with joy’ and ‘if I could go back in time, I would choose this job again’, although they found their work meaningful, can be interpreted as there is a need to review their work conditions, work environment, and administrative regulations. Theoretical studies on the concept of meaningful work also highlight the personal and environmental components of meaningful working life. Terez (2000) associated the meaningful work with the working environment and the impact of the environment, and examined the components of meaningful work under five groups including Mission (purpose, orientation, attachment), People (respect, equality, sincerity, flexibility, and ownership), Development (discovery, invention, support, personal development), Community (dialog, building relationship), Me (self-identity, harmony, balance, value). From this aspect, the teaching profession provides benefits for the individual and humanity, meaning and motivation for the profession due to its nature; the negative impacts of the working environment might be considered as negative factors in providing meaning and commitment. According to this result, it can be suggested to provide training for educational administrators on generational differences teachers and creating a meaningful work environment that will increase teachers' motivation and reflecting it on implementations.

The proposed study revealed that gender and generation were not variables that affected meaningful working life; however, the city that the teacher works and instruction-level were

variables associated with meaningful working-life. According to this, teachers who were working in primary schools and smaller cities were more positive toward finding their work meaningful. The reason for this situation is related to the fact that primary school represents a phase of development that contributions and benefits can be seen more concretely, and teachers' level of meaningful work increases as they can experience their contributions made for students more quickly and in a concrete manner. The literature also emphasizes that providing a direct contribution to others, to humanity and society as an important component of a meaningful working life, and an intrinsic motivator (Morin, 2008; Steger, Dik & Duffy, 2012). Another research study presented a theme "making a difference in students' lives" with respect to the meaningful work life of teachers (Willey, 2017). In this study, according to the city variable, teachers who were working in a smaller city found their work more meaningful than the teachers who were working in a bigger city and this situation can be associated with various dimensions of meaningful work in teaching profession such as; autonomy, using one's potential, harmony between work and personal goals, contributing to the world and humanity through work, being excited about work, and experiencing life-satisfaction through work (Yeoman, 2012). Accordingly, it can be argued that the problems related to teachers' motivation and commitment can be eliminated, even they work in relatively disadvantaged locations, if teachers, who are expected to have high qualifications worldwide, find their work meaningful.

Another objective of the study was to examine the career values that affected the meaningful work level of teachers. According to the results, the values that had an impact on Generation X teachers' levels of finding their work meaningful included serving an important purpose through work, making a contribution to work and being integrated with work. On the other hand, the values that had an impact on Generation Y teachers' levels of finding their work meaningful included their principles and harmony between their work and life goals. According to this result, while the perception of Generation X on meaningful work was social benefit-oriented and related to serving a purpose and contributing to others and the world; the perception of Generation Y was relatively individual-oriented and related to personal principles and life goals. Generation Y is generally considered as an individualistic generation whose career commitments are difficult to be established. Generation Y has an innovative spirit, aims to rise under comfortable working conditions and has a tendency to switch jobs for better salary and position (Akdemir et al., 2013). Soule (2001) noted that Generation X and particularly Generation Y exhibit more individualistic behaviors and are insensitive towards social problems (as cited in Doganay, Cuhadar & Sari, 2007, p.220). Generation Y is considered as multidimensional and their limitless career perception was found higher than other generations (Wong, 2007; as cited in Cetin & Karalar, 2016).

On the other hand, both Generation X and Generation Y participated in expressions provided under material values that affect finding work meaningful dimensions at the lowest level. The items 'Having enough income to maintain my life' and 'Having job security to guarantee my life' were the items that teachers participated in the least. Even at the lowest level, Generation Y generation teachers participated in these items at a high-level, and Generation X teachers participated in a medium-level. Although it is thought that the job guarantee that public school teachers have had a role in the given situation, the lowest level of participation in material dimensions can be explained with the fact that besides financial opportunities, teachers had various values and tendencies related to meaningful work and working environment which included integration with work, making a contribution, serving an important purpose. The teaching profession presents a high level of intrinsic motivation, altruism, and identifying with work (Tang, Wong, Wong & Cheng, 2018). According to Wiley (2017), in the last two decades, the tendency was directed towards more important factors in working life rather than income. In addition to income, today, the working generation seeks inspirational jobs that will enable them to have meaning and make a contribution. In this context, the facts that Generation X employees, who are retired or will be retired soon, have different attitudes towards working life; and the Generation Y employees, that include employees who are maximum 38 years old, are in the phase of expertise, show that it is important to examine attitudes and values to demonstrate how the expectations and

educational goals of society and the Generation Z students will be met in the framework of technological opportunities.

Another result provided by this study indicated that teachers who lived in a smaller city had more positive and higher job perceptions in comparison to teachers who lived in a bigger city. Therefore, it can be suggested to take precautions in smaller cities to enhance meaningful work life, where living conditions are easier and the work environment is more familiar and accessible. Based on the fact that the harmony between the goals and principles of both work and life was an important factor for Generation Y to find their work meaningful, it can be beneficial to provide autonomous working conditions for Generation Y teachers to carry out their projects, administrative support and vocational development opportunities for keeping them in working life and in institutions and for ensuring their commitment. In the literature, it was frequently stated that meaningful work has a negative relationship with various factors such as burnout, stress and cynicism. On the other hand, it was revealed that meaningful work has a positive correlation with positive outcomes of work such as job satisfaction, productivity, performance, organizational commitment, and well-being. A research study conducted with teachers who found their work meaningful at a high level presented five different themes including the harmony between personal and professional values, creating change in students' lives, personal improvement through work, the excitement of creativity and autonomy (Willey, 2017). From this perspective, examining the concept of generation and different generation of employees' and administrators' characteristics, work attitudes, motivating factors, rewards and performance systems, and expectations and demands regarding "meaning of work" is as important as the physical environment and income for the quality of education and sustainability of this quality.

In the scope of this study, validity and reliability analysis of measurement tool which was developed for determining the level of meaningful work and the values that affect meaningful work were applied. It was concluded that Meaningful Work Level and Values that Affect the Meaningful Work scales was found valid and reliable. However, one of the limitations of the study was testing the validity and reliability of scales included in the measurement tool only on the study group. Therefore, it can be suggested to analyze the relationship between the measurement tool with different samples and variables in the context of meaningful work. It can be also offered to conduct large-scale studies that will examine attitudes of teachers from different generations and motivational factors in the detail and carrying out work-life balance programs that will ensure teachers' job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Furthermore, implementing a teacher-oriented administrative regulations and a reward system that will include reward, promotion and improvement opportunities may increase the motivations of teachers from different generations by providing job satisfaction and commitment through positive relationship with colleagues, autonomy, responsibility, and job enrichment that are among the factors which affect meaningful work in a school environment. The study is expected to make contributions to future programs particularly on organizational behavior, recruitment of teachers in the context of human resources management, education, personnel training and improvement, and reward and promotion.

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