A generation is defined as a group of individuals who are roughly the same age, and who experience and are influenced by the same set of significant historical events during key developmental periods in their lives.

With multiple Nursing generations working together in the healthcare setting identifying and understanding generational differences that influence job satisfaction will help to promote a healthy work environment and a sustainable workforce.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**


**FINDINGS**

**Baby boomers:** 1946-1964, significant historical events included the civil rights movement, Vietnam War, moon landing, Woodstock and TV.

**Generation X:** 1965-1980, significant historical events included women’s lib, AIDS, Challenger Disaster, fall of Berlin Wall, Rodney King and the first computer.

**Millennials:** 1981-2000, significant historical events included Oklahoma City bombing, September 11, death of Princess Diana, school violence and the digital age.

Generational views related to:

**Autonomy:** Very important to boomers and Generation X to conduct their work the way they feel it’s most important to supporting the patient. Dislike micromanagement. Millennial perspective is it’s not important because it’s mostly following orders and they have not yet developed the level of expertise needed to be autonomous.

**Commitment:** For Boomers it is a professional career path. They are process oriented, team builders. Gen X is not team focused, have learned to manage their own time, set their own limits and get their work done without supervision. They are adaptable and focus on outcome rather than process. View nursing as an occupation rather than a profession. Willing to change jobs to get ahead. Millennials enjoy strong peer relationships and favor a collective, collaborative approach to teamwork. Job portability is important. Adaptable to change and believe security lies in the need for their skills and service. View nursing as an occupation rather than a profession. Always looking for something better. Tend to change jobs every 2-3 years.

**Compensation:** For Boomers it is an important acknowledgement of their experience and contribution to the profession. Viewed as a reward.

Generation X’s view is work to live. They work hard and play hard and value time off. This generation wants to work less and make more money. A millennial view is “I’ve worked and studied hard to get here and pay is my reward.”

**Communication:** Boomers prefer one-on-one, face-to-face communication and informal discussion. Gen X technology is preferred. May not be interested in personal contact. They want concerns heard and positive feedback regarding their performance for their contributions. Millennials read less than any other generation. They have learned to speak up for themselves and question authority. They prefer immediate feedback and direction. They use instant messaging and chat rooms and are technology dependent.

**Work Life Balance:** For Boomers, work is their life. They equate work with personal fulfillment and self worth. Gen X highly values a balance between their personal and work lives. Millennials thrive on maintaining a balance between their work and personal life.

**CONCLUSIONS**

An understanding and acceptance of generational differences in the workplace is needed to develop highly functional teams focusing on the strengths of each generation.

**IMPLICATIONS**

Nursing Leadership must incorporate strategies to bridge generational gaps in communication, compensation, commitment and work life balance to develop cohesive nursing teams to facilitate nurse retention.