

# Examining the differences in the impact of different work ethics of 80s, 90s and 00s Chinese employees on their organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior

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**Abstract.** As global economic integration advances, an increasing number of businesses are confronted with the conflict between economic and social benefits, as well as between the pursuit of corporate profits and the observance of ethics and morals. Using the Employee Work Ethics Questionnaire, the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire, and the Organizational Citizenship Behavior Questionnaire, this study focuses on the differences between different generations of employees' work ethics and organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviors. The study focuses on the enterprise management of "post-80s, post-90s, and post-00s" personnel and explores the distinctions between "post-80s," "post-90s," and "post-00s" people. The objective is to assist the "post-80s," "post-90s," and "post-00s" in adapting to corporate management with related measures. The objective is to assist the "post-80s," "post-90s," and "post-00s" in better adapting to enterprise management in order to achieve the enterprise's sustainable development. Several company personnel were chosen as responders, and the data are analyzed using Questionnaire Star and SPSS. A regression model of employee work ethics, organisational commitment, and organisational citizenship behavior was established. Generational differences were discovered in the effects of gender, years of work experience, education, and position on organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviors. However, in all three age groups, work ethics was strongly and positively associated with organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviors.

**Keywords:** Work ethics; organizational commitment; organizational citizenship behavior; post-80s; post-90s; post-00s.

## 1. Introduction

In an increasingly competitive economic climate and with the rapid advancement of science, initiative is crucial for employees. Human capital, being the base and core of a company's existence and long-term development, can only be fully leveraged to create more organizational citizenship behaviors among employees in order to make the company unbeatable in the harsh market competition [1]. This is why an increasing number of businesses demand their employees to display corporate citizenship and regulate their organizational commitment at work. In 2022, the first graduates from the 2000s will enter the workforce. Even though the post-2000s have only been recognized as the newest generation in the workplace this year, there are already legends circulating about them. Since 2018, numerous organisations have conducted research on the personality features of those born in the 2000s. In a 2008 paper titled "Youth at the Right Time - Case Study Report on Marketing and Products of Post-00s," Yi-O Library stated: The increase of self-awareness has enhanced the post-00s' perception of themselves, and they desire to be independent, intelligent, and self-assured [2]. Each employee generation was born and raised in a distinct age of internet development. Their home environment, higher education level, upbringing in a flourishing market economy, and unique values, among other factors, have shaped the distinctive traits and employment requirements of these three distinct groups. To further investigate the mechanisms responsible for the next generation of employees' organizational citizenship behaviors. While the literature confirms that intergenerational differences in work values influence the organizational citizenship behavior of different generations of employees, relatively few references explore the mechanisms of

organizational citizenship behavior of new generations of employees in the context of intergenerational conflict (between new generations of employees and older generations of managers) in China [3].

To this end, this study employs theories of organizational commitment and work ethics to examine the impact of employee work ethics on organizational commitment and organizational citizenship relationships in three different generations from the unique perspectives of the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s, thereby enhancing to some extent the empirical research on intergenerational differences and organizational citizenship behavior and organizational commitment, as well as developing a suitable humor. Both are beneficial.

In the context of a knowledge-based economy and a harmonious society governed by the principles of cooperation and win-win, the purpose of this research paper is to build upon previous research. A questionnaire was used to collect data in real time to investigate the impact of the different work ethics of employees in the three age groups on organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior. Constructing a dual regression model with organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviors as the two dependent variables suggests effective methods for companies to manage their workforce.

The post-1980s, 1990s, and 2000s will each be analysed separately in this study to determine how the impact of work ethics on organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior varied across these three time periods. The dimensions of work ethic that will be chosen will be taken from Miller et al (2002) 's Multidimensional Work Ethic Profile (MWEP), which includes "centrality of work, self-reliance, hard work, leisure, morality/ethic, delay of gratification, and wasted time." The dimension of organizational commitment will be studied in three different dimensions: organizational the three dimensions that make up organizational commitment are organizational identification, organizational involvement, and organizational loyalty. The organizational citizenship behavior adopts the two-dimensional model of interpersonal-friendly organizational citizenship behaviors and organizational-friendly organizational citizenship behavior developed by Williams and Anderson [4]. This model has been widely used by domestic and international scholars in empirical studies.

Specific studies include.

1) The influence of employees' work ethic on their organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviors in the 1980s is investigated.

2) To investigate the influence of work ethics on the organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior of employees in the 1990s.

3) To investigate the influence of work ethics on organizational commitment and organizational citizenship in the 2000s.

4) Compare the differences between the effects of the three generations.

In the 1980s, the study found that: (i) gender, and length of employment had a negative impact on organizational citizenship behavior, whereas education, position, and work ethic had a positive impact; (ii) gender had a negative impact on organizational commitment, whereas the other four factors had a positive impact. In the work ethic of the 1990s: (i) gender, and length of employment were negatively associated with organizational citizenship behavior, whereas education and position were positively associated with it; (ii) gender and education were negatively associated with organizational commitment, whereas the remaining two factors were positively associated with organizational commitment. Only gender and organizational citizenship behavior are positively related to organizational commitment in the work ethic of the 2000s. Additionally, work ethic is significantly and positively associated with organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior across all three age groups.

The remaining sections of the paper are structured as follows. Section 2 describes the structure and characteristics of the study data and identifies the regression models; Section 3 elaborates the regression results of the data analysis; and Section 4 provides our conclusions.

## 2. Research Programme

For the purpose of making the findings more applicable and generalizable, this study will concentrate on workers who are employed by businesses. From September 2022 through November 2022, a quantitative questionnaire will be used to send an electronic version of the questionnaire to 600 employees working in various industries across China. Of these employees, 200 were born after the 1980s, 200 were born after the 1990s, and 200 were born after the 2000s. The questions were based on the "Multidimensional Work Ethic Profile" developed by Miller et al. [5,] Meyer & Allen's three-factor measure of organizational commitment, and Williams and Anderson's (1991) two-dimensional model of interpersonal and organizational citizenship behaviors. A model of organizational citizenship behavior that takes into account two dimensions. In order to facilitate a more in-depth analysis, the questionnaire includes additional information regarding the respondent's age, city, industry, and job type [6]. The results of the survey will be analyzed using SPSS, and a report will be generated based on those results.

### 2.1 Features of the project

Examining the differences in the impact of work ethics on organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s was identified as the study's central theme following a review of the relevant literature and current issues. Miller et al (2002). 's "Multidimensional Work Ethic Profile" is one of the most comprehensive and widely used work ethic measurement tools available [7], and the Organizational Citizenship Behavior Scale (OCB) [8] is a widely used tool developed by Williams and Anderson, who created a two-dimensional model of interpersonal-friendly and organizational-friendly organizational citizenship behavior, ensuring the reliability of the scale [9]. Prior to their official use, the three questionnaires were subjected to a preliminary analysis to determine their usability. The sample was collected according to gender, age, education level, years of labor force participation, and job level. The distribution of 600 questionnaires included the Employee Work Ethics Questionnaire with five dimensions and twenty questions, the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire with three dimensions and thirteen questions, and the Organizational Citizenship Questionnaire with two dimensions and eight questions. Weaknesses and restrictions: the questionnaire collection period is too brief, and only written responses are accepted.

### 2.2 Regression model

After collecting the questionnaires, the data from the three questionnaires were averaged to find the mean of the variables: gender, age, education, years of participation in the workforce, and position, in order to further reveal the influence of work ethics on organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior among employees of three different age groups. To investigate two linear regressions, a stepwise regression analysis was performed with the dimensions of organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior as the dependent variables and work ethics as the independent variable. The first equation was constructed when exploring organizational commitment:  $y$  (organizational commitment) =  $1.34 + 0.12 \times x$  (years in the workforce) +  $0.59 \times x$  (work ethic); the second equation was constructed when exploring organizational citizenship behavior:  $y$  (organizational citizenship behavior) =  $0.23 - 0.07 \times x$  (gender) +  $0.07 \times x$  (years in the workforce) +  $0.05 \times x$  (position) +  $1.04 \times x$  (work ethic). This paper also ran separate group regressions for the post-80s, 90s and 00s.

## 3. Regression results

This study conducts separate group regressions for each of the three age groups in order to get a better understanding of the differences in how the impact of work ethics on organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior differs among employees working in the 1980s,

1990s, and 2000s. The purpose of this study is to make the differences between these three impacts clearer.

The study analyzed the impact of work ethics on organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior of employees in the 1980s by first conducting a regression analysis of organizational citizenship behavior to produce Table 1. The figure shows that gender and years of participation in the workforce are negatively related to organizational citizenship behavior, education, and position as well as work ethics of employees in the 1980s are positively related to it, and among these five variables, work ethics of employees in the 1980s has the greatest impact on their organizational citizenship behavior.

**Table 1.** The impact of employee work ethics on OCB in the 1980s

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value
Intercept	2.18025713	0.223321	9.762877	4.71E-20
Gender	-0.1022439	0.049728	-2.05608	0.040522
Academic qualifications	0.04633763	0.034978	1.324769	0.186119
Years in the workforce	-0.0072527	0.026629	-0.27236	0.785509
Position	0.12161685	0.039676	3.065266	0.002345
Ave (A- Work ethics)	0.52227101	0.055503	9.409805	7.04E-19

The next regression model, using organizational commitment as the dependent variable, resulted in Table 2. As can be seen from the figure, gender is negatively related to organizational commitment and the remaining four X values are positively related to it, and out of these five variables, work ethics of employees in the 1980s has the greatest impact on their organizational commitment.

**Table 2.** The impact of employee work ethics on OC in the 1980s

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value
Intercept	2.171319882	0.197224683	11.00937192	2.22706E-24
Gender	-0.065650647	0.043916595	-1.494893847	0.135850978
Academic qualifications	0.082438622	0.030890504	2.668736667	0.00797128
Years in the workforce	0.100636834	0.023517528	4.279226694	2.42897E-05
Position	0.060936356	0.035039421	1.739079986	0.082907523
Ave (A- Work ethics)	0.347836017	0.049016991	7.096233538	7.26452E-12

The study analyzed the impact of work ethics on organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior of employees in the 1990s, starting with a regression analysis of organizational citizenship behavior, resulting in Table 3. As can be seen from the figure, the coefficients of gender and years of participation in the workforce are negative and therefore negatively related to organizational citizenship behavior; the rest are positive and positively related to it, and among these five variables the work ethic of employees in the 1990s has the greatest impact on their organizational citizenship behavior.

**Table 3.** The impact of employee work ethics on OCB in the 1990s

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value
Intercept	-1.102173954	0.172919373	-6.373918277	9.70816E-10
Gender	-0.032651092	0.054590211	-0.598112584	0.550343262
Academic qualifications	0.003489792	0.038174508	0.09141681	0.927239614
Years in the workforce	-0.011287397	0.039637186	-0.284767867	0.776073853
Position	0.026012331	0.043604531	0.596551113	0.551383803
Ave (A- Work ethics)	1.41951501	0.043408439	32.70136037	3.12189E-89

Table 4 shows the regression model with organizational commitment as the dependent variable. The remaining three variables are positively correlated with organizational commitment, and of the

five variables, the work ethic of employees in the 1980s has the greatest impact on their organizational commitment.

**Table 4.** The impact of employee work ethics on OC in the 1990s

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value
Intercept	0.711857668	0.136590226	5.211629637	4.10855E-07
Gender	-0.009502367	0.04312119	-0.22036422	0.825779646
Academic qualifications	-0.021300276	0.030154312	-0.706375806	0.480657191
Years in the workforce	0.034919074	0.031309691	1.115280048	0.265874498
Position	0.034286685	0.034443525	0.995446459	0.320547419
Ave (A- Work ethics)	0.78042185	0.03428863	22.7603681	2.98832E-61

The study analyzed the impact of work ethics on organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior of employees in the 00s by first conducting a regression analysis of organizational citizenship behavior, resulting in Table 5. As can be seen from the figure, only the regression coefficients for gender and post-00s work ethic are positive, thus indicating that these two variables are positively related to organizational citizenship behavior, and that the work ethic of employees in the 1990s has the greatest impact on their organizational citizenship behavior out of the five variables.

**Table 5.** The impact of employee work ethics on OCB in the 2000s

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value
Intercept	2.009045703	0.355790741	5.646705979	5.49601E-08
Gender	0.013715082	0.045876568	0.298956144	0.765280846
Academic qualifications	-0.000653372	0.032736691	-0.01995841	0.98409625
Years in the workforce	-0.012325253	0.034009157	-0.362409837	0.71742467
Position	-0.038174993	0.031876201	-1.197601697	0.232475522
Ave (A- work ethics)	0.593269447	0.093949858	6.314745561	1.68886E-09

The next regression analysis was conducted on organizational commitment, resulting in Table 6. The figure shows that only the post-00s work ethic has a positive regression coefficient, which shows that it is positively related to organizational commitment, and that the work ethic of the 1980s employees has the greatest impact on their organizational commitment out of these five variables.

**Table 6.** The impact of employee work ethics on OC in the 2000s

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value
Intercept	2.554928856	0.328727027	7.772189836	3.84417E-13
Gender	-0.009264112	0.042386904	-0.218560719	0.82721291
Academic qualifications	-0.010757094	0.03024653	-0.355647207	0.722475901
Years in the workforce	-0.03547988	0.031422204	-1.129134036	0.260180421
Position	-0.0330209	0.029451494	-1.121196081	0.263535518
Ave (A- Work ethics)	0.316939883	0.086803432	3.651236773	0.000332413

#### 4. Conclusion

To examine the structure of employee work ethics and the impact of work ethics on organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior in different generations of companies within the context of Chinese culture, and to contribute to the research in this field in China [10]. This is the first study in China to compare the effects of work ethics on employees' organizational commitment and organizational citizenship in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s. By employing a questionnaire survey and conducting a regression analysis on the collected data, the study takes into account the current state of the labor market and current hot topics. In addition, for the first time in previous research on work

ethics, the post-2000s are included in the research discussion to investigate the differences in the influence of work ethics on the organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviors of employees from these three generations. In-depth examination of the differences between different generations of employees in Chinese companies will not only provide a reference for recruitment and selection of employees, but will also assist companies in selecting high-quality employees, thereby enhancing the work ethic of prospective and current employees. It can also help reconcile the contradictions between the individual ethics of employees and the organizational ethics of the company and create a harmonious working environment to improve the fit between employees and the organization, as well as employee productivity.

Despite the limited conclusions and insights gleaned from the exploratory nature of this study, there are deficiencies that must be addressed in future research. Work ethics, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior are not uniform concepts; therefore, only one of these concepts was selected separately for this study, and a scale based on that concept was employed. In addition, the questionnaire adapted for this study addresses ethical issues, and there may be a tendency for socially approving responses, which may have implications for the research. To increase the generalizability of the findings, future studies could employ different concepts, scales, and research methodologies to validate the results of this study.

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