

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In today's professional environment, organizations increasingly depend on diverse workforces made up of multiple generational groups, including Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z. These generational groups, shaped by unique sociohistorical contexts, bring distinct values, communication styles, and work ethics. However, this diversity also presents challenges, including communication gaps, differences in technological adaptability, and conflicting workplace priorities.

McCrinkle, in *The ABC of XYZ* (2014), describes generations not only as demographic cohorts but also as social groups shaped by shared formative experiences. For instance, Baby Boomers (born 1946–1964) are typically characterized by loyalty, a strong work ethic, and a preference for structure and stability. In contrast, Millennials or Generation Y (born 1980–1994) are known for their digital fluency, collaborative mindset, and desire for meaningful work, flexibility, and rapid feedback. These generational differences in values and attitudes can lead to both friction and synergy within multigenerational work environments.

Generational distinctions, influenced by broader social, economic, and technological developments, are evident not only in interpersonal dynamics but also

in organizational systems, leadership styles, and professional expectations. The rise of digital technology, globalization, and evolving workplace cultures has pushed companies to reconsider how they foster cross-generational collaboration. While many organizations focus on attracting and empowering younger generations, the enduring presence of older workers—particularly Baby Boomers—remains highly relevant. Their continued participation in the workforce exemplifies a broader societal shift, in which retirement is no longer seen as the end of one’s contribution to professional life.

Among the most notable generational contrasts are those between Baby Boomers and Millennials. Baby Boomers tend to value structure, discipline, and loyalty to organizations, often preferring hierarchical leadership and face-to-face communication. In contrast, Millennials are more comfortable with flexibility, digital communication, and flatter organizational structures, and they often seek meaning, autonomy, and rapid feedback in their work. These differing attitudes toward authority, technology, and workplace engagement can lead to miscommunication or conflict, but also present rich opportunities for cross-generational learning and innovation.

As a result, today’s workforce is increasingly intergenerational, with older employees staying active well into their seventies, while younger colleagues bring innovation and technological expertise. This reality underscores the growing need for intergenerational understanding. Organizations that embrace generational diversity not only navigate challenges more effectively, but also benefit from a

richer exchange of ideas, stronger mentoring relationships, and enhanced team performance.

Understanding the dynamics between these generational differences is crucial for fostering a harmonious and productive work environment. Nancy Meyers' film *The Intern* (2015), provides a compelling exploration of intergenerational interactions within a modern startup setting. The narrative centers around Ben Whittaker (Robert De Niro), a 70-year-old widower who discovers that retirement is not what he imagined. As he was walking down the street, he found a flyer advertising a "Senior Intern Program" for retirees at an online fashion retailer called 'About The Fit,' owned by Jules Ostin (Anne Hathaway) a driven and innovative Millennial entrepreneur. The company is only 18 months old but has already gained more than 200 employees since its founding. Jules is portrayed as ambitious and perfectionist, frequently involving herself in both major and minor aspects of her business operations. With the age gap between two main characters, they're ended up understanding each other's storie and form a successful partnership.

The Intern (2015) serves as a compelling study of generational dynamics in the workplace is amplified by the increasing presence of older employees in traditionally younger, tech-driven industries. By focusing on the interaction between Ben, Jules, and other young employees at About The Fit, the film reflects broader challenges and opportunities of managing multigenerational workforces. As these dynamics play out, the film not only reflects the complexities of workplace relationships but also raises important questions about how generational diversity

can be leveraged to foster collaboration, improve organizational performance, and create inclusive work environments.

This study aims to explore how generational differences, particularly between Baby Boomers and Millennials, manifest in workplace interactions. Using McCrindle Generational theory as a framework, this research seeks to provide a deeper understanding of the dynamics in multigenerational workplaces. Ultimately, the study intends to offer insights into how organizations can effectively manage and benefit from the diverse perspectives and contributions of each generation.

1.2 Research Questions

1. What is the intrinsic of the study?
2. How are Baby Boomer and Millennial traits depicted in *The Intern* (2015)?
3. What are the challenges and opportunities of cross-generational collaboration as analyzed in *The Intern* (2015)?

1.3 Aims of the Study

1. To analyze the intrinsic of the study.
2. To analyze the depiction of Baby Boomer and Millennial traits in *The Intern* (2015)
3. To identify and explore the challenges and synergies arising from intergenerational interactions in the film.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on analyzing cross-generational collaboration in the workplace, specifically between Baby Boomers and Millennials as portrayed in *The Intern* (2015). The analysis centers on the characters Ben Whittaker and Jules Ostin, representing Baby Boomer and Millennial generations respectively. Using McCrindle's Generational Framework, this research explores how their generational traits, communication styles, and work values affect their interactions.

1.5 Previous Studies

The writer of this study has incorporated several relevant previous studies as references to support the research. For research using objects from the film *The Intern* (2015), the author found three previous studies, and the rest are several studies with a topic focus that is almost the same as the research conducted by the author.

Representasi Perempuan Pemimpin Melalui Tokoh Jules Ostin Dalam Film The Intern (2015) by Atria Zahra Yani (2018). This study also has the same film object as this study, using the film *The Intern* (2015). This research focuses on exploring the representation of female leaders through the character of Jules Ostin in the film *The Intern* (2015). The aim of this study is to analyze how female leadership is portrayed through her character through the characterization of the figure women leaders who are open, caring, and democratic. The researcher uses John Fiske's semiotic analysis method which includes three levels of social codes: the level of reality, the level of representation, and the level of ideology. There's

also Rifqi et al. (2024) research entitled *Gender Stereotype Portrayal on Hardworking Women In "The Intern" Movie Director's Perspective*. The purpose of this research is to identify similarities between the character of Jules Ostin in *The Intern (2015)* and the director, as well as to explore the reasons behind the inclusion of these elements. Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that there are parallels between the director's life and the character of Jules Ostin. The director incorporates and portrays various elements of feminism and gender stereotypes, which are reflected in her own biography. Furthermore, Nancy Meyers, the director, aims to highlight the importance of recognizing women in professional and personal realms, promoting equality between women and men. In addition, previous research discussing the film *The Intern (2015)* was conducted by Wibowo et al. (2019) with the title *Representasi Feminisme Dalam Film "The Intern"*. This study aims to see how the representation of feminism is in the film *The Intern (2015)* using John Fiske's television semiotics method. The results of this study found that there was a first wave of feminist ideology by depicting the exchange of women's positions with men in the public sphere. Where women can make decisions about their careers.

This study differs by applying McCrindle's Generational Framework to investigate intergenerational collaboration, an aspect less frequently explored in previous research. It seeks to contribute a new perspective to film studies by addressing the practical implications of generational diversity in modern workplaces.

1.6 Research Method

1.6.1 Data and The Sources Data

The author will use the library research method as method in conducting research for this paper. According to George (2008), data in research refers to systematically collected evidence that supports analysis and interpretation by utilizing various materials available in the library, such as documents, books, magazines, historical accounts, and other relevant resources.

1.6.2 Method of Collecting Data

The data collection process involves several systematic steps to ensure a thorough analysis of the film *The Intern* (2015). First, the writer watches and closely observes the film multiple times to gain a comprehensive understanding of the narrative and character dynamics. During these viewings, detailed notes are taken, focusing on intergenerational interactions, dialogue, character behavior, and relevant visual elements such as camera angles and implied proximity. Next, the observed data are classified into thematic categories based on the research focus, particularly those related to generational traits and workplace communication. These categories are then analyzed and synthesized using the McCrindle's Generational Framework (2014) to interpret the significance of the interactions between the main characters. Cinematographic techniques are also examined to identify how visual storytelling supports the thematic findings.

1.6.3 Method of Approach

This study employs a qualitative content analysis to examine intergenerational interactions in the workplace as depicted in *The Intern* (2015), focusing on the relationship between Ben Whittaker (Baby Boomer) and Jules Ostin (Millennial). Using McCrindle's Generational Framework (2014) as the primary lens, the analysis explores how generational identities shape communication styles, work values, and collaboration, highlighting tensions and resolutions that emerge from their age and experience gap. McCrindle's framework conceptualizes generations as cohorts shaped by shared formative experiences, resulting in distinct attitudes, behaviors, and approaches to work and relationships (McCrindle, 2014). By applying this perspective, the study investigates how the unique characteristics of Baby Boomers and Millennials are manifested in their workplace dynamics, and how these differences influence both conflict and synergy in cross-generational collaboration. In addition to narrative analysis, this study also considers cinematographic elements such as camera angles and implied proximity to understand how visual choices support or contrast the generational themes within the film. This combined approach enables a comprehensive understanding of how generational perspectives are constructed and negotiated both textually and visually in the cinematic context.

1.7 Writing Organization

In organizing this paper, the writer has divided it into several chapters. Each chapter addresses a specific issue related to the topic of the paper.

Chapter I INTRODUCTION

The first chapter of this study consists of background of the study, research problems, scope of the study, aims of the study, previous study, research methods, and organization of the writing.

Chapter II INTRINSIC THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

The second chapter discusses the intrinsic theoretical frameworks and narrative elements of film, which include intrinsic aspects of film such as character, setting, and conflict, as well as cinematographic aspects such as camera shot, camera angle, and sound.

Chapter III EXTRINSIC THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

The third chapter consists of an extrinsic theoretical framework consisting of the definition of generation, an explanation of the McCrindle's generational framework, social relationships in American working culture, and technological impact upon American working culture.

Chapter IV RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The fourth chapter consists result and discussion and theories that can be used as guidance and references for analyzing the intrinsic and extrinsic aspects.

Chapter V CONCLUSION

This chapter will conclude the whole discussion and analysis from previous chapters.

REFERENCES