

GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES IN SOCIAL SECURITY POLICY PREFERENCES: USING JAPANESE MICRO DATA

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to identify differences in policy preferences by generation among Japanese citizens, especially, differences between Generation Z and other generations regarding social security policy. An Internet survey was conducted targeting Japanese people between the ages of 18 and 79. A total of 2,163 respondents completed the survey. The respondents were classified into 10-year age groups for the analysis. The results of the t tests regarding different age groups' opinion on various socio-economic issues, showed that policies that benefit a specific generation have difficulty gaining support from other generations. Generation Z do not support policies for improving elderly care, but they are strongly in favor of making university tuition free. On the other hand, people over 50 seem to be against university tuition free. Even within Generation Z, there are many questions that show significant differences between teenagers and those in their 20s. Thus, it appears that people's opinion on economic policy issues are influenced by whether or not they are working and paying tax, rather than the generation they belong to. On the other hand, the concept of equality of outcome elicited support from both teenagers and those in their 20s, and is therefore a characteristic of Generation Z.

Keywords: Altruism, Generational differences, Generation Z, Policy preferences

1. Introduction

Generation Z (Gen Z), those born between 1997 and 2012, are starting to enter the labor market.¹ Gen Z began attending university in 2015, and at present, all university students are Gen Z. After graduating, this generation will become the nation's workforce. Recent studies have looked into what companies need to do to accept Gen Z as workers (e.g. Bencsik et al. (2016) and Schroth

¹Although there are some differences in the definition of generations depending on the research, Dimock (2019) defines Generation Z as those born between 1997 and 2012.

(2019)). Most research on Gen Z has focused on marketing, emphasizing how their consumption patterns differ from other generations. Gen Z has been a popular research topic in recent years because they account for an increasing proportion of the total population, and it is crucial to understand their preferences. Gomez et al. (2022) pointed out that Gen Z comprises more than a quarter of population of the US population and that they will contribute 44 billion dollars to the US economy.

However, not many studies have examined Gen Z's views on policy. There is almost no research on them in Japan. Even though Gen Z makes up a substantial percentage of the Japanese population, many still do not have the right to vote. In other words, in Japan, where the birthrate is declining and the population is aging, research on young people's policy preferences is highly inadequate. To reduce this research gap, this study aims to determine whether there are differences in policy preferences by generation in Japan, particularly regarding social security. This study follows the generation classifications presented in Table 1.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows: Section 2 introduces research related to Gen Z and the characteristics of each generation. Section 3 describes the data used in the analysis. Section 4 discusses the analysis results of the questionnaire survey. Section 5 summarizes the paper.²

Table 1 : Generation Classification

Generation classification	Year of birth
Alfa generation	2010+
Z generation	1995 - 2010
Y (Millennial) generation	1980 - 1995
X generation	1960 - 1980
Baby boom generation	1946 - 1960

Source: Bencsik et al. (2016)

2. Literature Review

In this section, I mainly introduce research that shows the characteristics of different generations and previous research that reveals the characteristics of young people, especially Gen Z.

²This study is part of the Advanced Collaborative Research Organization research project of Chukyo University.

2.1 Generation Z mindset

An internet survey conducted in Brazil to identify the characteristics of Gene Z presented the following findings by Francis and Hoefel (2018). Gen Z does not distinguish between internet friends and in-person real world friends. They believe in the importance of dialogue and accept differences of opinion with the institutions in which they participate and with their own families. Many Gen Z youth are aware of the need to save money for the future and see job stability as more important than a high salary. They believe that consumption means accessing products or services, not necessarily owing them.³

Williams and Page (2011) enumerated differences in consumption trends by generation in the United States as follows: Pre-Depression generation, Depression generation, Baby Boomer generation, Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z. About Gen Z, the study says that it faces global terrorism, the aftermath of 9/11, economic uncertainty, recession, and mortgage crisis (e. g. the bankrupt of Lehman Brothers). Regarding the values of Gen Z, it stated: Gen Z individuals are the new conservatives embracing traditional beliefs, valuing the family unit, self-controlled, and more responsible. The study also said that the average tween in 2011 had three important tendencies: 1. pursuing instant gratification, 2. perceived success, and 3. liberal social values. From the perspective of marketing, Gen Z during childhood influenced family decision-making and family consumption.

2.2 Generation Z as students

Cho et al. (2018) examined the relationships between Gen Z volunteers' motivations, their attitudes and job performance using data obtained from 306 Gen Z participants in a volunteering event. It found that the volunteering efforts by Gen Z were motivated by four factors-value, career, leaning and self-esteem-and that contributing to the betterment of society was not a motivating factor. Thus, the researchers inferred that for Gen Z, volunteering was more about resume-building and career-enhancement than altruism.

Seemiller and Grace (2017) pointed out that Gen Z students are characterized by participating in practical learning opportunities that allow them to immediately apply what they have learned to real life. They have distinctive learning methods as follows: Gen Z students like to watch others complete tasks before doing it themselves, and they want to know that the concepts that they are learning have broader applicability to more than a single concrete example, and they prefer intrapersonal learning and interact with others only when necessary. This way of learning is different from that of Millennials. Fewer than 34% of Gen Z university students see the first few weeks of university as a good opportunity to volunteer, and unlike Millennials, Gen Z students

³Francis and Hoefel (2018) used car-riding services, video streaming and subscriptions as examples.

are not seeking traditional community service opportunities, so their interest in volunteerism appears low.⁴ Instead, Gen Z students prefer community engagement opportunities which make a lasting impact on an underlying societal problem than short-term volunteer experiences that focus on the symptoms that problem.

2.3 Generation Z as employees

Hyman et al. (2022) considered the job retention of Generation X (born between 1965 and 1980) and Generation Z (born between 1997 and 2012) American civil servants. The study revealed the reasons why Gen X leave their jobs. The top three reasons are personal or family-related issues, issues with their immediate supervisor, and opportunities for advancement in another position. Caught between raising children and caring for elderly parents, 40 to 59-year-olds tend to have a poor work-life balance compared to other age groups, so they want flexibility in where and when they work. On the other hand, Gen Z employees were more likely to leave due to salary issues or the expiration of a work contract. Gen Z believe that flexible work environments, such as remote work, are an indicator that their leaders trust or value them. Hyman et al. (2022) also pointed out that members of Generation Z have more than \$18,000 in student debt on average in 2021 and are particularly concerned about financial stability. The study focused on public servants and found that Gen Z is highly socially conscious and enthusiastic about contributing to society. However, they appear to conceive of government service as just one of many possible ways to contribute to the public good, making mission focus a less influential retention factor for younger federal employees than for their older employees. In other words, Gen Z public servants motivated by altruism are quick to quit their jobs if they can find another environment that better reflects their beliefs.

Bencsik et al. (2016) focused on the differences between Generation Y (also called Millennials) and Generation Z. Using a lot of previous studies, they summarized each generation as follows:⁵ the characteristics of Gen Y are easily accept change, live in the present, do not like to think about the long term, family is not everything, and traditional values are disappearing; whereas Gen Z are characterized as not knowing the concept of struggling compared to Gen Y, being intelligent than wise, being brave enough to take the lead, and being impatient and agile. Moreover, Gen Z is known as the feature of “internet generation” who grew up digital era and who consult the internet when trying to solve any problems. The most important career goals of Gen Z are the work-life balance and workplace stability, which are different from the goals of Gen Y.⁶ Concerning original research of Bencsik et al. (2016), they collected a sample of 410

⁴ The figure of less than 34% of Generation Z is quoted from the Higher Education research Institute's 2014 CIRP Freshman Survey.

⁵ See Bencsik et al. (2016) pp. 92-95 for more detail.

⁶ In Bencsik et al. (2016), for Generation Y, the concept of success, career and money is of top priority.

respondents on the internet in 2015 to investigate how people of various ages perceive the work attitudes of Gen Y and Gen Z and how these two generations can fit into their workplaces. They divided the respondents into five age groups⁷, and revealed that opinions about employees under 30 are the following: they have too much self-confidence, they are creative, they have strong career desires, and their communication is perfect, on the other hand, they are not at all moderate, committed or hard-working.

Regarding characteristics of Gen Z in the labor market, Schroth (2019) showed that Gen Z are the most achievement-oriented of the generations, have greater economic well-being, are more highly educated, and are more ethnically and racially diverse than any other generation. On the other hand, due to their lack of work experience as teenagers, they also tend to be more depressed and anxious than previous generations when they enter the labor market. The study found that Younger Millennials and Gen Z state that it is important to them that their employer value their ideas.⁸ For Gen Z, the notion of equality is important and 91% of them believe that everyone is equal and should be treated that way. In addition, Gen Z is unique in growing up with a culture of safety that overprotective parenting inadvertently took away their opportunity to learn life skills, and this interfered with their social, emotional, and intellectual development, and made it difficult for them to become autonomous adults, to navigate the challenges of life, let alone the that of the workplace.

In this section, I introduced several studies on generation characteristics, focusing on Gen Z. While many studies have revealed the characteristics of Gen Z, there is a lack of statistical analysis or comparison with other generation in the literature. Furthermore, many studies have focused on the life stages of Gen Z, but not many have compared general values and policy preferences between generations. To fill this research gap, this study uses Japanese data to examine whether there are differences between generations in policy preferences regarding social security. The next section explains the data collected in this study.

3. Data

This section explains the data used for the quantitative analysis. The data were collected through an Internet survey conducted on October 27 and 28, 2023. The survey subjects were men and

Moreover, Bencsik et al. (2016) stated that money and success are basic motivational tools for Generation Y in their work.

⁷ There were five groups: under 20 years old, 20-30 years old, 30-40 years old, 40-50 years old, and 50 years old and above, which is a similar age classification to this study.

⁸ She also referred to older Millennials who want health insurance, work-life balance, and vacation from their employers.

women between the ages of 18 and 79 living in Japan. I received 309 responses from each age group: teens, 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s, and 70s.

The survey start screen presented the purpose of this study, stating that the responses collected will not be able to identify individuals, that participation in the survey is completely optional, and that respondents can stop responding at any time. Only those who agreed to these terms were asked to participate. The survey was conducted by Macromill Inc.,⁹ who provided anonymized data for analysis. In other words, I did not have any contact with the survey respondents, and since I received anonymized data from the research company, I cannot identify the survey respondents. Most of the survey questions were to be answered on a five-point scale, but some questions included options such as “I don't know” and “I don't want to answer.” Therefore, for some questions, the number of responses received were fewer than the total number of survey participants. In addition, many respondents who were enrolled in a vocational school or university answered that their final educational background was “high school graduate.” Therefore, I treated their educational background as if they were expected to graduate from the school they were enrolled in.

The questions in this survey mainly concern how taxes are used, sense of equality, and altruism. There are 49 questions regarding sense of values and ways of thinking, excluding personal attributes. An example of a question is “Social welfare for the elderly, such as pensions and geriatric care, will be implemented even if consumption tax etc. are increased.” Respondents choose from: 1. Agree, 2. Somewhat agree, 3. Neutral, 4. Somewhat disagree, 5. Disagree, 6. I don't want to answer. In the actual analysis, I excluded those who answered “I don't want to answer” from the analysis and I reversed the order of the options for easier interpretation. Thus, the higher the number, the more the respondent agrees with the statement presented.

There are also questions that present two contradictory opinions and ask the respondent to rate the statement based on how closely it aligns with their opinion. For example, two sentences are presented: “A: I want to use the money I earn for myself and my family” and “B: I want the money I earn to be used to help others through taxes, etc.” The options are: 1. Close to Sentence A, 2. Somewhat close to Sentence A, 3. Neutral, 4. Somewhat close to Sentence B, and 5. Close to Sentence B.

In the next section, I will present the results of t-tests, focusing on teenagers' responses to certain questions and provide an overview of whether Gen Z has different sense of values than other

⁹ Macromill Inc. is a Japanese internet research company. In addition to their own panel of 1.3 million people, they have built a panel network of approximately 36 million people, including panels from domestic partner companies. In addition to basic quantitative and qualitative research, they can provide a wide range of marketing data, including large-scale data and time-series data.

generations regarding social security policy and altruism. According to the definition of Bencsik et al. (2016) in Table 1, Gen Z will be between 13 and 28 years old in 2023. Therefore, teenagers and people in their 20s in this study can be considered Gen Z.

4. Results

In this section, I will test whether there are differences in the average values of respondents by age group, mainly regarding question items using a five-point scale. The reference group is the 18- and 19-year-old category. This study focuses on 17 items that showed distinctive results. Table 2 shows questions 1-1 to 1-5.

For Question 1-1, "In today's Japan, the gap between the rich and the poor is widening," the mean of 18-19 years old category is 3.99. The upper limit of options is 5 and the mean is very close to 4, which indicates that many young people feel that inequality is widening in Japan. The average value of people in 20s does not seem to be different from the average value for teenagers. On the other hand, older age groups are more aware of Japan's widening disparities.

Question 1-2 is about whether it is acceptable to raise consumption tax to support elderly welfare. There are clear generational differences on this question. The average value for those under 60 is less than 3. People in their 30s are especially negative about improving welfare for the elderly. On the other hand, the average value for people in their 60s and older is higher than 3, indicating approval. Based on these results, it cannot be said that Japan's Gen Z is especially altruistic toward older generations.

Question 1-3 asks not only about social security for elderly, but also about public services for the general population. Since the average value for all generations is below 3, it seems that people do not want to reduce their own tax burden at the cost of the quality of public services. Those in their 70s, who receive more social security benefits than their tax burden, strongly disagree with this statement.

Question 1-4 asks whether respondents value their family more or themselves. The average value for all generations is around 3, indicating that neither option can be selected. Gen Z also does not seem to be particularly altruistic. It can be said that people in their 30s tend to care more about themselves.

Question 1-5 shows markedly different results for teenagers. The average score for other generations is below 3, indicating that they do not feel rich in terms of food, clothes, and a house. Working generations feel that their lives are not rich, while teenagers, most of whom are not working, feel that their lives are rich. The non-working generation does not feel the tax burden close to them, and they may feel that they are rich because their parents give them money. On the

other hand, the working generation feels a heavy tax burden, and also feels that it is difficult to live because they have to pay childcare expenses and save money for the future. This is considered to be one of the reasons for the low average value of all generations except teenagers. However, one reason may be that Gen Z, the digital generation, does not seek material wealth as much as the older generations.

Table 2: The results of t test (Question1-1~Question1-5)

Question 1-1 In today's Japan, the gap between the rich and the poor is widening.

Age	18,19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79
Mean	3.99	4.05	4.20 ***	4.28 ***	4.38 ***	4.34 ***	4.39 ***
Std. dev.	1.00	1.07	0.93	0.86	0.82	0.87	0.72
Obs	302	305	308	308	307	309	309

Question 1-2 Social welfare services for the elderly, such as pensions and medical care for the elderly, will be implemented even if consumption taxes and other taxes are increased.

Age	18,19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79
Mean	2.93	2.78	2.70 **	2.86	2.98	3.14 **	3.23 ***
Std. dev.	1.19	1.22	1.10	1.19	1.17	1.16	1.10
Obs	301	302	304	307	306	307	309

Question 1-3 Even if the quality of public services (defense, medical care, pensions, education, etc.) deteriorates, it is better to reduce one's tax burden, such as consumption tax.

Age	18,19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79
Mean	2.82	2.96	2.72	2.90	2.86	2.71	2.49 ***
Std. dev.	1.30	1.16	1.22	1.21	1.22	1.13	1.14
Obs	305	306	309	308	306	305	309

Question 1-4 For the sake of the family, one's personal profit or loss should come second.

Age	18,19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79
Mean	3.28	3.16	3.08 **	3.25	3.18	3.23	3.31
Std. dev.	1.11	1.06	1.08	1.06	1.01	0.97	0.94
Obs	304	307	306	306	306	307	307

Question 1-5 In my daily life, I live a materially rich life with clothes, food, and a house.

Age	18,19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79
Mean	3.49	2.96 ***	2.84 ***	2.82 ***	2.72 ***	2.83 ***	2.97 ***
Std. dev.	1.15	1.21	1.25	1.25	1.21	1.20	1.16
Obs	306	305	308	308	308	308	309

Note: * Significant at the 10% level; ** Significant at the 5% level; *** Significant at the 1% level.

Table 3 shows the results of questions 1-6 to 1-9.

Question 1-6 asks whether respondents have a purpose in life and are living a life with strength and peace of mind. The average value for teenagers and those in their 70s exceeds 3, but the average value for other generations is less than 3 and is significantly smaller than the average value for teenagers. The working generation seems to be mentally burdened, while the non-working generation seems to have greater peace.

Question 1-7 measures the degree of altruism towards countries other rather than Japan. Like Question 1-6, there is no statistically significant difference between the average values for teenagers and those in their 70s. For those in their 20s, 30s and 40s, the average score is less than 3, which indicates that they have negative opinions about aid to other poor countries. In Japan, 20-30% of salary is deducted as income tax and social insurance premiums, and on top of that, 10% consumption tax is applied when people buy something.¹⁰ Hence, working-age people may want to reduce their tax burden rather than provide aid to other countries. On the other hand, Question 1-8 is about aid for other countries which are hit by major natural disasters; all generations are in favor of aiding in such circumstances. However, because the average value for teenagers is high, there is a significant difference from the average value for 20s, 30s and 40s. Question 1-8 seems to show the same trend as question 1-7, with the only difference being the standard values.

Questions 1-9 and 1-10 are about free tuition. Since the average value for all generations exceeds 3 for Question 1-9, most people appear to be in favor of making high school tuition free. Teenagers and people in their 20s are in favor of making high school tuition free. This result is significantly higher than for people in their 40s and above. Concerning Question 1-10, teenagers overwhelmingly support free university tuition. This is thought to be due to the large number of university students among the teenagers.¹¹ In other words, they are likely to be self-serving. The average value decreases as the generation gets older, with people in their 50s and older having a stronger opposing opinion. Some people in their 20s to 40s may be repaying their educational loans, and people in their 50s would probably oppose making university tuition free if their children had already gone on to university. Gen Z includes people in their 20s, however, average value of 20s is lower than that of teenagers. If Gen Z is altruistic, there should be a large proportion of them who support making university tuition free, even when today's teenagers become working generations. The same investigation will need to be conducted in a few years to determine whether Gen Z is more altruistic.

¹⁰ However, food products are subject to a reduced tax rate of 8%.

¹¹ According to Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan (2023), University admission rate is 57.7% and higher education institution admission rate including junior colleges and vocational schools is 84.0%. Although the rate of students going on to higher education is high, many students use educational loans. According to Japan student services organization (2022), the percentage of university students who use educational loans is 49.6%.

Table 3: The results of t test (Question1-6~Question1-10)

Question 1-6 I have a purpose in life, and I live a life with strength and peace of mind.

Age	18,19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79
Mean	3.26	2.93 ***	2.83 ***	2.92 ***	2.83 ***	2.96 ***	3.24
Std. dev.	1.33	1.19	1.23	1.26	1.14	1.19	1.01
Obs	306	307	308	307	309	308	308

Question 1-7 I agree with the government providing aid to poor countries and people in foreign countries who are in trouble.

Age	18,19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79
Mean	3.27	2.88 ***	2.92 ***	2.98 ***	3.09 *	3.08 **	3.37
Std. dev.	1.19	1.18	1.15	1.18	1.10	1.15	1.08
Obs	303	302	303	308	306	307	308

Question 1-8 I agree with the Japanese government providing aid to countries hit by major natural disasters.

Age	18,19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79
Mean	3.74	3.34 ***	3.50 ***	3.49 ***	3.62	3.69	3.85
Std. dev.	1.00	1.13	1.07	1.05	0.97	0.95	0.90
Obs	306	303	306	308	308	307	308

Question 1-9 I am in favor of making high school tuition free.

Age	18,19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79
Mean	3.86	3.76	3.68 *	3.59 ***	3.22 ***	3.19 ***	3.35 ***
Std. dev.	1.20	1.25	1.26	1.29	1.30	1.37	1.21
Obs	303	304	307	308	303	308	308

Question 1-10 I am in favor of making university tuition free.

Age	18,19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79
Mean	3.81	3.41 ***	3.28 ***	3.20 ***	2.82 ***	2.69 ***	2.63 ***
Std. dev.	1.29	1.37	1.38	1.41	1.36	1.30	1.23
Obs	300	303	308	307	304	306	308

Note: * Significant at the 10% level; ** Significant at the 5% level; *** Significant at the 1% level.

Table 4 shows the results for questions 1-11 to 1-15.

Question 1-11 asks whether respondent's generation is better off than older generations. For teenagers who have lived in the digital era since birth, the average value is 3, probably because they can not imagine the lifestyle of older generations. People in their 20s, 30s and 40s feel that they are living in worse times than their parents and grandparents. The values for people in their

70s are significantly different from those of teenagers. It is assumed that this result is because the generation of parents and grandparents in their 70s lived about 100 years ago, and compared to that, life today is very convenient with a better social environment.

Concerning Question 1-12, it can be seen that teenagers want to make the world a little better through their own actions than other generations. However, since the average value of teenagers is significantly different from that of people in their 20s, it is a future challenge to distinguish whether it is a characteristic of teenagers or a characteristic of non-working people, rather than a Gen Z feature.

Question 1-13 asks whether respondents are short-sighted. Every one except teenagers tend to prefer saving money for the future rather than enjoying the present. The difference between the average values for teenagers and those in their 20s is at a significance level of 10%, but this may be since 20- and 21-year-olds include university students. As a future task, I would like to investigate whether the mindsets of Gen Z workers and students differ from each other. The average life expectancy in Japan is long, which shows that even people in their 70s are thinking about the future.

Question 1-14 is about equality of opportunity and equality of outcome. The average value for people in their 30s and above is significantly lower than that for teenagers. As pointed out by Schroth (2019), the concept of equality of outcome is more important for Gen Z.

Question 1-15 asks whether respondents are satisfied with the tax burden. The result shows that all generations have doubts about the weight of taxes. One of the reasons why the average value for teenagers is the highest may be that there are few people who actually work and therefore there are few situations in which they feel the burden of tax. Furthermore, the reason why there is no statistically significant difference between the average value for people in their 70s and that for teenagers is probably that people in their 70s are not currently working and are receiving pensions.

Question 2-1 asks how respondents would like the money they earn to be spent. The average value for all generations is between 1 and 2, indicating that people would rather spend the money they earn on themselves or their families than on others through taxes. In other words, Gen Z is neither altruistic nor wants to spend their money in order to achieve equality of outcome.

Question 2-2 asks what kind of tax collection method is desirable. The average value for all generations is less than 3 indicating that all generations think it is better to increase taxes on the wealthy. People in their 30s and older are more likely to favor tightening taxes on the wealthy. Gen Z is more likely than other generations to believe that they too need to pay more taxes to ensure equal outcomes, but they still believe that higher taxes on the wealthy are desirable.

Table 4: The results of t test (Question1-11~Question1-15)

Question 1-11 The generation to which I belong is better off than the generation of my parents and grandparents.

Age	18,19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79
Mean	3.07	2.80 ***	2.75 ***	2.66 ***	2.91	3.21	3.74 ***
Std. dev.	1.27	1.30	1.28	1.32	1.34	1.27	1.04
Obs	304	304	305	307	308	307	308

Question 1-12 I want to contribute to making the world a better place through my own actions.

Age	18,19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79
Mean	3.67	3.35 ***	3.21 ***	3.25 ***	3.34 ***	3.37 ***	3.50 **
Std. dev.	1.08	1.05	1.09	1.07	1.02	0.93	0.84
Obs	306	306	307	305	307	304	308

Question 1-13 I would like to use my money to enjoy my current life rather than saving for the future.

Age	18,19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79
Mean	3.13	2.94 *	2.82 ***	2.84 ***	2.63 ***	2.71 ***	2.61 ***
Std. dev.	1.21	1.11	1.09	1.13	1.06	0.99	1.11
Obs	307	304	308	307	307	308	309

Question 1-14 It is more important that everyone is guaranteed an equal life than having the opportunity to improve one's abilities while competing with others.

Age	18,19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79
Mean	3.41	3.26	3.16 ***	3.08 ***	3.04 ***	3.04 ***	2.90 ***
Std. dev.	1.15	1.12	1.04	1.05	0.97	0.95	1.01
Obs	305	303	306	306	306	306	308

Question 1-15 It is an understandable tax burden that about half of the money earned is collected (as is the case with the current situation in Japan).

Age	18,19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79
Mean	2.34	2.01 ***	2.06 ***	2.05 ***	2.08 **	2.09 **	2.22
Std. dev.	1.33	1.17	1.19	1.21	1.14	1.09	1.09
Obs	304	303	307	304	305	306	306

Note: * Significant at the 10% level; ** Significant at the 5% level; *** Significant at the 1% level.

As the results of Question1-2 (social welfare service for the elderly) and Q1-10 (for university tuition free) show (see Table 5), policies related to a specific generation have difficulty gaining support from other generations. In other words, Gen Z, who are in their teens and 20s, do not support policies benefiting the elderly, which reveals that they are not altruistic. Instead, Gen Z appears to be strongly in favor of making university education free. Furthermore, as the results of Questions 1-7 (aid to poor countries) and 1-8 (aid to countries hit by disasters) show, working-age people are not very supportive of aid to other countries. Even within Gen Z, there are many questions that have significant differences between those in their teens and those in their 20s. For example, Question1-5,1-6,1-7,1-8,1-10,1-11,1-12 and 1-15. Regarding the results of these

questions, the influence of life stage, such as whether a person is working or not and whether they pay income tax or social insurance premiums, may be stronger than the influence of generation. This is because in cases Question 1-6, 1-7, 1-8, and 1-15, the results for teenagers are similar to those for people in their 70s, who share the common characteristic of not working. On the other hand, equality of outcome is advocated by both teenagers and those in their 20s, and therefore it is a characteristic of Gen Z.

Table 5: The results of t test (Question2-1 and Question2-2)

Question 2-1 [A] I want to use the money I earn for myself and my family.

[B] I want the money I earn to be used to help others through taxes.

Age	18,19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79
Mean	1.68	1.71	1.63	1.68	1.67	1.72	1.78
Std. dev.	0.87	0.96	0.85	0.84	0.77	0.76	0.80
Obs	309	309	309	308	309	309	309

Question 2-2 [A] I think that more taxes should be taken from the wealthy and distributed to help the poor.

[B] I think that in order to help the poor, we all need to share the burden broadly.

Age	18,19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79
Mean	2.57	2.47	2.32 ***	2.39 *	2.26 ***	2.20 ***	2.08 ***
Std. dev.	1.21	1.20	1.14	1.19	1.10	1.10	1.05
Obs	309	309	309	308	309	309	309

Note: * Significant at the 10% level; ** Significant at the 5% level; *** Significant at the 1% level.

5. Conclusion

In this study, I analyzed whether there are differences in policy preferences by generation, particularly regarding social security. To perform statistical analysis, I collected individual data of Japanese people using an internet survey. From the results of the t test and mean values, some notable differences between generations were found.

Although teenagers tend to be more altruistic than other generations, they rarely held the opposite opinion. For example, regarding the level of satisfaction with the current tax burden, teenagers have the highest average value, but the average value is less than 3 on a five-point scale, meaning that the majority are not satisfied. Furthermore, regarding the choice between increasing taxes on the wealthy or spreading the burden among various income classes to generate funds for poverty alleviation measures, teenagers had the highest average value, indicating their greater support for the latter idea than other generations. However, the average value was still only 2.57, meanings that the majority want higher taxes on the wealthy.

On the other hand, the idea of making university education free has a rating of 3.8 on a five-point scale, indicating that teenagers are sensitive to policies that benefit them. Regarding this policy,

the average score is less than 3 among people in their 50s and above, indicating strong opposition. Concerning improving elderly welfare, those younger than 50s tend to be against it with an average value of 3 or less, but those in their 60s and above tend to be in favor with an average value of 3 or more.

Additionally, people in their 20s also fall under Gen Z, but there are some results where they differ from Gen Z teenagers. When asked whether they lead a materially rich life and whether they have peace of mind in their daily lives, respondents in their 20s had significantly lower scores than teenagers, and the trend was in the opposite direction for teenagers. In fact, many of the results for people in their 20s show the same trends as other working generations. In other words, it is suggested that these values are not influenced by whether or not a person is a member of Gen Z, but by whether or not they are working and paying taxes. On the other hand, equality of outcome is a common desire among teenagers and those in their 20s, and is therefore a characteristic of Gen Z.

In this study, I only focused on the effect of an individual's generation on his or her policy preference. Based on the results, it appears that whether a person is working or not is also likely to influence policy preferences. In other words, rather than generational influences, policy preferences are influenced by the experience of actually working, earning a salary, paying taxes and social insurance premiums, and spending money on raising children. This study focused on providing an overview of generational differences in policy attitudes. A future challenge will be to analyze whether generational differences influence policy preferences, even after controlling for the effects of age, gender, work experience, unemployment history, current income, and having children.

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