INTERGENERATIONALITY

Intergenerationality, Intergenerational Justice, Intergenerational Policies

"Age of life" is one of the essential characteristics that differentiate people. Age perception is also associated with social justice. The concept of age is defined ambiguously. At the same time, the different age criteria also form the basis of age differentiation and age discrimination. The population leads to distinctions of age groups, age categories, and generations. Differences between generations also lead to study in the concepts of intergenerationality, intergenerational justice, and intergenerational policies.

Multiple Meanings of the "Age" Concept

In the social sciences, standard variables for defining people are considered to be age, sex, occupation, education, race, ethnicity, and social class. Generally, the "age of life" is understood as the time from birth to death, or the life span from birth to the current moment that determines the time of life. Usually, age is described in years and months.

The basic distinction recognizes the "biological age" (i.e., internal time of body) from "chronological age." The concept of biological age is determined by changes taking place in the body during the course of an individual's development subjected to a complex influence of living conditions. Biological age is about the efficiency and viability of the organism, while chronological age is a simple linear function of time from birth to the current moment in life. In other words, chronological age is demographic age, calendar age, and the number of years lived. Both of these measures are irreversible processes in the body as it passes through successive phases of individual development. In other words, childhood is followed by youth, while adulthood is followed by medium and late adulthood—not vice versa.

Chronological age does not necessarily equate individuals with mental age, social age, economic age, and social/legal age. Mental/psychological age is the efficiency of intellectual functions, senses, and adaptability. The social age is the social situation of a man determined on the basis of whether the person complies with appropriate social roles. For example, a young child is an elementary school student while an elderly person is regarded as a grandparent. Economic age refers to the individual's place in the division of labor. This could be pre-working age, prime-age/working age, and post-working age. Pre-working and post-working ages are referred to as nonproductive ages. Finally, the social/legal age refers to the date of receipt of a national entitlement to social benefits such as pensions.

Specifying Age Diversity: Age Group, Age Category, Generation

"Age diversity" is the study of the social differences and characteristics attributed to people of all ages according to various criteria. Social identity is, therefore, dependent on the age of the individual in different social environments that define and determines social roles. The roles assigned to age are then culturally relativized.

Moreover, age diversity is described in terms of *age group*, *age category*, and *generation* (Mortimer & Shanahan, 2006). The "age group" (cohort) is a collection of people who are the same age or in the same age range, who are born in the same year or within a specified time. The age group concept is also used interchangeably with the terms *category of age* and *age class*. For example, in demographics, the population is divided into five compartments: zero to four years old, five to nine years old, and so on. Each of these compartments is an age group. Age group is, therefore, a statistical category and is a collection of people who are similar in terms of age and differ in this respect from others. Age group is also a sociological category. Researchers recognize age as a feature common to this set of people, so it can mean that they have a similar social situation.

"Social category by age/age category" is a set of people similar in some socially significant features that are aware of the similarities and their distinctiveness from other categories. Social categories, divided according to age, are, for example, "young people," "people in middle age," and "old people/elderly." Individuals within these social categories do not necessarily have to maintain direct contact and interaction with like-minded people similar to them because those interactions occur only in small social groups. For example, not all young people are among the hippie subculture, but subjectively, despite this difference, they may be associated with such young people because of a similar age, similar social status, roles, tasks and development level, life events, and lifestyles. Moreover, age category is also social strata, which is located below or above the social stratification in terms of opportunities for achieving socially valued goods such as wealth, power, prestige, education, and health. For example, the elderly may differ by the number of retirement benefits they receive, but they can feel connected by the fact that they have, in a given society, less prestige and suffer from poor health. Social stratification by age varies from country to country and types of welfare states. In addition, age categories can transform into social classes. This transition is possible when there is a sense of a more general connection between people of an age category in the areas of economic interest, network communication and engagement, and class consciousness based on the idea of the existence of

conflicting class interests as well as organizational structures for engaging the class struggle. In other words, it is theoretically possible for there to be a class conflict between young and old people.

"Generation" can be interpreted most generally as a community of individuals belonging to the same age group born at approximately the same time. People born in the same period (usually within one year), sharing social and/or demographic characteristics, are considered of the same generation. The concept of generation, just like "age," is interpreted ambiguously. Generation may be defined as a "link in the genealogy," such as kinships. For example, generations depend on their parents—common ancestors having similar interests and commonalities. Generation may also be defined as a "link in the culture." For example, this is the dependence of children on their parents, or students on teachers, in gathering knowledge, skills, and traditions. Two familiar and well-cited generations are the postwar generation and the well-known (and often celebrated) baby boomer generation. Generations are also "ahistorical" when they are carried out as part of a comparative analysis of people in the same age from different societies and eras. Finally, the generation is a "historical" community with a certain hierarchy of values, attitudes, and common momentous experiences (such as war, changes in the social system, and economic crises).

Generation Gap Concept

In the time period after World War II, there were rapid changes in the social, economic, and cultural characteristics of societies, including changes in fashion, lifestyles, electoral behavior, expectations of work, and values. Differences between younger and older people, in particular children and their parents, were then referred to as a "generational gap" or "generational conflict" (Binstock, 2006). It is possible to identify two reasons for this phenomenon. First, in industrial societies, specific stages of socioeconomic development were assigned to individual biological roles. For example, youth corresponded with education, medium age was the stage of work, and old age was a time for leisure and pension. In postindustrial societies, these steps have not been followed consistently. For example, there is lifelong learning, unemployment no longer needs to be considered as a lack of potential and opportunity for finding a new job in the future, and flexible retirement systems are used while continuing work. Additionally, modernity leads to the development of individually targeted institutions for copresence and responsibilities of persons in different age groups. This "age segregation" involves placing children within educational institutions or childcare centers while parents are isolated in work (public,

commercial, or nongovernment entities), and the elderly are living in retirement homes, nursing homes, or senior daycare centers. The generation gap exposes barriers to mentoring, cooperation, and other benefits of cross-generational interactions.

Toward Intergenerational Justice and Intergenerational Policies

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the focus of debates about the relationship between the rational equity and justice (Binstock, 2006). There are many types of "intergenerational relationships/intergenerationality," or interactions between members of different generations. As Szukalski (2012) noted, there are also intergenerational bonds, solidarity, contract, and conflict. Intergenerational relationships and contract are value-free terms, bond and solidarity are positively characterized, and conflict has a negative meaning. There are also other concepts such as intergenerational integration, war, disintegration, and ambivalence. "Intergenerational relationship" is generally understood as a relationship between individuals or groups from different generations, which include interactions, opinions, attitudes, and stereotypes. There are no obligations between generations. "Intergenerational bond" is a sense of biological, cultural, and economic interaction with other generations with a positive attitude toward individuals from other generations. *Bond* is used to describing the attitude of one generation who believes they "should do something" to help other generations—for example, teach them or share resources with them.

Szukalski (2012) also described other concepts. "Intergenerational solidarity" is a mutual responsibility between generations toward one another where they consider each other's activities, interests, needs, and opinions. This solidarity also includes a "we must do something" attitude. While "intergenerational conflict" is a term describing one generation that, contrary to the will of another, will not help the other generation and also makes it difficult for the other generation to act. There are also other relations such as "intergenerational mobility," which describes changes in social status between younger and older generations that may rely on the improvement or deterioration in the position of the group. Sometimes the term *intergenerational cycle of violence* is also used to describe a continuation of violence or abuse from one generation to the next. For example, when a child witnesses domestic violence, they may repeat that same pattern of behavior as an adult. Additionally, there is the term *intergenerational ambivalence*, which is the coexistence of different attitudes and ways of thinking about relationships at both micro (individual families) and macro (entire societies) levels. It is possible to organize the divergent interests of different generations. Under the

concept of "intergenerational contract/agreement," written and/or unwritten rules of the redistribution of social status, which include wealth, power, and prestige, can exist between generations.

Intergenerational equity and justice are similar but not equivalent concepts. "Intergenerational equity" is a broader concept than "intergenerational justice." Szukalski (2012) pointed out that while every injustice assumes the existence of inequalities, inequality is not present in every case of injustice. For example, there are individual differences in the health status of groups and their biological characteristics and physiology. So intergenerational equity can be understood as equity in relations considered as equal rights under the law, such as security, political equity, voting rights, freedom of speech and assembly, property rights, economic equity, access to education, health care, and social security. This equity can be horizontal—equal opportunities for the same generation in different collectivities—for example, young people in different countries. This equity is also vertical—different treatment of different generations in order to compensate for differences in, for example, education and place of origin.

Tremmel (2009), in his "intergenerational justice" theory, defines it as a situation in which every generation has a moral obligation to the presently existing generations—young and old (temporal generations) as well as past and future generations (intertemporal generations). Justice means that decisions made in the present time are based on the calculation of losses and benefits for other generations. This implies, for example, that adults are responsible for the futures of the children and the elderly, but also for their future living conditions. Tremmel (2009) also noted that intergenerational justice should be considered separately from "intra-generational justice," which is justice between persons of the same age. Examples of intragenerational justice are: social—between the poor and the rich within a country; international—between different countries, independent from the revenue repartition in those countries; gender—between men and women; and other—between the ill and the healthy, those with and those without children, persons of different ethnic and religious backgrounds, and more. Meanwhile, intergenerational justice is the relations between generations that include temporal (intertemporal, family-related, or spatial-level), global, national, and regional focus. Intergenerational justice is considered in connection with transition economics, social policy, government budget-making, environmental concerns, youth rights, and elderly law. However, generational justice should be distinguished from "sustainability." Intergenerational justice is considered in sustainability in terms of ecology and finances, while intragenerational justice

mainly aims at international justice (conditions of living in the North and the South), justice between the poor and the rich within a country, and justice between men and women. Other main approaches to intergenerational justice are indirect reciprocity; the mutual advantage; utilitarianism; the Lockean proviso; the Rawlsian egalitarianism; and Brundtland's sufficientarianism (Gosseries, 2008).

"Intergenerational policies" can be understood as public policies, collections of activities focused on the development and implementation of a specific contract between generations (Klimczuk, 2013). This policy applies to establishing and maintaining "regime," which is the rules defining the shape of relationships between generations, written or unwritten, and the principles present in the law, religion, ethics, and customs. Intergenerational policies include discourse, negotiating the use of ethical and ideological arguments on the scales, and orientations and ways of resource redistribution between generations. Moreover, such policies may be forced upon other generations through physical force or through symbolic violence by another generation but can also be cocreated through dialogue. Intergenerational policies can be targeted to increase age integration by facilitating interaction between people of different age groups by providing physical proximity, developing common interests, or by other mechanisms. The purpose of integration is to eliminate social barriers and difficulties associated with age, including discrimination on the grounds of age. Intergenerational policies are based on interdependence and reciprocity between the generations for basic needs such as income, health care, social services, educational policy, employment policy, and architectural and environmental policies. Intergenerational policies contain specific programs and actions aimed at supporting the simultaneous participation of children, youth, and older adults. Examples include solutions, such as "intergenerational shared sites" (spaces where participants from different age groups interact during regularly scheduled, planned intergenerational activities); "communities for all ages" (engaging community residents of all ages and their organizations in leadership roles); and World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities (exchange of experience and mutual learning on creating universal physical and social environments).

Andrzej Klimczuk

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