Depreciation of Millennials in Organizational Settings: What Underlying Factors in a Traditional Values Context

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This study sets out to examine: In a traditional value context, which variables are related to the attitude of depreciation of Millennials by GX in an organizational setting? Through a Factorial Correspondence Analysis, it is postulated that three factors would be at the origin of the depreciation of Millennials in an organizational environment. The analysis shows a correlation between the 10 variables analyzed, but two factors emerge: the GY’s ability to invest or build and the GY’s commitment to starting a household. The hypothesis that there are three latent factors underlying the data analyzed is therefore rejected.

Keywords: Generation X, Generation Y, organization, depreciation, culture

Context and Justification of the Study

The organizational social dynamics puts different actors in a network of relationship where subgroups are clearly defined and perceive themselves as in-groups or as out-groups. A categorization of the members of the organizations based on an identity archetype built in a given interval of time, according to the way they lived their childhood, the moment when their process of maturation took place, their adolescence and what type of adult they became, of the relationships with technology, allows today to define four big categories of actors in organizational environment namely, the Baby Boomers, the Generation X, the Generation Y still called Millennials, and the Generation Y Fi. Some authors situate the birth of Generation Y Fi from 2001, Millennials between 1980 and 2000, Generation X between 1961 and 1979, and Baby Boomers before 1961. As the latter are almost leaving organizations and Generation Y Fi has not sufficiently integrated them, Generation X and Generation Y are now the generations that are most in contact with each other in an organizational environment. However, collaboration between these two categories of actors is difficult. They do not agree on issues related to the experience in the organizational environment, the realization of activities, the aspirations of different groups ... All things create a power relationship between these two entities or even, a rejection of the GY by the GX despite the fact that according to Kowske, Rasch, and Wiley (2010), the GY is very willing to accept the difference (Skjellaug, 2018; Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010; Kaifi, Nafei, Khanfar, & Kaifi, 2012; Andert, 2011).

Beyond the above-mentioned categorization factors, there are others that are linked to the social representations of the actors or to their cultural values, reinforcing the differentiated grouping of organizational actors. In a context of collectivist values, in this case among the Bantu, Semi-Bantu, Pygmy, Sudanese, and Sudano-haminite.
GY in a psycho-social dimension could be considered as people still living in their childhood phase. Childhood in this context is understood as a period from birth to the end of adolescence. However, the end of adolescence here is not defined in terms of an age limit, but rather, in terms of vicarious achievements ensuring the autonomy of the person. These achievements are regulated by the groups to which they belong (Mbiah, 2021).

According to Gauthey and Xardel (1993), the social representations of organizational actors enrich their behaviors within these environments. In this sense, Generation X, which according to cultural norms is the eldest or even the parent of the GY in the organizational environment because it is the age group of the parents of the latter, is the current custodians of social norms and values on the one hand. On the other hand, the economic situation has not helped; the GY on the infrastructural, conjugal, and subsidiary plans does not always present the criteria which define the exit of childhood with regard to the standards of their group of belonging. Thus, there is a multiplicity of factors that may underlie GX’s rejection behavior of GY in organizational settings. The present study therefore sets out to examine: In a context of traditional values, exactly which variables are related to the attitude of rejection or depreciation of Millennials by GX in an organizational environment? In order to do so, after a theorization on the variables likely to cause the aforementioned GX attitude, it will be presented a methodological framework, the results of the study, the interpretation, and discussion of said results.

**Theorizing the Study**

Generation X in the African context is socialized in a post-colonial context (Mbiah, 2020). This generation lives under a mode of socialization governed by the rigidness of educators, punishment, endurance in order to avoid punishment, acceptance without reluctance for fear of punishment, lack of leisure... At this time, the populations are still rooted in their pure traditional cultural values. In addition, the need for African countries to emerge pushed citizens to get involved in organizations. However, the economic recession of the 1980s changed all that. It is under this aegis that GY was born. In terms of organization, GX installs all sorts of vices and excesses, including corruption, nepotism, absenteeism, delays, and the abandonment of public services (Karamoko, 2006). The tendency to vice in the organizational environment. Moreover, this generation is also growing up in a context of a strong devaluation of traditional family values (Andert, 2011). The GY, thanks to information technology, is increasingly open to the world on a global level, receiving foreign values (Anika, 2018). These factors will have a major impact on the behavioral orientation of the GY, which will show different trends than those of the GX in an organizational setting.

A psychosocial reading of the stages of the childhood period in a collectivist context reveals several criteria defining the passage from childhood to the adult life stage. The exit from the childhood period is determined by several factors whether one is female or male. Men should have built a home, have a wife, and have a job or a stable source of income. Women should live in a couple with a man. Thus, a person who does not meet these criteria, regardless of age, will be perceived as being a child, and therefore immature (Mbiah, 2021).

In view of the above, particularly in the context of the economic situation in which GY is emerging, it is difficult for them, after their twenties, to have a source of income, to build a house, and worse still, to be married. In this study, the 78% of Millennials surveyed do not meet all three of these criteria. Yet, the people surveyed are those who already have a job. Millennials in an organizational setting will exhibit some
peculiarities regarding task disposition, and work ethic.

Task disposition refers to the attitude that a person has towards the task in terms of involvement, desire to achieve the goals that are assigned to him/her, and to achieve his/her goals effectively and efficiently. This disposition is generally a function of various factors related to the subject’s background, personal equations, the quality of the dynamic with other members of the organization, the organizational culture, and several other factors related to the external environment, notably, the socio-cultural and socio-economic environment. Millennials’ attitude towards the task has been studied by several authors. Millennials are very goal-oriented people who like to do a good job. They are willing to go the extra mile and are excellent at what they do. These dispositions drive them to constantly seek out new opportunities for action or learning, hence their turnover rate is often higher than that of the GX (Hauw & Vos, 2010). Millennials in an organizational setting do not have the same work orientations as Gen X. They are more interested in building their skills and competencies. They are more interested in building their skills, developing themselves in terms of employability rather than acquiring direct gain as is the case with GX. They like originality, are creative, and like flexibility.

For this study, professional ethics refers to the respect of morals and other norms that govern life in an organizational environment, whether they are related to the relationship between colleagues, to the dimension of work or to the relationship to the organization as a structure. Millennials’ work lives are fraught with ethical issues, both in terms of personal decision-making and the constraints of moral dilemmas within the organization. The fact that Millennials present values that do not coincide with those of the GX poses a real moral dilemma for them in the sense of Schermerhorn et al. (2014, p. 371) who defines it as the “dilemma that forces a subject to make a choice between several solutions that are painful or have ethical disadvantages”.

Hypotheses and Methodology of the Study

Presentation of the Hypotheses

This study deals with the depreciation of Generation Y by Generation X in an organizational environment. Based on the observation that there are several hidden dimensions that could explain the depreciation of GY by GX in an organizational environment with traditional values, the main hypothesis we formulate is that there are three hidden dimensions that justify the depreciation of GY by GX in an organizational environment with traditional values. These factors are manifested through 10 variables reflecting the characteristics and attitude of Generation Y in traditional value organizational settings.

The variables in this study are the manifestations of the aforementioned hidden dimensions, which are manifested through, the observed characteristics that are: having land or house; having founded a home; being a father or mother; being married for women; being very picky, liking freedom, and being flexible at work; having poor performance at work; having a fairly high level of confidence; having poor work ethics; liking to bend the law. These variables are as close as they will allow for a linkage assessment between the variables.

Methodology of the Study

In order to study the quality of the links between the above-mentioned qualitative variables or the degree of proximity between them and thus to establish an assessment of the similarity of the variables presented by individuals, a Correspondence Factorial Analysis is undertaken. An exploratory factorial analysis is therefore carried out to describe the database obtained, and a confirmatory factorial analysis to determine whether the underlying factorial structure as postulated is likely or legitimate at a 5% significance level.
The sample for this study is Generation Y and Generation X. It consists of 130 people, with 123 questionnaires returned. They are nationals of the regions of Cameroon. The common modalities that unite them at the organizational level are the fact that they work in the public, parapublic and private sectors, and in non-governmental organizations or associations, the fact that they have been at work for at least two years, and the fact that they work in organizations where GY and GX work together. They are in the 21 to 41 age range for Millennials, and no older than 61 for Gen Xers. As many GYs, GXs are participating in the study. Organizations as well as respondents are selected by reasoned choice in order to fulfill selection criteria related to the age of the individuals, the type of organization, the seniority, and the gender factor.

**Results of the Study**

The hypotheses are tested here in order to find out if there are, a priori, unmeasured factors among the variables selected for our study that are manifested through variables that are actually measured.

**Descriptive Analysis**

At the outset of this analysis of the results, we shall present the results of Table 1 on the number of responses on the underestimation of GY in the organizational environment by the GX. These results reveal that more than half of the respondents, or 69.6%, believe that Millennials are devalued or undervalued by GX in the organizational setting. Furthermore, considering that the data collection was done on 50% of Millennials and 50% of GX, one can deduce that many GX recognize these facts as true.

**Table 1**

| GX Is Underestimated by GY in Organization | Number | Percentage | Valid percentage | Cumulative percentage |
|-------------------------------------------|--------|------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Oui                                       | 78     | 63.4       | 69.6             | 69.6                  |
| Non                                       | 34     | 27.6       | 30.4             | 100.0                 |
| Total                                     | 112    | 91.1       |                  |                       |
| Missing                                   | 0      | 11         | 8.9              |                       |
| Total                                     | 123    | 100.0      |                  |                       |

**Correspondence Factorial Analysis**

**Results of the descriptive statistics on the variables studied.** Table 2 on the descriptive statistics of the study presents information on the scores obtained for each of the variables in terms of mean, standard deviation, and sample size. As mentioned above, the number of people who participated in the study was 123. The mean of the responses given for these questions ranges from 1.83 to 2.46. The lower bound is on “not being a father or mother” as a factor in rejecting GX and the upper bound is on “seeking freedom and flexibility” as a factor in depreciating GY by GX.

**Table 2**

| Descriptive Statistics | Mean | Standard deviation | N analysis |
|------------------------|------|--------------------|------------|
| Have land or house     | 2.21 | 0.617              | 123        |
| Found a home           | 2.43 | 0.654              | 123        |
| Being a father or mother | 1.83 | 0.807              | 123        |
| Being married for women | 2.07 | 0.715              | 123        |
| Being very picky       | 2.17 | 0.662              | 123        |
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| Freedom and flexibility | 2.46 | 0.669 | 123 |
|-------------------------|------|-------|-----|
| Poor performance        | 2.41 | 0.711 | 123 |
| Fairly high level of trust | 2.15 | 0.769 | 123 |
| Poor work ethic         | 2.28 | 0.728 | 123 |
| Enjoy bending the law   | 2.45 | 0.655 | 123 |

Results of the KMO index and Bartlett’s test. Table 3 presents the results of the KMO index and the Bartlett test. It shows whether the correlation matrix matches the unit matrix. The Bartlett’s test has a P value = 0.017 and is therefore less than 5%. We therefore reject the null hypothesis that the correlation matrix is equal to the unit matrix. Therefore, it is admitted that it is not equal to the unit matrix. Therefore, there are significant correlations between variables in the study.

| Table 3 | KMO Index and Bartlett Test |
|---------|-----------------------------|
| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin sampling accuracy measure | 0.452 |
| Bartlett’s test of sphericity | Approximate chi-square 67.423 |
| | ddl 45 |
| | Meaning of Bartlett 0.017 |

It should be noted that the table of the correlation matrix, which is not illustrated in this work due to its large size, contains several significant correlations at the 5% threshold. The structure of the correlations between the initial variables of the problem indicates that this analysis is legitimate. The determinant of the matrix is 0.564, not equal to 0, which further confirms the quality of the legitimacy of this analysis. For the KMO index, the adequacy parameter of the sample is 0.452 so KMO > 0.452. It can be concluded that this sample has the required properties for a factor analysis.

Moreover, the matrix of anti-image correlations which is also not shown due to its size shows on the main diagonal, rather average KMO coefficients, the lowest being related to being picky, i.e., 0.390, which could raise questions. However, overall, the variables are legitimate for this factor analysis.

Representational quality results. The Table 4 presents the variance shared by the variables. Thus, the most strongly shared variance is relative to “having a land or a house”, i.e., 15.8%, and the least shared variance is relative to the variable “seeking freedom and flexibility”, i.e., 7.8%.

On the basis of the above initial commonalities, the Factorial Analysis has extracted hidden dimensions, relating to the three selected factors. The variance most strongly shared by the three dimensions is related to the variable: “Having a land or a house” and is expressed at 90.5%. On the other hand, the variance least shared is “Being very fussy” and is expressed at 5.8%.

| Table 4 | Quality of Representation |
|---------|---------------------------|
| Initial | Extraction |
| Have land or house | 0.158 | 0.905 |
| Founded a home | 0.109 | 0.108 |
| Being a father or mother | 0.099 | 0.140 |
| Being married for women | 0.135 | 0.324 |
| Being very fussy | 0.102 | 0.058 |
| Freedom and flexibility | 0.078 | 0.068 |
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| Poor performance | 0.099 | 0.238 |
| Fairly high level of trust | 0.105 | 0.085 |
| Poor work ethic | 0.130 | 0.181 |
| Enjoy bending the law | 0.098 | 0.144 |

Note. Extraction method: Principal axis factorization.

Results of the total variance explained. Table 5 of the post-extraction results reveals 10.925 of variance for the first factor. It is related to the conception of childhood of Millennials; 5.849 of variance for the second factor related to the attitude of Millennials towards the task; 5.719% of variance for the third factor related to the work ethics of Millennials. In total or cumulatively, 22.493% of total variance shared by the initial variables. These three factors therefore explain 22.493% of the common variance or shared variance. We can see that the total variance explained is low. The graph of eigenvalues in Figure 1 shows that after the third factor, the slope varies a lot. According to this Scree Plot, we could have chosen fewer factors, to have a more satisfactory solution.

Table 5
Total Variance Explained

| Factor initial eigenvalues | Extraction sum of squares of factors retained | Sum of squares of factors retained for rotation |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
|                            | Total | % de la variance | % cumulés | Total | % de la variance | % cumulative | Total |
| 1                          | 1.490 | 14.902           | 14.902    | 1.093 | 10.925           | 10.925       | 1.074 |
| 2                          | 1.416 | 14.159           | 29.062    | 0.585 | 5.849            | 16.774       | 0.583 |
| 3                          | 1.308 | 13.082           | 42.144    | 0.572 | 5.719            | 22.493       | 0.599 |
| 4                          | 1.131 | 11.311           | 53.455    |       |                  |              |      |
| 5                          | 1.042 | 10.424           | 63.879    |       |                  |              |      |
| 6                          | 0.953 | 9.532            | 73.410    |       |                  |              |      |
| 7                          | 0.881 | 8.810            | 82.220    |       |                  |              |      |
| 8                          | 0.647 | 6.465            | 88.685    |       |                  |              |      |
| 9                          | 0.592 | 5.921            | 94.607    |       |                  |              |      |
| 10                         | 0.539 | 5.393            | 100.000   |       |                  |              |      |

Note. Extraction method: Factorisation in main axes.
Results of the structure matrix. Table 6 of the structure matrix shows how the factor points are distributed after Oblimin rotation, assuming that the factors are correlated or have some degree of association. Thus, it can be seen that the first dimension is well existing. However, only the variable “Having a plot of land” is relevant to this dimension and is not associated with any other variable.

Table 6

| Structure Matrix |
|------------------|
|                  |
| Factor | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Have land or house | 0.941 |
| Found a home | |
| Fairly high confidence level | |
| Poor performance | |
| Like to bend the law | |
| Poor work ethic | |
| Being married for women | |
| Being a father or mother | 0.508 |
| Being very picky | |
| Freedom and flexibility | |

Notes. Extraction method: Principal axis factorization. Rotation method: Oblimin with Kaiser normalization.
The second dimension is almost non-existent. No variable shows the relevance of its existence. Meanwhile, the third factor is represented only by “Being married for women”, and is not associated with any other variable. The other variables do not appear in the factorial structure and this is not surprising, as their initial communalities were found to be quite low.

**Result of factor correlation matrix.** As Table 7 presents the factor correlation matrix, SPSS gives us correlations. It should be examined whether the correlation between the factors is significant. However, since the factors do not exist as such, this analysis will not be done. We cannot say that the extracted behaviors are statistically related, since they hardly exist.

Table 7

*Factor Correlation Matrix*

| Factor | 1     | 2     | 3     |
|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1      | 1.000 | 0.108 | 0.038 |
| 2      | 0.108 | 1.000 | -0.076|
| 3      | 0.038 | -0.076| 1.000 |

Notes. Extraction method: Factorization in principal axes. Rotation method: Oblimin with Kaiser normalization.

Remember that factor analysis reduces the size of the data, or the number of variables, by constructing combinations of the original variables, while maximizing the variance of each main variable. Thus, we cannot reveal information about the quality of the link between the behavioral dimensions underlying the devaluation of GY by GX because, statistically, these do not exist.

**Result of the matrix of factor coordinates.** The result in Table 8 shows that each factor from the initial variable is expressed as a linear combination of all other variables. The factor weights or parameters of the regression are thus given. The score matrix shows us how each factor was calculated from the initial variables. Thus, looking at the heaviest factor weights, the first factor is more correlated with “Having land or house”, the second factor is “Poor performance”, and the third factor is “Being married for women”.

Table 8

*Matrix of Factorial Coordinates*

| Factor | 1     | 2     | 3     |
|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| Have land or house | 0.925 | -0.062 | 0.005 |
| Founded a home | 0.031 | 0.125 | -0.100 |
| Being a father or mother | -0.021 | -0.041 | 0.241 |
| Being married for women | 0.033 | 0.143 | 0.416 |
| Being very picky | -0.012 | -0.031 | 0.153 |
| Freedom and flexibility | 0.039 | 0.091 | 0.113 |
| Poor performance | 0.051 | 0.369 | -0.009 |
| Fairly high level of trust | 0.005 | -0.053 | 0.084 |
| Poor work ethic | 0.056 | 0.246 | -0.182 |
| Like to bend the law | 0.005 | 0.242 | 0.005 |

Notes. Extraction method: Factorisation in main axes. Rotation method: Oblimin with Kaiser normalization. Factor score method: Regression.

**Conclusion of results.** Eight variables are not measured at the 5% threshold. They are also not explained by factors. The table of communalities shows that almost all the variables should be deleted from the analysis.
because they are poorly explained by the factors. Since the factors are not expressed by a set of variables, it is difficult to say whether they are correlated. At the same time, it is not possible to comment on the quality of their dependence and even less on the structure of these dependences. This is because one of these factors is not explained by any variable. From all the above one can say that the factorial solution is not adequate because the hypothesis that there are three latent factors underlying these data must be rejected. The exploratory factor analysis is still conclusive. The confirmatory factor analysis to determine whether the underlying factor structure as postulated is likely or legitimate at a 5% significance level is tested according to these criteria but not satisfactory.

**Interpretation of the Study**

The analysis of the above data is related to the fact that the attitude of depreciation of the GY by the GX in traditional organizational environment is manifested through three factors. The results show that the variables are legitimate for this factor analysis. In this sense, our sample does have the properties required for such an analysis. It is true that the factors are not constructed in the proper sense of the term, but we note that the only elements that appear in these poorly represented factors are concentrated on variables that we can describe as “cultural, related to the conception of childhood” in the traditional organizational environment. If the cultural factors are thus more determining in the attitude of depreciation of the GY by the GX, this could be justified by the theory of the Mental Model (Steven et al., 2012) which states that the general worldview on which people base their perceptions and behaviors is based on the behavioral patterns received in the situation of primary socialization. Thus, the norms underlying the conception of childhood in the GX continue to determine the consideration of the latter in the organizational environment and, in turn, the discounted consideration of the fact that they are still only children. These dispositions are also determinants of the primacy effect, or the misperception that one forms a lasting opinion of another based on a first impression. In the context of this study, one might note the “youthfulness” of Millennials as the basis for this effect more than work-related and ethical factors.

The effect of the first traits of a list guiding perception more decisively than the following traits, noted by Asch (1946) and taken up by Nauts et al. (2014) is not to be left out of account in these conditions. For, far from the way of behaving in a work situation, the first information that the millennial reviews at the GX is his state of youth (his immaturity in cultural terms). The value attributed to this trait is therefore very determinant of the judgment that will be made about his attitude later on.

The fact that the elements revealed in this study are centered on variables related to the conception of childhood in a collectivist environment shows that, the respondents’ actions remain dominated by their social representations of childhood. Gosling (2009) affirms in this sense that, even if the perception of people is qualified as active, once established, it remains stable and relatively difficult to modify.

The rest of the factors that were found not to be associated with dimensions are not to be rejected. According to Escofier and Pagès (2008), two modalities are more similar if they are present or absent simultaneously in a large number of individuals, whether they are associated with the same modalities a lot or a little. That said, the rest of the eight factors could be considered as modalities that are therefore similar, which could be grouped under the same factor. Thus, the study could present three main dimensions, one related to the GY’s “ability to invest or build”, another related to their “commitment to start a home”, and a last one related to “ethics and attitude towards the task”.
Discussion of the Study

For St-Arnaud (1989), in a mature group, members should be able to accept their respective differences without associating with them the qualifiers “good” or “bad”; members should be aware of their own commitment, and of the other aspects of the group’s functioning, without feeling crushed or without crushing the others. In light of this conception of maturity, one could deduce that the organizations in the sample are not yet mature. This is ambiguous in the context of this study because several of the organizations selected were over fifty years old. In view of our results, the depreciation of GY, the non-acceptance of difference shown by GX, refers to the cultural variable linked to the conception of childhood by the latter. Moreover, Kowske et al. (2010) will argue that, Millennials in organization tolerate diversity and all kinds of differences.

Several authors who have examined the behavior of Millennials in post-materialist contexts in the sense of (Inglehart & Baker, 2000) lean towards the moral dimension and attitude at work as a factor of depreciation of Millennials in an organizational environment (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010). However, this study conducted in a collectivist setting justifies this attitude by the cultural dimension that determines the perception of the millennial in the organizational setting.

The realities of the central values of the society seem in the case of this study to be a factor of discord between the members of the different generations of the organization. This might lead one to believe that commonly shared values do not exist at the heart of this organizational culture. Yet in the sense of Shermerhorn et al. (2014), there is a link between the commonly shared values in the organization and the core values of the society. Only, in the context of this study, as pointed out by Bloch (1997), representations determine the percept. Rather, we are talking about the strong dependence of GX on the representations that serve as a grid for reading behavior in the organizational environment.

Following Bourhis and Leyens (1999), for whom our categories are made up of a cluster of interrelated traits, one might think that having only one variable to explain each factor would deprive them of their value. Instead, it should be noted that while the factors revealed by the study do not cluster several variables, this does not mean that the depreciation of Millennials in organizational settings is based solely on the mono variables of these factors. In fact, the high significance level chosen during the design of the study, i.e., 5%, meant that several variables that did not have a high enough factor weight were swept from the list. Thus, the rest of the variables still count for the study. They could be associated with existing categories based on the level of scores obtained or be put under a category called “ethics and attitude towards the task”.

Conclusion

This study focuses on the quest for reasons why GY is undervalued in organizational settings. It explores these reasons around factors related to GY’s attitude towards their tasks, their work ethic, and cultural factors related to GX’s conception of childhood. We postulate that, three main factors determine these attitudes. Based on 10 variables, the issue is explored through a Correspondence Factorial Analysis.

The study reveals that the attitude of depreciation of GY by GX is driven solely by the factors “GY’s ability to invest or build” and “commitment to start a household”. Of the three postulated factors, none of them show clustering of variables. The apparent factors might suggest that it would have been more relevant for this study to construct factors around the central idea of “the conception of childhood in a traditional organizational context. Latent behaviors or dimensions would have manifested themselves through more detailed factors if the
study had gone in that direction. In the end, this study allowed for the realization of two overriding realities. The first is that in collectivist organizations, the most important factors that can lead to disharmony between GY and GX in an organizational setting are the stereotypical perceptions of GX based on cultural factors. This is far more important than the work-related or attitudinal dimensions of GY in organizational settings. Furthermore, this study reinforces the authors’ position that the first information or traits returned by a subject determines the valence that will be attributed to the rest of the items that will emanate from said person. Thus, whatever the cultural context in which we find ourselves, this rule remains proven and constant.

In perspective, a study on the factors specifically related to the conception of childhood is necessary. It will be made in order to examine if the preponderant factor included in the cultural dimension put forward through this study is specifically related to the conception of childhood.

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