

Who Should Shape the Future: Experts or the Younger Generations?

In today's world, knowledge does not last very long. In some jobs, half of what you know can already be outdated after only two years (Arbesman, 2012). This shows that we are living in a time where change happens very fast. At the same time, younger generations like Generation Z (1997–2012) and Generation Alpha (2010–2025) are growing up in this environment. They are learning how to live with technology, climate issues, and new ways of thinking.

This makes an important question: who should have more influence in shaping the future? Should it be older experts who have years of experience, or the younger generations who can adapt more quickly? For me, the answer is that younger generations should have greater influence. The world today changes too fast for only experience to be enough. Adaptability, and the fact that young people will live with the results of today's choices, show that their voices must be stronger.

Knowledge Changes Fast, So Adaptability Is Key

The first reason is that knowledge changes so quickly that adaptability is more important than experience. If knowledge in technology or science loses half its value every two years, then someone who has worked for twenty years may know a lot of things that no longer matter today. This does not mean their hard work is useless, but it does mean that being able to learn new things is more valuable than simply knowing old things.

For example, in the world of technology, programming languages and platforms change all the time. A language that was popular ten years ago might already be replaced by something newer and faster. If an expert refuses to learn the new language, their skills may not be as helpful anymore. The same is true in medicine, where new research often changes how diseases are treated.

Younger generations are used to this kind of change. Gen Z and Gen Alpha grew up with smartphones, apps, and constant updates. They are not shocked when something new comes along—they expect it. This kind of mindset is exactly what the future needs. The ability to adapt quickly, learn new skills, and keep moving forward is more useful than only having long years of experience.

Young Generations Have Values for the Future

Another reason is that young people hold values that match the problems of today and tomorrow. Gen Z is known for caring about diversity, equality, mental health, and sustainability. These are not just small issues. They are some of the biggest challenges the world is facing. For example, mental health has become a major problem in schools and workplaces. Young people openly talk about it, and because of them, many companies are starting to take it seriously.

Gen Alpha, although younger, is already growing up with artificial intelligence, climate change, and digital life. They will likely focus on issues like technology ethics, environmental protection, and how people should live in a completely digital society. These issues will shape the future, and since they are growing up with them, they are better prepared to lead in those areas.

A good example is climate change. Older leaders sometimes delay action because they know they may not live to see the worst effects. But young people like Greta Thunberg have shown that youth can bring urgency and passion that experts sometimes lack. They are not only speaking for themselves but also for the generations that will come after them.

Institutions Already Listen to Young People

Another reason why younger generations should have more influence is that many important institutions are already giving them more space. The United Nations, for example, created a Youth Advisory Group on Climate Change. Youth are also present at international climate meetings (COP conferences), where they share their ideas and demand action. This shows that young people are not only being listened to, but also trusted to help guide the world.

Some governments are also giving youth more power. In Scotland, people aged 16 and 17 can vote in national elections. In some cities in the United States, teenagers can vote in local elections. These changes prove that societies are realizing the importance of youth voices. If big institutions and governments already trust young people, then it makes sense for us to give them even more influence in shaping the future.

Counterargument: The Importance of Experience

Of course, it is fair to say that experts with many years of experience are important. They know history, they understand complicated systems, and they can prevent mistakes. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, experts in medicine and public health were necessary. Without their experience, the world would not have been able to create vaccines so quickly or manage the crisis in an organized way.

This is a strong point. We cannot simply ignore experience. Experts give us wisdom and lessons that the younger generations do not yet have. But the problem is that experience alone is not enough anymore. If experts are not willing to adapt, their knowledge can quickly become outdated. That is why I believe the best solution is to let younger generations lead while still learning from experts. This way, society benefits from both adaptability and wisdom.

Young People Will Live With the Results

The strongest reason to give more influence to young people is that they will live with the results of today's choices. Decisions made now about climate change, artificial intelligence, and global politics will affect their entire lives. Older generations may not face the full consequences, but younger generations will.

For example, if people do not act strongly on climate change today, it will not be retirees who face food shortages, and other problems. It will be Gen Z and Gen Alpha. If leaders fail to manage artificial intelligence in a safe way, it will not be the elderly who lose jobs or face privacy problems. It will be the young. This is why it is fair and logical that younger generations should have more influence. They have the greatest stake in the future.

Conclusion

The world today is changing faster than ever. Knowledge loses its value quickly, which means adaptability is more important than experience alone. Younger generations like Gen Z and Gen Alpha are naturally adaptable, they care about the values that matter for the future, and they are already being included in global institutions. Most importantly, they are the ones who will live with the consequences of today's decisions.

This does not mean that experts are useless. Their wisdom and experience still matter. But the balance of power should shift toward younger generations. The question is simple: do we want the future to be built mostly by those who remember the past, or by those who will actually live in it? I believe the answer is clear. The future belongs to the young, and they should have the strongest voice in shaping it.