



# Student Assignment: Cohort Analysis

## Personal Insight

To work with older adults from diverse backgrounds that are different from your own calls for the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable you to deliver culturally appropriate care and services (i.e., cultural competence). Utilizing a tool that assists you in organizing historical events experienced by individuals in older ethnic generations, and acquiring information regarding their past histories, can help you in a number of ways. But to really get a handle on this technique, it is important to understand how it can be used to provide insight into your own development.

Its important to remember that life events have a differential impact on you according to where you are on the lifespan continuum when the event takes place. For example, some research (Elder, 1993) indicates that younger children under the age of 10 who went through the Depression of the 1930s and World War II were more profoundly impacted by the economic hardships than older children ages 11 and above.

In addition, men and women who had direct contact with war activities during the war were, as older adults, more assertive and showed greater social competence and self-reliance than their cohorts who had no such experiences. In other words, *you must look at the significant historical events that you have experienced as a back- drop in terms of the life stage that you were in when that event took place.*

In order to increase awareness of diversity across generations, and to get a feel for what a historical profile is, **look at the worksheet on page 2** and:

- 1 Take a moment to reflect on at least one event during the time period listed in column 1 and state how this event may have impacted you.
- 2 Identify the event in column 2 and indicate what developmental period you were in when you experienced the event (i.e., infancy (0–2), early childhood (2–6), middle childhood (7–12), adolescence (13–20), young adulthood (20–40), middle (41–65), or later (65 and beyond) in column 3.
- 3 In Column 4 you should briefly describe how that event impacted you.

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For more information on cohort analysis, refer to Yeo, Hikoyeda, McBride, Chin, Edmonds, & Hendrix, 1998 and visit—  
[www.gasi-ves.org/diversity](http://www.gasi-ves.org/diversity)

**Reference:** Yeo, G., Hikoyeda, N., McBride, M., Chin, S-Y., Edmonds, M., & Hendrix, L. (1998). *Cohort analysis as a tool in ethnogeriatrics: Historical profiles of elders from eight ethnic populations in the United States. Working Paper #12, Second Edition*, Stanford, CA: Stanford Geriatric Education Center.

## Cohort Analysis Worksheet

Time Period	Event	Developmental Period Event Was Experienced	Impact
2000– present			
1990–1999			
1980–1989			
1970–1979			
1960–1969			
1950–1959			
1940–1949			
1930–1930			

## Cohort Historical Analysis Tool

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The Cohort Historical Analysis Tool (CHAT) can be used by an individual, a group of elders, a family, health care providers, students, or anyone interested in understanding how events in the past (within a decade) may have affected their knowledge, behavior, or attitude towards formal and informal systems, their personal goals and choices, and their perspectives. It can increase a clinician’s awareness and understanding of the diversity across generations of older adults, especially among ethnic elders.

The suggested questions in columns 2 and 3 can be adapted to obtain the information from the older adult.

*Time Period is broken down into 10-year, or decade increments, and can go as far back as necessary.*

<b>Time Period</b>	<b>Event</b> <b>Suggested Question:</b> “What has happened in the past that made an important change in your life, health, lifestyle, etc ?”	<b>Impact on Health, Access to Care, Lifestyle, Values, Beliefs, etc.</b> <b>Suggested Question:</b> “How did the event affect your life, health, ability to seek services, health beliefs, etc?”
2000–present		
1990–1999		
1980–1989		
1970–1979		
1960–1969		