

https://dspace.org/

Understanding generational differences impact on employee relationships with co-workers, on individual performance and engagement in the workplace

Maja, Makgotso Birtha

2017

https://hdl.handle.net/10539/24462

Maja, Makgotso Birtha (2017) Understanding generational differences impact on employee relationships with co-workers, on individual performance and engagement in the workplace, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, <https://hdl.handle.net/10539/24462>

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF STUDY

1.1. INTRODUCTION

The human capital of a company has been regarded as the most important aspect within any workforce as it has an influence towards the success and the failure of the company. Today's workforce is more diverse than ever due to the co-existence of more than three generational groups (Zopiatis, Krambia-Kapardis & Varnavas, 2012). The diversity prominent amongst generations can often lead to differences in attitudes towards the labour market and future prospects concerning work (Baran & Klos, 2014). Such aspects include work ethics, relationships, perspectives, and preference to leadership (Arellano, 2015). Differences exist because there are different constructs such as values, ethics, preferences, behaviours, attitudes, expectations and needs which influence each member (Chi, Maier, & Gursoy, 2013; Gursoy, Chi, & Erdem, 2013; Twenge, 2010 as cited in Lu & Gursoy, 2013). Although it is important to recognise existing differences, similarities between generations should also be acknowledged.

Generational differences can affect the individual, as well as, organizational performance, and engagement of employees (Fenzel, 2013). Previous studies have shown that the different values that employees uphold can often "influence their experience of meaningful work, which, in turn could have an impact on work engagement levels" (Hoole & Bonnema, 2015 p.4). When employees are engaged, positive organizational performances and collective performances are brought about in the workplace. It is important that organizations and human resource developers understand how to manage the different generations so that employees can be fully engaged and perform exceptionally well (Fenzel, 2013). The ultimate objective for management is therefore to establish platforms, which minimize weaknesses of employees and maximizes their strengths, because they link to the positive establishment of contributing directly to organizational and individual performance goals (Baran & Klos, 2014; Sze & Angeline, 2011).

Studies in the United States of America show that the inability of organizations to maintain and create effective workplace environments often perpetuates the lack of effective interactions and meaningful work being created (Applebaum, Serena & Shapiro, 2004; Twenge & Campbell, 2008). Factors which often lead to challenges include, poor communication and language

barriers (Singh, 2014; Farrell & Holkner, 2006), difficulties in effective socialization (Meyers & Sadaghiani, 2010), and flexibility (Tolbize, 2008) and effective workforce engagement (Richman et al, 2008; Wong, Gardiner, Lang & Coulon, 2008). It is therefore important that employers ensure that measures which can uphold and improve engagement and performance are put in place, to ensure growth and development of employees, as well as the organization.

In this chapter, the researcher will outline the problem statement and rationale, the significance of the study, the research question, aims and objectives. The chapter summary and organization of each chapter is also provided at the end of the chapter.

1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RATIONALE

The analysis of generational differences among workers has been regarded as a critical yet under developed area within research (Westerman & Yamamura, 2006). The aging of the world's population provides an understanding that the workplace has members of different generational groups who are confronted with accommodating one another to meet work expectations and demands within the workforce (Pitt-Catsouphes & Matz-Costa, 2008). In light of the shift and dynamics evident within the workplace, it is imperative that researchers and organizations have an understanding on how generational structures and generational differences relate to important employment aspects such as engagement, recruitment, retention and performance (Pitt-Catsouphes & Matz-Costa, 2008). Some studies have shown that failure of management to understand the needs of different generations within the workplace affect the engagement and the performance of employees, as well as, proper interventions and strategies not put in place to prevent difficulties (Westerman & Yamamura, 2006).

Notter (2013) argues that when different generations work together it can be problematic because of the differences, which already exist amongst them. Differences include attitudes towards work, perspective on respect and authority, training styles and needs, attitudes towards supervision, perception on work and/or life balance, and communication style (Tolbize, 2008). Failure to acknowledge and deal with the differences could results in generational issues, also known as challenges, encountered by the specific generation within the workplace (Notter, 2013). These include negative stereotypes, poor social integration and the absence of learning (Notter, 2013). Such problematic encounters emerge because of certain factors such as

technological advancements, poor communication patterns, language, style of working, and often, a lack of acknowledgement about existing differences by generations and management, often resulting in confusion and future problems and challenges experienced (Masibigiri & Nienaber, 2011 as cited in Close, 2014; Singh, 2014; Van Der Walt & Du Plessiss, 2010; Twenge & Campbell, 2008). It is important that organizations understand each generational group, and the interactions that happens between them, so as to capitalize on the strengths to achieve success (Hanny & Fretzwell, 2011). An understanding between generations and relationships among generations can be a positive block in the development of recruitment strategies, training methods, hiring processes, and benefit packages (Lehinsky & Michael, 2004 as cited in Westerman & Yamamura, 2006).

Methods which seek to engage employees have been seen to be on a decline worldwide. This is due to the discrepancies in the perceived importance of engagement and the level of engagement that exists in organizations today, and this is seen to affect co-worker relationships and the organizational success (Czarnowsky, 2008). However, little research has investigated the experience of being engaged and how engagement can also affect an employee's experience and ultimately his or her performance (Shuck, Rocco & Albornoz, 2010). Despite a wide variety of studies being conducted on generational differences, fewer studies in South Africa have paid attention to the generational differences' impact on employee relationships with co-workers in individual performance and engagement in the workforce. In light of this, this study seeks to explore how generational differences influence employee engagement and performance within the workplace.

The study has personal significance to the researcher, as it will allow for execution of her role as a social worker in the workplace setting. The study brings forward ways in which occupational social workers can respond and manage human relations and diversity in the work context. This is because employees will always be confronted with making attempts in sustaining their human needs and also organizational needs. However, the confrontation of having to work effectively with other generations will be of importance. The study anticipates making a contribution to social work practice by heightening the importance of social workers to engage in a practice embracing human relations and diversity, in relation to employees within the workplace (Sheafor

& Horejsi, 2012). The study also creates awareness on how occupational social workers can develop organizational strategies and interventions which seek to acknowledge and embrace diversity amongst employees in order to successfully manage and work effectively with a multigenerational workforce.

1.3. RESEARCH QUESTION

How do generational differences impact employee relationships with co-workers, on individual performance, and engagement in the workplace?

1.4. RESEARCH AIM

The aim of the research is to understand how generational differences impact on employee relationships with co-workers, on individual performance, and engagement in the workplace.

1.5. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

i. To explore and describe differences of generations within the organization

ii. To explore and describe employee workplace expectations of different generations within the organization

iii. To explore and describe how performance is affected when working with co-workers of a different generational group

iv. To explore and describe engagement when working with members of a different generation group

v. To explore and describe problems experienced by different generations when interacting with other co-workers

vi. To explore and describe strategies employed by different generations to address the challenges experienced when working with employees of a different generational group

1.6. CHAPTER SUMMARY

The first chapter has shown important aspects about the research study which the researcher has undertaken. It has effectively provided insight to the background of the study, problem statement and rationale, the significance of the study, research question, aim and objectives and more

importantly provided a synopsis of what the other chapters will encompass within this research report.

1.7. ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

The structure and forming of the organization of this research report is divided into five chapters. These chapters all provide an insight towards the process and the knowledge which was used and gathered to ensure that the thesis was a complete success. The chapters include an overview of the study, the literature review, the methodology, the research results and also future recommendations for this study. Below, each chapter has been elaborated on as follows:

1.7.1. Chapter One: Introduction and Overview of study

In this chapter, the researcher has presented the introduction and the overview of the research study on understanding how intergenerational differences have an impact on co-worker relationships with employees, as well as on workplace engagement and performance. Important aspects in this chapter provided are the problem statement and rationale for the study, the research question, the aim and objectives. The chapter ends with a summary of all the chapters found in the report.

1.7.2. Chapter Two: Literature Review

Chapter two presents literature on existing knowledge from various disciplines. This literature seeks to draw attention to the definition of key terminology, an understanding of what a workplace is, generational differences in the workplace, generational workplace expectations, generational performance and motivation, generational engagement in the workplace, challenges experienced and coping strategies. It also provides the theoretical framework used for the study, which includes the Two-Factor theory.

1.7.3. Chapter Three: Methodology

The chapter provides an in-depth understanding and clarity towards the research methodology, which was used for this research. In this chapter the specific instrument, which was utilized for the study is clearly provided and articulated. The chapter provides understanding towards aspects such as the research approach, the research design, the sampling method and the procedure,

which was taken to ensure trustworthiness. The chapter also provides the ethical considerations and limitations of the study.

1.7.4. Chapter Four: Results and Discussion

The chapter presents the findings and the results of the study. The findings are substantiated with the participants voices and existing literature. Moreover, the researcher has presented the findings which emerged making use of the thematic data analysis.

1.7.5. Chapter Five: Main Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations

In the fifth chapter, the researcher presents the main findings, conclusions and the recommendations. The researcher has ensured that the conclusions and the recommendations are provided, which will be based on the findings from the research process as well as evidence indicating how the objective was achieved. Recommendations for both the social work profession and hospitality sector have been provided.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

The chapter provides an opportunity to bring forward previous research and theories, which will assist in framing the research being presented. In this chapter the definition of key terminology, a background of the workforce, existing different generational cohorts found in the workforce, generational expectations in the workplace, and generational ethics and values, are all discussed. The chapter provides an understanding to generational performance and motivation, generational engagement, causes of generational challenges and coping strategies, which are used to deal with workplace challenges. The chapter concludes with a theoretical framework, which is the Hertzberg two-factor theory; this theory will be used to explain the findings of the study. The chapter ends with a summary of the contents discussed.

2.2. DEFINITION OF KEY TERMINOLOGY

The section which follows seeks to provide definition of key terminology which was used within the study. Terminology includes generations, generational relations, performance, workplace expectations, workplace engagement, generational differences, employee relationships and workforce.

2.2.1. Generation

A generation is a recognizable group of people who share the same characteristics, which include birth years, age and significant life events (Smola & Sutton, 2002). It is through a generation where generational groups emerge and these are defined as a group of people who share the same social and historical life experiences. A generational cohort has a culture of their own and in most cases, have different approaches to work ethic, career choices and communication (Gentile, Campbell, & Twenge, 2013 as cited in Campbell, Campbell, Siedor & Twenge, 2015; Baker, 2005). In the discussion that follows members encompassing the Baby Boomer generation and Generation X will be referred to as the older generation, and members encompassing Generation Y will be referred to as the younger generation. An elaboration of each generational group is provided in the chapter; see section 2.4 on generations within the workplace.

2.2.2. Generational Relations

Generational relations are considered to be the interactions found between different generations within a particular setting (Miller & Yu, 2003).

2.2.3. Performance

Performance is the achievement of what is expected of the employee by the organization, however, it has also been defined as the effective ability to carry out duties and responsibilities given to the individual by the individual (Sawitiri, Suswati & Huda, 2016).

2.2.4. Workplace Expectations

These are considered to be "differences between the positive and negative experiences a person faces on the job and what he is expected to encounter" (Claretha, 2012 p.51). Expectations provide a clear understanding of what is expected and provide a clearer understanding towards performance criteria (Claretha, 2012).

2.2.5. Workplace

A workplace is known as a particular setting where an employee provides work to their employer (Heathfield, 2016). It encompasses three aspects which include others, system and self. The other refers to employees, the system refers to policies and procedures found within the workplace, and self refers to the unique individual (Claretha, 2012).

2.2.6. Engagement

Engagement is defined as the employees' willingness and ability to assist his or her company succeed, mostly by providing constant effort on a sustainable basis. It is also defined as the positive attitude held by the employee towards the organization and its value often being linked to the emotional attachment and employees' commitment (Markos & Sridevi, 2010).

2.2.7. Generational Differences

These are the different values, beliefs, attitudes and the characteristics which each generational group encompasses. The representation of the generations is often different because of the

difference in birth years, age, significant life events and also the critical developmental stages (Smola & Sutton, 2002).

2.2.8. Employee Relationships

These refer to the relationships which are shared amongst employees within an organization (Management Study Guide, 2017). In order for positive relationships to emerge employees must learn to adjust to one another by recognizing the diversity which exists amongst them (Management Study Guide, 2017).

2.2.9. Workforce

A workforce is considered to be the total number of people who are employed within a specific context and are able to carry out their work expectations (Collins, 2017).

2.3. UNDERSTANDING THE WORKPLACE

The section below provides an in-depth analysis of what the workplace is. It seeks to provide understanding towards the background of the workplace, the work environment, the occurrence of the workplace and the workplace evolvement within the South African Context.

2.3.1. Background of the workplace

A workplace is considered to be an area where employees, together with their employers, work in order to achieve a shared vision (Pravamayee, 2014). The workplace has a purpose, it outlines human needs and desires for the company's product and service, which it shall ultimately fulfils (Price Water House Coopers, 2016). A healthy workforce is one which ensures that the physical, cultural, psychological entities and work conditions make best use of the health and well-being of providers, and ensures that the performance of the organization is optimized (Pravamayee, 2014). In order for employees to be content and productive in the workplace, it is important that a workplace which fosters a good attitude is upheld, as opposed to one which fosters negative behaviours (Naharuddin & Sadegi, 2013).

2.3.2. Workplace Environment

The workplace environment plays a critical role in ensuring that employees perform successfully as this may influence the employee's morale, fulfilment and productivity (Hamid & Hassan, 2015). A workplace environment is the interrelationships which exist between employees and the environment in which the employee is able to carry out work expectations (Tawio, 2010). A supportive workplace environment has the ability to engage the employee and enhance their satisfaction and performance as opposed to a toxic work environment which fosters deviant behaviour (Hamid & Hassan, 2015). It is important that managers ensure that a workplace which fosters a positive experience is upheld to avoid turnover and cost implications.

Three major aspects which include the technical environment, the human environment and organizational environment are important in understanding the workplace environment (Noah & Steve, 2012). The technical environment includes the technological infrastructure required to assist the employee to accomplish work tasks; the human environment includes peers, clients, management and people that interact with one another; and the organizational environment includes systems and procedures, such as policies and programmes, which seek to establish a good working environment (Noah & Steve, 2012).

An effective work environment is one which upholds certain factors which include trust, mutual respect, and mindfulness, welcoming diversity, open communication and cooperation (Pravamayee, 2014). Furthermore, these aspects are essential in understanding how the culture of the organization will be derived and creates an understanding towards how employees are able to treat one another within the workplace. Therefore, the organizational culture is the norms, beliefs, principles and shared meaning amongst members of the organization which often have a great impact on the experience of the employee within the workplace (Manetje, 2009).

2.3.3. Occurrence of the Workplace

In order for society to be sustained it is important that organizations which contribute to the economy are established. The economy is considered to be the organizations and processes which enable for the delivery of human needs and societal needs (Hagemeier, Spicer, Nadasen, Draper, Thaver & Batley, 2009). Workplaces came about because specific organizations were required to assist people in meeting basic needs, yet, at the same time required the human capital

to assist in fostering those needs (Hagemeier et al., 2009). Maslow argues that human beings are often pressured into fulfilling needs essential for human growth (Chima, 2013; Lingard & Rowlinson, 2005).

Maslow's Hierarchy Needs Theory presumes that the basic needs of people are progressive from simple needs to more complex needs, which should be attained as they have an influence on behaviour; these needs are essential so that human beings are able to sustain and survive (Lingard & Rowlinson, 2005). Through the aspect of being employed and contributing to the workplace this allows for human beings to effectively contribute (Rosdahl & Kowalski, 2008). Workplaces were therefore established to allow people to attain needs, establish capital and contribute to the economy**.**

2.3.4. Workplace involvement in South African context

South Africa's emergence and formalized involvement in the workplace awakened with the discovery of gold in the late 1800s and 1970s, which required extensive manpower to contribute in the economy and engage in the transformation of the workplace (Labour Research Service, n.d.). Although the introduction to the workplace stems from the 1600s where Africans were forced to work on farms in exchange for a wage, it is important to recognise that despite the workplace sector, organizational needs and human needs had to be met (Labour Research Service, n.d.; Hagemeier et al., 2009).

South Africa was confronted by Apartheid which was a system encompassed by social orders of violence, where order was often sustained by repression (Chinguno, 2015). The workplace, during this era, was characterized by racial segregation, practices and discourses, which had an influence on the distributions of occupation, skills, income and power, which were often racially defined and divided (Buhlungu & Webster, n.d.). This had an influence on the interactions and engagement of workers, either being minimal and often non-existent (Von Holdt, 2003). In this era, worker struggles and challenges were often confronted and addressed based on race, and it was through measures of trade unions that workers sought to have these challenges eradicated (Chinguno, 2013).

The eradication of the Apartheid system allowed for the progressive constitution in the country which included new laws and legislations which sought to uphold the rights of those within the

country (Noyoo, 2010). This changed the context of the workplace to be an inclusive and progressive environment where employees together with their employer contributed to the success of the company. However, the Marikana strike which happened in 2012 revealed how poor management of employee challenges, grievances and expectations can impact the employee negatively; and it has shown the negative impact that the employer and the ineffectiveness of the government, has on the worker (Chinguno, 2015). It has shown the challenges which were faced by workers of different ages and ethnic groups not being addressed, however provided a lesson for South African labour relations in the workplace (Chinguno, 2015).

2.4. GENERATIONS IN THE WORKPLACE

The world of work has always encompassed different generations and the differences amongst generations are often confounded by changes in working experience, life stages, career stages and chronological age (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008). It should be recognized that within the workplace there are differences amongst generations which can limit them to a specific personality trait and belief, often which they share as members of the specific generation group (Bowes, 2008). In order for the different generations to work effectively they should understand the differences which exist amongst one another (Sessa, Kabacoff, Deal & Brown, 2007 as cited in Bowes, 2008). Today's workplace encompasses five different generational groups; the Veterans, Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y and Generation Z (Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2007; Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman & Lance, 2010).

It is assumed that the workplace encompasses a majority of Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y members. Specific historical events, circumstances and life cycles and age are motivating factors in dividing generations into specific categories (Pew Research Centre, 2017). Often countries make use of different names on deciding how to identify a specific generation group. In South Africa, the different generational groups include the early Apartheid generation, the Struggle generation and the Born Frees (Mattes & Richmond, 2012). For the purpose of this study the generations will be referred to as the Veterans, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y. It is from this premise that the different generational groups will be discussed in detail in the following section.

2.4.1. Veterans (1925-1945)

Members of the Veteran's generational group have experienced some form of economic and political instability elicited by war and often oppressive situations which were happening in the country at that time (Brennan, 2010; Hendricks & Cope, 2012; Srinvasan, 2012). Often members of this generational group have either retired or are employed as consultants within the workplace, or hold senior positions (Brennan, 2010; Hendricks & Cope, 2012; Srinvasan, 2012). A study done by Armstrong-Stassen (2006) cited in Hendricks & Cope (2012), provides relevant information that employers encourage members of this generation to stay in the workplace so as to prevent a gap of 'brain-dead'. Although this generational group makes up a small percentage in the workplace, they have the most knowledge, work experience and high standard of work (Bosco & Harvey, 2013). Their workplace values include hard work, loyalty and respect (Bartley, Ladd & Morris, 2007; Milligan, 2014).

2.4.2. Baby Boomers (1946-1964)

Baby Boomers comprise of people born during the years 1946-1964 and have experienced post war stress and social change movements aimed at bettering conditions and lives of people in society (Srinvasan, 2012). Members of this generational group are seen to have a significant impact on the workplace because of the extensive knowledge and experience which they encompass; however, they are seen to be highly competitive compared to other generational groups (Bosco & Harvey, 2013). This generational group prefers to work with other individuals and of course prefer to make decisions which are based on consensus (The Scoop on Recruiting, 2007 as cited in Bosco & Harvey, 2013). Baby Boomers main focus is seen to be their career, and a good majority is still working and plan to continue working (Young, Struts, Ross & Kim, 2013).

2.4.3. Generation X (1965-1980)

Generation X is that sector of the population born between 1965 and 1980 (Brennan, 2010), raised in homes which encompassed instability, insecurity and diversity (Smola & Sutton, 2002). Individuals that encompass this generational group often interact and relate well with other generations, and this is because of the effective interpersonal skills and communication they exhibit (Omana & Collective HR Solutions Inc., 2016). Previous research done by Karp et al.

(2002) cited in Young et al. (2013), makes several interesting points that this generational group recognises the importance of work-life balance, which includes putting family and friends first, and then their work second. This generational group has also been the first to be exposed to computers and the use of internet within the workplace; in some instances, they are regarded as the generation which was forced to fend for themselves (Bowes, 2012). Generation X encompasses characteristics such as practical knowledge; recognising diversity, and value work-life balance within the workplace (Gursoy, Geng-Qung Chi & Karadag, 2013).

2.4.4. Generation Y (1980-1994)

Generation Y were born between 1980 and 1994, grew up in a time encompassed by parents being protective yet encouraging (Toblize, 2008). This generational group is considered to be the most diverse and tends to accept diversity as it comes within the workplace (Young et al., 2013). Generation Y members easily adapt to change and more importantly recognise the importance of challenging assumption more of their own than others, developing new knowledge and career moves being of importance (Hendricks & Cope, 2012). A study, which was done by the Briefings Media Group (2013) shows that individuals who are born from this generational group often portray discomfort especially when taking risks. In the light of this, it has been shown that members of this group are not subtle and are shy to raise their opinions and concerns in the workplace (Bowes, 2012). Generation Y portray characteristics such as being optimistic, driven, independent and being sociable (Tolbize, 2008).

2.4.5. Generation Z (1995-present)

Generation Z comprises those born after 1995, however not much research related to the workplace has been established about this generational group (Johnson & Johnson, 2010). This generational group has recently arrived into the workplace and some members of this generational group are completing their studies (Omana & Collective HR Solutions Inc., 2016). It can be said that a limited number of people from this generational group with extensive experience, are found within the workplace. Generation Z is seen to be more technologically advanced than their generational counterparts (Johnson & Johnson, 2010).

It would appear that differences in generations should be recognised so that effective approaches, which appeal to these generations and meet their needs are established (Young et al., 2013). Van

Rensburg (2013) argues that it is important to consider that not every member of a specific generational group will exhibit characteristics and expectations encompassed by their generational group. This supports the notion of diversity amongst people and individualization that people are shaped by their backgrounds and life experiences, most importantly; factors such as culture, religion, socio-economic class and ethnicity will influence their thoughts and behaviours (Sheafor & Horejsi, 2012). This shows that employees will have different expectations which they find when entering the workplace.

Table 2.1: Summary of Generations found in the workplace

	Veterans	**Baby Boomers**	**Generation X**	**Generation Y**
Outlook	Practical	Optimistic	Sceptical	Hopeful
Born	1925-1945	1946-1964	1965-1980	1980-2000
Work Ethic	Dedicated	Driven	Balanced	Ambitious
View of Authority	Respectful	Love/Hate	Unimpressed	Relaxed/Polite
Leadership by	Hierarchy	Consensus	Competence	Achievement
Relationships	Self-sacrifice	Personal Gratification	Reluctance to commit	Loyal and inclusive
Perspectives	Civic-minded	Team orientated	Self-reliant	Civic-minded
Turn Offs	Vulgarity	Political Incorrectness	Hype	Cynicism

Adopted from: ***Generational Perspectives (aarp.org, 2007) as cited in Arellano (2015).***

2.5. GENERATIONAL EXPECTATIONS OF THE WORKPLACE

The generations existing in the workplace have specific needs and expectations. Angeline (2011) demonstrates that some members of the different generational groups often expect other generations to understand and recognise the differences which they encompass, their needs and expectations of the workplace, which can often be a challenge. Nevertheless, workplace expectations have shown to provide a clue to what employees find motivating and whether that motivation is provided (Claretha, 2012).

It is important that expectations are included in the vision, mission and goals of the organization because employees will have an understanding of what structural goals they are working towards. Furthermore, it has been shown that they have an influence on employee performance and organizational success (Lovallo & Kahneman, 2003 as cited Claretha, 2012). These expectations are influenced by the perceived potential outcome and reward when entering the job. Perceived performance and belief of performing at a particular level bring rewards such as development and growth, and finally the effort being put into the job (Claretha, 2012). These are often influenced by internal and external drivers within the organization (Phillips & Connell, 2004). Work expectations discussed below include; knowledge and skills transfer, opportunities for innovation, as well as attractive financial incentives.

2.5.1. Knowledge and Skills Transfer

The desire to learn is evident in different generations found within the workplace. The ability of older and younger generations to impart knowledge to one another has been seen to be essential in small, medium and large companies, where if one group leaves without imparting knowledge to the other generation it may lead to catastrophic consequences (Boittin & Theys, 2014). Productivity, development and the need to learn have been considered to be the paramount expectation which employees have when entering the workplace and often influence their retention (Levitt & Harwood, 2009). The lack of productivity on the other hand results in a decrease in performance and often results in job loss or resignation by the employee (Levitt & Harwood, 2009).

The transfer of knowledge is often possible through socialization where the younger generation and the older generation are able to transfer their knowledge, values and norms as well as practice; this allows for the maintaining of the social system (Djabi & Shimada, 2013). Learning enables different generational groups to advance their knowledge, improve their skills, and often at times improve their performance (Cureton, 2014). Therefore, when the older and younger generation are provided the opportunity of working together and exchanging knowledge, this result in a positive impact for employees and often advances their performance in the workplace and the social interactions which exist (Foss, Minbaeva & Pedersen, 2009).

It has been shown that the need to learn is an important expectation for employees because it provides them with job security (Phillips & Connell, 2004). In addition to obtaining skills through learning, employees often feel the need to grow and develop their skills in that organization. However, when employees feel this is not happening, they often leave or make use of withdrawal behaviour (Phillips & Connell, 2004). Through the provision of learning and growth opportunities employees are able to be satisfied and retained accordingly because of the possibility of using skills acquired in their jobs (Gronfeldt & Strother, 2005).

In a study done by Woog (2017), it can be said that younger generation are able to educate the older generations about the importance of diversity, being technologically advanced, and having the ability to balance their work demands and life. In this case it is argued that each generation is able to receive and impart knowledge from the other which is essential for their personal and professional development (Cerny, 2015). Moreover, that age does not appear to be an obstacle when different generations are establishing relationships, the differences between generations enables for solidarity and belonging which is continuously transformed (Vendramin, 2009). Hence, it is important that the workplace invests in the technical skills, social, innovative skills, and promotes the relationship between the employer and the employee so that employees can also feel as though they are able to benefit from their workplace (Kombo, Obonyo & Oloko, 2013).

2.5.2. Opportunities for Innovation

The opportunities for continued growth have been seen to stimulate a work force (Hess, 2012). Therefore, it is the onus of an employer to ensure that personal and professional growth is provided. Younger employees have been seen to value opportunities which foster growth, therefore the harnessing of their energy is important (Sonnet & Zerbarini, 2001). When training is provided it can be used to encourage growth, attract and retain employees, and this enables employees to do more with less supervision (Sonnet & Zerbarini, 2001). Organizations often have different expressions which show that they provide opportunities for advancing their employees; this is often shown through educational opportunities, promotions and giving small gifts as means of appreciation (Hess, 2012).

Professional and personal development has been seen to enhance the happiness of the employee and the fulfilment which they require to be complete human beings (Senge, 2010). For younger generations growing assists them in learning about major assets and long-term growth areas which they have to take into account (Aslop, 2008). The younger generations have been seen to focus on career growth and development, whereas the older generation sees the importance of being retained (Aslop, 2008). Most employees value the aspect of growth and opportunities; this shows that employees do want to be engaged and perform well; however, opportunities should be fostered for them to exercise this (Bach & Edwards, 2012).

The provision of growth and development opportunities often results in organizational success; however, when there is a decrease in such opportunities, it is highly unlikely that employees will be engaged and perform well (Kombo, Obonyo & Oloko, 2013). Employees who feel that there is a limitation to opportunities for career advancement within the workplace may be exposed to a decrease in satisfaction (Kombo, Obonyo & Oloko, 2013). It is therefore important that the advancement, growth and development of employees are paramount as it can allow them to change their perspective of their working environment. Employees, irrespective of their age, have factors which can actually lead to enthusiasm and often discouragement, and growth is an aspect which results in satisfaction (Thompson, 1996).

2.5.3. Attractive Financial Incentives

Great financial rewards have been seen to be important for employees as they motivate them and often at times encourage them to be retained (Lawson, 1998). However, it has also been shown that financial incentives are not enough to generate a highly motivated workplace (Hess, 2012). Often when an employee, irrespective of their age, takes on a new job, their salary becomes an entitlement (Hess, 2012). Although employees cannot be rewarded the same within any working environment, employers are encouraged to be fair to employees more especially on the salaries which they receive (Lawson, 1998). In order for this to be achieved it is important that employees are provided salaries which are equal or slightly similar to employees who encompass the same or similar skills, and are working in the same or similar industry (APME, Classe, Thal, Kamen & Rounds, 2004).

Attractive financial incentives are important because they allow for employees to attain their needs; they communicate the value of the organization and acts as an estimate for employees in their career success (Jex & Britt, 2014). When employees feel that they have been underpaid they become less engaged and often they become less satisfied with their current work place (APME et al., 2004). Salaries which are attractive provide an indication of what the employer values and sees in their employees (Snell & Bohlander, 2012). Often employers fail to make use of strategic compensation which places an emphasis on paying employees as they perform; often through attractive year-end bonuses (Snell & Bohlander, 2012).

Paying employees for their performance not only increases their performance and engagement, but allows them to feel appreciated and recognised by their employer (APME et al., 2004). Recognition helps the individual to feel good about themselves, the company and also their employer (Sonnet & Zerbarini, 2001). This has been shown to ensure that workers are effectively retained and attract more of them through word of mouth which stems from job satisfaction (Sonnet & Zerbarini, 2001). It should be however, recognised that the organization should use their capital effectively while recognising the importance of salaries as a factor of retaining the employee and making them satisfied (Baldwin, 2003).

2.6. GENERATIONAL ETHICS AND VALUES

Workplace ethics are defined as the set of beliefs, standards, principles and often rules, which reflect the fundamental value of work (Meriac, Woehr & Banister, 2010). When workplace ethics are enforced effectively it helps generational groups to understand what the preferred way to behave is, to understand what is found to be appropriate and inappropriate (Sharma, 2013). For example, employees tend to look for employers who treat all workers fairly, encompass dignity, respect them, provide job security, pay well and are also honest with them (McConnell, 2016).

Workplace conduct and etiquette are considered to be important expectations for employees and their employers within the workforce. Proper behaviour and conduct in the workplace has been regarded to be important because it shows that the individual values their job, their co-workers and client system (Levitt & Harwood, 2009). It has been shown that etiquette refers to behaviour and conduct, and often it requires respect and fair treatment of employees. In some instances,

employees have provided differences of what it entails (Levitt & Harwood, 2009). Respect, fair treatment and trust are regarded as being important for employees because they build their co-worker relationships on these aspects (Wiley & Kowske, 2011). Held (2006) argues that it is also important to recognise the interdependence of people and putting caring for others as a priority, respecting and treating them with dignity as being essential for a co-operative working environment.

It is important to recognise that ethical training for employees is important, as workplace ethics reflect what is learnt, specific attitudes and behaviours are multi-dimensional, are circular and not tied to any religious beliefs (Meriac, Woehr & Banister, 2010). Often it has been shown that Traditionalists have a positive view of ethics, often fearing retaliation, as they value traditional morals; Baby Boomers often address questionable behaviours in the workplace and are most responsive to ethics (Danklefsen & Meyer, 2015). Generation X members are often prepared for problems and concerns, and ensure that they make use of people in power to resolve any ethical concerns which may arise (Danklefsen & Meyer, 2015); whereas generation Y members have fewer boundaries and are flexible in ethics, they are often compliant to ethics only when executed effectively through support and social interaction (Danklefesn & Meyer, 2015).

Verschoor & Mertz (n.d.) have hypothesized that companies can make use of different approaches to ensure that each generational group adheres to ethical standards and have an understanding of what company ethics constitute. Veterans and Baby Boomers prefer to be communicated about the policies which highlight ethical standards and feel comfortable when there is a platform provided to share ethical conducts and dilemmas (Danklefsen & Meyer, 2015). Generation X members prefer also to be communicated with through the use of policies and also the provision of supervision; and members of the Generation Y prefer constructive feedback and interactive discussions (Danklefsen & Meyer, 2015; Ethics Resource Centre, 2013).

As much as ethics are important within the workplace, it is also important to pay attention to what different generations value. Intergenerational differences have certainly proven that generations share common work and organizational values, however, they exhibit differences in generational values (Meyers & Sadaghiani, 2010). Generational values are the shared expectations and standards held by a specific generation, and these ultimately guide what is

considered to be acceptable or non-acceptable (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008). These differences often influence attitudes, beliefs, communication, engagement, language, learning, performance, productivity levels, social integration and interaction, as well as the adopted style of working (Bright, 2010; Giles, 2003; Singh, 2014). Hess & Jespen (2009) show that each generation exhibit different characteristics within the workplace, due to the historical and social contexts which have influenced and shaped them. This may certainly result in generations being comfortable with members of their own generational group rather than members of other generational groups (Singh, 2014). It is through understanding generational differences that effective measures can be put in place to manage each generational group (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008).

The difference in values shows that each generational group has certain expectations and these influence established relations (Lieber, 2010). Relations are often influenced by seeking different work expectations and these are motivated by access to opportunities, different personalities, socialization and values (Bright, 2010). Zemke's et al. (2000) findings support this idea as they have shown that Baby Boomers often respect authority and hierarchy, while Generation Y tends to challenge authority figures. Veterans don't seek to be removed from familiar settings and Generation Z are still finding their way in the workplace (Bright, 2010; Gursoy et al., 2008; Karpus & Johnson, 2015). It is through acknowledging and meeting commonalities between employees that will be beneficial in creating an effective multigenerational workplace (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008).

2.7. GENERATIONAL PERFORMANCE AND MOTIVATION

Having knowledge on generational differences and performance in the workplace will ultimately provide human resource professionals and managers the executive tools to improve the organizational outcomes and development (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008 as cited in Duquesnoy, 2011). Performance underlines three areas which include job performance, task performance and contextual performance. Job performance is considered to be the aspect of activities performed by the individual; task performance refers to the behaviour which is related to the work, and contextual performance is seen as the good behaviours which create a good social environment within the workplace (Zhu, Yang & Bai, 2016). All these three aspects are considered important

for the execution of work expectations and the ability to have the enthusiasm when executing such tasks (Zhu, Yang & Bai, 2016).

It has been identified that when employers are supportive and treat their employees equally this can result in improved performance in the organization (Nguyen, Dang & Nguyen, 2015). Maingi & Makori (2015) argue that there are certain features of performance which affect the manner in which employees are able to perform. These include salary level, learning more skills through others; the level of skills, employee training and exposure and team-work. It is therefore important that a good working environment is created because better working environments motivate employees to work even better therefore increasing their performance (Nguyen, Dang & Nguyen, 2015).

The ability to perform well has been seen to link with motivation. Motivation is defined as the process that sustains and regulates the behaviour of a person to continue doing what they desire (Forges, 2014). When people motivate themselves from within rather than expect external rewards, this can lead to an increase in performance and achievement of goals within any context (Coon & Mitterer, 2012). The aspect of employee performance shows that work motivation is central to performance followed by work capability and opportunity (Ivancevich et al. 2005 as cited by Pandza et al., 2015).

An intrinsic motivation is based on the internal aspects of the individual and is less tangible, whereas extrinsic motivation is based on the external aspects and is more tangible (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Intrinsic motivators which increase performance include healthy relationships with others; meaningful work, progress and choice, extrinsic motivators include money, benefits, promotions, the inspiration of a good leader and other inspirational people (Buchbinder & Shanks, 2011). People have been seen to be more motivated by other factors and not just money, as it motivates to a particular point (Buchbinder & Shanks, 2011). Different generational groups have been seen to be motivated by different aspects. The table below provides an outline of the different motivational factors for each generational group.

Table 2.2: The table below outlines intrinsic and extrinsic factors essential in engaging employees

Intrinsic Motivators	Extrinsic Motivators
Relationship with co-workers	Organizational Policies
Relationship with managers	Training and career development
Employee's well-being	Compensation
	Work environment

Source: Bergstrom & Martinez (2016).

Often performance increases when some of these factors are met. However, it decreases when there is an absence of these factors. There are different strategies which should be used to help motivate employees and improve their working environment such as rewarding employees, providing recognition, compliments, encouraging and including measures which help them learn (Buchbinder & Shanks, 2011). When there is accurate motivation, this enables both older and younger generations the opportunity of working together and exchange knowledge. This results in a positive impact for employees and often advances their performance in the workplace and the social interactions because they are able to learn from one another (Foss et al., 2009).

The understanding and recognition of motivation shows that performance can be improved only when employees are motivated and opportunities are created (Furnham & MacRae, 2017). However, team work and co-operation, is where a team is a group of people who encompass skills and are committed to a common purpose, have common performance goals and hold one another mutually accountable (McKinlay & Williamsam, 2010). When employees and employers are able to sit down and discuss issues, this allows for a cooperative working environment which is able to work through concerns which affect and negatively influence the performance of employees (Tarricone & Luca, 2002). A good team has been shown to improve performance and also establish good human relationships, and because of the work activities and the tasks which exist, they are confronted with communicating with one another and how they engage with one another (Spaho, 2011).

Generational Group	Veterans	Baby Boomers	Generation X	Generation Y
Motivating Factors	• Loyalty • Status • Recognition and Hard Work	• When employers treat them equally • Work life Balance • When assured that they are making a difference in the workplace.	• Training and growth opportunities • Genuine managers • Flexibility	• Achievements • Personal Fulfilment in a job • Collaboration & positive interactions • Support and Coaching

Table 2.3. Motivators for each generational group adopted from American Hospital Association, 2010 as cited in Buchbinder & Shanks (2011).

2.8. GENERATIONAL ENGAGEMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

Engagement has been considered to be the situation whereby employees are able to find their work meaningful and are passionate about what they do and willing to achieve personal and career benefits and goals (Hoole & Bonnema, 2015). This definition is further supported by Abercrombie (2014), who regards engagement to be a construct which entails a positive, fulfilling and a work-related state of mind. Engagement between generations has been regarded as a good indicator in determining the organizational outcomes and success (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2008; Bakker et al., 2007; Schaufeli, 2013 as cited in Hoole & Bonnema, 2015). This is because it shows how employees have the passion and energy to serve their organization (Cook, 2008). Sinha and Trivedi (2014 p.22), put forward the idea that a "high level of employee engagement in an organization leads to employee retention, improved performance, increased customer loyalty and increased stakeholder satisfaction".

In Abercrombie (2014) terms, engagement is based on three aspects which include dedication, vigour and absorption. The aspect of dedication refers to the enthusiasm, the pride and the

inspiration that one has towards their work (Abercrombie, 2014). Vigour refers to the aspect of energy and the high levels which are evident to do the work, where absorption refers to being captivated in the work that you do as an individual (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004 as cited by Abercrombie, 2014). Mula (2014) adds that engagement is based on safety, availability and meaningfulness.

Previous studies have shown that there are specific needs which are required for employees in order for them to be fully engaged within the workplace (Abercrombie, 2014; Mula, 2014; Sinha & Trivedi, 2014). These include encouragement through growth and development, work-life balance, belief in the organization, recognition, being cared about as a person, attractive incentives, clear job expectations, resources for effective work performance and opportunities to use and acquire skills (Sinha & Trivedi, 2014). It has been identified that more fundamentals influence and determine the engagement of employees in the workplace and therefore having a positive influence on the performance of employees (Hoffman, Lesser & Ringo, 2012). These fundamentals are included below:

- **Work design:** meets the company objectives
- **Training and development activities:** recognizes the importance of supporting knowledge and skills within the workplace and additional skills which may be required for the future.
- **Leadership:** which strengthens and motivates employees; which recognizes that employees should be treated fairly and should be acknowledged.
- **Culture of the organization**: the behaviour in that workplace ensures that people are encouraged to show positive behaviour and are supported effectively.
- **Employee needs:** the workplace recognizes the needs that the employees have and should be effectively met.

Hoffman, Lesser and Ringo (2012), argue that if the workplace provides these aspects then employees will most likely be engaged within their workplace and in turn perform well. Engagement often stems from appreciation and motivation received and portrayed further, influencing and affecting performance (Abercrombie, 2014). The above-mentioned factors show that in order to be completely engaged the individual should be satisfied with his or her work and

also his or her career opportunities (Rice, Marlow & Masarech, 2012). Employees who do not feel valued and appreciated are less likely to demonstrate effective service in the organization (Cook, 2008). A company which has disengaged employees show certain characteristics which include:

- Poor communication
- Increased employee stress
- High staff turnover
- Increase in absenteeism or late coming
- Employee avoidance or fighting
- Badly communicated company values
- Loss of interest in work expectations
- Poor performance

This shows that employee engagement is about the enthusiasm which employees bring to the workplace. It is important that any workplace has employees who believe in their workplace and have the energy to assist the organization to meet its goals; otherwise this will lead to challenges in the workplace (Cook, 2008). In this instance, it can be said that showing employees that they are valued in the workplace is imperative for a highly engaged work force (Hamidullah, 2015).

A study done by Shuck et al. (2011) as cited in Mula (2014), has shown that management often has an influence towards the engagement of employees within the company. It can be said that a management style and leadership style within the workforce can either positively or negatively affect the employees' engagement (Mula, 2014). If management makes use of a style which engages one generational group, then this will have a negative impact on the other generational group (Mula, 2014). It has also been shown that companies often want what is best for their employees, however, may have poor strategies on executing this. This has been seen to negatively affect the engagement of employees within the workplace (Alam, Saeed, Sahabuddin & Akter, 2013).

When employees feel that there is a lack of recognition, a lack of performance is more evident and prominent in employees (Alam et al., 2013). It is therefore essential that management incorporates aspects, which include effective support for employees so that they can engage

accordingly within the workplace (Cureton, 2014). In this case employees are able to exhibit positive feelings which were associated with helping others and portraying care for others, and more especially enjoying the work that they do (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). The existence of workplace trust, fair relationships and interactions results in more engaged employees (Okello & Gilson, 2015). This is because often co-workers have shown to have the ability to enhance the performance and engagement of employees as they are able to add enjoyment in the workplace (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Although there are differences in generations it can be said that co-worker support is essential and has an influence on whether or not employees will be engaged.

Studies on generational engagement in the workplace completed in the international context such as Asia, America, Europe and Latin America argue that Baby Boomers appear to be more engaged than other generations, whereas studies done in Africa have shown that Generation Y members are more engaged than the other generations (Holle & Bonnema, 2015). Previous studies in South Africa have shown that older generations exhibit a higher engagement in the workplace than the other generations (Coetzee and De Villiers, 2010 as cited in Hoole & Bonnema, 2015). While the aspect of engagement appears to be important in the workplace to meet certain employee needs, attention should also be placed on the challenges faced by different generations.

2.9. CAUSES OF GENERATIONAL CHALLENGES IN THE WORKPLACE

When different generations work together it has been speculated that issues and concerns may arise because each generational group has different attributes, skills and attitudes, which they bring into the workplace (Bosco & Harvey, 2013). The inability of organizations to maintain and create effective workplace environments often perpetuates the lack of effective interactions (Applebaum, Serena & Shapiro, 2004; Twenge & Campbell, 2008). The discussion of the challenges experienced by the different generations within the workplace will be divided into three areas which include generational challenges, organizational challenges and structural factors leading to challenges experienced.

2.9.1. <u>Generational challenges</u>

These challenges are often prominent amongst the different generations found within the workplace. Although there are other challenges which include language barriers (Singh, 2014;

Farrell & Holkner, 2006), difficulty in effective socialization (Meyers & Sadaghiani, 2010), flexibility (Tolbize, 2008), ineffective work place engagement (Richman et al, 2008; Wong, Gardiner, Lang & Coulon, 2008), it is important to understand the predominant generational challenges which exist. These include negative stereotypes, communication style, conflict and often cultural expectations (Gausepohl, 2016; Singh, 2014).

2.9.1.1. ***Negative Stereotypes***

Generational stereotypes often emerge as workers have pre-conceived notions and biases about another generational group (Du, 2011). Often these stereotypes come about when another generational group is being judgmental towards the other and fails to understand the difference which that particular generation encompasses. This becomes a challenge because it undermines the contribution which the employee will make within the workplace and the effective collaboration which should exist amongst employees (Blauth, McDaniel, Perrin & Perrin, 2011). Younger generations are stereotyped to be less experienced and knowledgeable, whereas the older generation has been stereotyped as being lazy and often too difficult to train (Gausepohl, 2016; Blauth et al., 2011).

2.9.1.2. ***Communication Style***

Effective communication is essential for the workplace; however, when poor communication is evident this results in a challenge. Different generational groups have different methods of communicating (Singh, 2014; Farrell & Holkner, 2006). This becomes a challenge as it shows that adjustments should often be made in terms of approaching and communicating with the specific generation (Cruz, n.d.). The older generations prefer phone calls and often at times electronic mail, where the younger generation prefers informal language such as colloquial or even slang, which may establish specific language barriers (Gausepohl, 2016).

2.9.1.3. ***Conflict***

In some cases, conflict has also been described as a workplace challenge which employees encounter. Conflict breaks down interpersonal relationships between employees and employers (Mayer, 2015). It is a challenge because it affects the performance of employees, more especially their engagement (Mayer, 2015). Generational conflict often arises because of the differences in

generational values, behavioural patterns and communication (Deyoue & Fox, n.d). With an increase in generational conflict there will be a possibility of a decrease in a collaborative and cohesive work environment (Deyoue & Fox, n.d.).

2.9.1.4. ***Organizational Culture***

Organizational culture may be a challenge for the different generations within the workplace. This often results in resistance from the specific generations, more especially if the organization does not uphold the same values and beliefs which the employee has. Gausepohl (2016) argues that the younger generations seek a workplace which will enable them to learn and develop; however, if this is not provided this results in resistance and the changing of jobs. Therefore, the culture of the organization plays a major role in the experience that one will have within the working context (Gausepohl, 2016).

2.9.2. Organizational Challenges

These challenges are encompassed around the aspects which affect employees within the workplace. These challenges are often elicited within the workplace and normally happen within the premise of the company or organization. These include bullying, poor treatment, discrimination and harassment.

2.9.2.1. ***Bullying***

Bullying has been considered to be a common workplace challenge. Bullying often arises when negative actions are experienced and the individual does not know what to do in order to defend themselves against such actions (Peyton, 2003). Bullying is not just an interpersonal matter, it takes place in organizations and often perpetuates when nothing is done about it. Often at times bullying can be underestimated. It can have detrimental effects on the individual which can lead to anxiety, powerlessness, dismay and often feelings of revenge (Randle, 2006). Some working environments may have bullying behaviours as a norm which makes it a challenge to defend (Randle, 2006).

2.9.2.2. ***Poor Treatment from Managers***

Poor treatment from managers has also been considered to be a challenge as it results in an increase in absenteeism, turnover and disruptive behaviour (Lagen-Fox, Cooper & Klimoski, 2007). When managers or supervisors exercise coercive power towards employees this can result in employees becoming resentful, vengeful and often disruptive (Lagen-Fox, Cooper & Klimoski, 2007).

2.9.2.3. ***Discrimination***

Discrimination is considered to be the act where the attachment of value judgments to differentiate people and treat them unfairly is practiced (Conely & Wright, 2016). Often people are discriminated against due to their religion, race, gender, sexuality, age, belief and disability (Du Plessis, 1990). When discrimination is not effectively addressed it may lead to victimization and often harassment (Conely & Wright, 2016). Some argue that race in South Africa will remain a discriminatory challenge within the workplace because of the political past of the country. This shows that despite progressive laws which seek to protect people more work still needs to be done to eradicate discrimination within the workplace (Noyoo, 2010).

2.9.2.4. ***Harassment***

Sexual harassment is one of the most common workplace challenges which employees face within South Africa. This is because harassment is considered unethical and unprofessional, and should be dealt with accordingly (Picco, 2017). Harassment is a serious workplace offense. It not only affects the employees but also the environment (Du Plessis, 1990). It can result in the increase of costs when not addressed and dealt with accordingly (Du Plessis, 1990), the productivity, morale and the motivation of the employee, which will most likely decrease (Du Plessis, 1990).

2.9.3. External Structural Challenges

The external challenges which employees face within the wider social and economic environment poses as a challenge to the workplace. The structural challenges which will be discussed include job insecurity, social inequality and personal concerns.

2.9.3.1. ***Job insecurity***

The well-being of any individual is often hampered by the thought of unemployment and the unstable economy within South Africa (De Witte, 2005). Job insecurity is a common challenge which employees experience as it is often caused by the fundamental changes within the economic system (De Witte, 2005). Often employees question themselves about their future within the company, more especially if they have been employed on a contract basis. This is because the thought of losing their own jobs due to aspects such as restricting and downsizing caused by the unstable economy (Probst & Brubaker, 2001) is a reality. This challenge often results in increased negative health with outcomes such as hypertension, depression and often withdrawal behaviour (Probst & Brubaker, 2001).

2.9.3.2. ***Social Inequality***

Social inequality is often a challenge which some employees face, because it shows the disparity between opportunities, resources, assets, money and jobs (Hagemier et al., 2009). Provided opportunities open up for the poor, it can be argued that there is a strong relationship between the choices these people make, and how they are influenced by the economic factors (Bernheim et al., 2013 as cited in Sibanyoni, 2014). The limitations of the workplace, and the limited opportunities it provides, will often have power against the employee, unless they change their perceptions to succeed and become better within the workplace (Sibanyoni, 2014). This means that employees will often find themselves settling for any job due to the desperation of meeting basic needs so to avoid poverty (Sibanyoni, 2014).

2.9.3.3. ***Personal Concerns***

Challenges include the inability to deal with divorce, rape, custody battles, grief, bullying, and often domestic violence, or HIV/AIDS (Harrison, 2009). The inability to effectively deal with stress can often lead to other serious workplace concerns such as substance abuse, disempowered employees, depression, anxiety, withdrawal signs and anger (Du Plessis, 1990). Often this can result in employees being frequently absent from work. When such concerns are dealt with accordingly, this can result in employees being highly satisfied, productive and engaged (Bouwer, 2009). As a result, such personal concerns can often lead to mental health issues, and coping strategies should be adopted to deal with such issues when they arise.

2.10. COPING STRATEGIES IN THE WORKPLACE

In general, an employee's experience challenges and the presence of different generations increase the level of challenges faced. Comforts are situations and provisions made to ensure that different generations are able to effectively engage with one another (Hahn, 2011; Tolbize, 2008). Although not much attention has been placed on the form of coping strategies which different generations make use of when faced with challenges, the internal and external strategies employed by employees will be discussed.

2.10.1. Internal Coping Strategy

Internal coping strategies involve coping with the situation internally whereas external strategies involve making use of external factors to help in solving the concern (Kim, 2008). Addressing workplace challenges enhances not only the well-being of the employee, but also that of the organization. Studies have shown that work seeks to bring about a positive impact on the individual and this includes: establishing a sense of belonging, creating self-identity and creating positive social aspects (Nattrass, 2004). This is seldom achieved if there are no provisions made by the company or organization to create a friendly working environment (Van Der Walt & Du Plessis, 2010). Although not much attention has been provided on how employees internally cope with challenges which they face within the workplace, for the purpose of the study, a common aspect utilized will be discussed, which is employee withdrawal behaviour.

2.10.1.1. *Employee Withdrawal Behaviour*

Withdrawal behaviour is when an employee distances themselves from a situation, which they perceive to be stressful or even makes them feel uncomfortable (Somers, 2009). It has been seen to represent disengagement and it provides an indication of how the individual feels about the organization at that particular moment (Somers, 2009). Withdrawal behaviour often arises because employees are uncomfortable with expressing their concerns, therefore often being silent and lacking expression about what is bothering them (Graen & Linden, 1982).

Although some studies indicate that withdrawal behaviour constitutes deviant behaviour such as late coming or an increase in absenteeism, it is important to recognise that such workplace stressors perpetuate such deviant behaviour (Bowling & Escheleman, 2010). Withdrawing has

been seen to negatively affect the performance of the employee (Sliter, Sliter & Jex, 2013). Cook (2008) argues that employee withdrawal often results in employees who are not engaged.

2.10.2. External Coping Strategies

The external coping strategies which are normally employed within the workplace include communication, co-worker support, and the use of external service providers as means of dealing with challenges which employees face.

2.10.2.1. *Communication*

Communication cannot be separated from human relations. It is essential because it's a method which enables employees and employers to communicate specific tasks, share information and thoughts, as well as meeting organizational needs and goals (Turner, 2003). When employees are able to communicate with one another, the relevant stakeholders and management, this allows for certain workplace challenges, such as conflict, to be eradicated. Through effective communication employees can then ensure that they are able to deal with challenges accurately and effectively (Waldron & Kassing, 2010). When employees, together with employers, are able to sit down and discuss issues, this allows for a cooperative working environment (Tarricone & Luca, 2002). This often works effectively when people are able to contribute, listen to concerns, and seek solutions as a team (Tarricone & Luca, 2002).

2.10.2.2. *Co-Worker Support*

Often receiving support from fellow co-workers has been considered to be a coping strategy within the workplace. Co-worker support is essential, because co-workers are often willing to assist each other, share information, ideas, and feedback and often provide mutual support for one another (Tse & Dasborough, 2008). Co-worker support is often a coping strategy used because it allows employees to establish comfortable interpersonal relationships with others; it further enables for a decrease in workplace stress, as well as a decrease in absenteeism (Yang, Shen, Zhu, Liu, Deng, Chen & See, 2015). It allows employees to be fully engaged in the aspects of their current workplace and also enhances their relations with other employees (Yang et al., 2015).

2.10.2.3. ***External Service Providers***

Often employees are able to make use of external service providers which can assist in dealing with workplace challenges they encounter. Working environments which provide wellness programmes provide the platform for employees to effectively deal with such challenges, and allows for management to understand the concerns which employees face (Employee Assistance Professionals Associations, 2005).

2.10.3. OCCUPATIONAL SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTIONS

Employees can use specific interventions that are provided by occupational social workers which include restorative interventions that place emphasis on serving the employee and assisting them to cope with workplace challenges. Further promotive interventions which pay attention to enhancing the social functioning and well-being of clients through training, preventative measures and developmental measures (Van Breda, 2009) can also be put in place. Work-person interventions which pay attention to the employee as a person, looking at issues within the workplace which affect the employee, and workplace interventions which look into focusing on the organization to change the social environments which employees work in (Van Breda & Du Plessis, 2009) can also be focussed on. Through the use of such interventions, employees are helped to cope with such challenges.

2.11. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: THE TWO FACTOR THEORY

The Two-Factor Theory has received much attention in the past and present years as it provides an understanding of factors which lead to job satisfaction or job dissatisfaction (Gaziel, 2001). The theory shows that the values which lead to job satisfaction are completely different to those which lead to dissatisfaction (Evans & Olumide-Aluko, 2010). Hertzberg highlighted that the positive events were linked to intrinsic factors, whereas the negative events were linked to the absence of extrinsic factors (Gaziel, 2001). The theory proposes that when satisfying factors decrease this could result in a neutral phase of satisfaction, but not necessarily dissatisfaction. However, if factors causing dissatisfaction are significantly reduced this can lead to a neutral phase of dissatisfaction and not dissatisfaction (Evans & Olumide-Aluko, 2010). The theory further shows that job satisfaction increases because of intrinsic motivational factors, however job dissatisfaction can be prevented using extrinsic motivational factors (Gaziel, 2001).

The theory stipulates that job satisfaction for employees is built by ensuring that there are motivational factors evident within the workplace (Thompson, 1996). Motivational factors, also known as satisfiers, include: achievement, advancement, works itself, responsibility, growth and recognition (Lussier, 2008). This allows for job enrichment which is defined as the process whereby the individual feels that their job is fulfilling and provides the adequate prospects for development and growth (Nelson & Quick, 2013). Motivational factors have been seen to lead to positive mental health. Further providing a challenge for people to grow allows for people to accurately contribute to their work environment, and most importantly allows them to invest themselves in their workplace (Nelson & Quick, 2013).

The theory also recognizes that the motivation will sometimes come from outside the job (Lussier, 2008). These factors include salary, organizational policies, and job security, working conditions, interpersonal relationships, benefits and supervision (Thompson, 1996; Lussier, 2008). These factors have been seen to prevent employees from being dissatisfied. These factors are not seen to affect the motivation of the individual directly, and most importantly, they are not seen to stimulate growth or human development (Nelson & Quick, 2013). It is also important that these factors show that their presence results in the absence of dissatisfaction (Thompson, 1996).

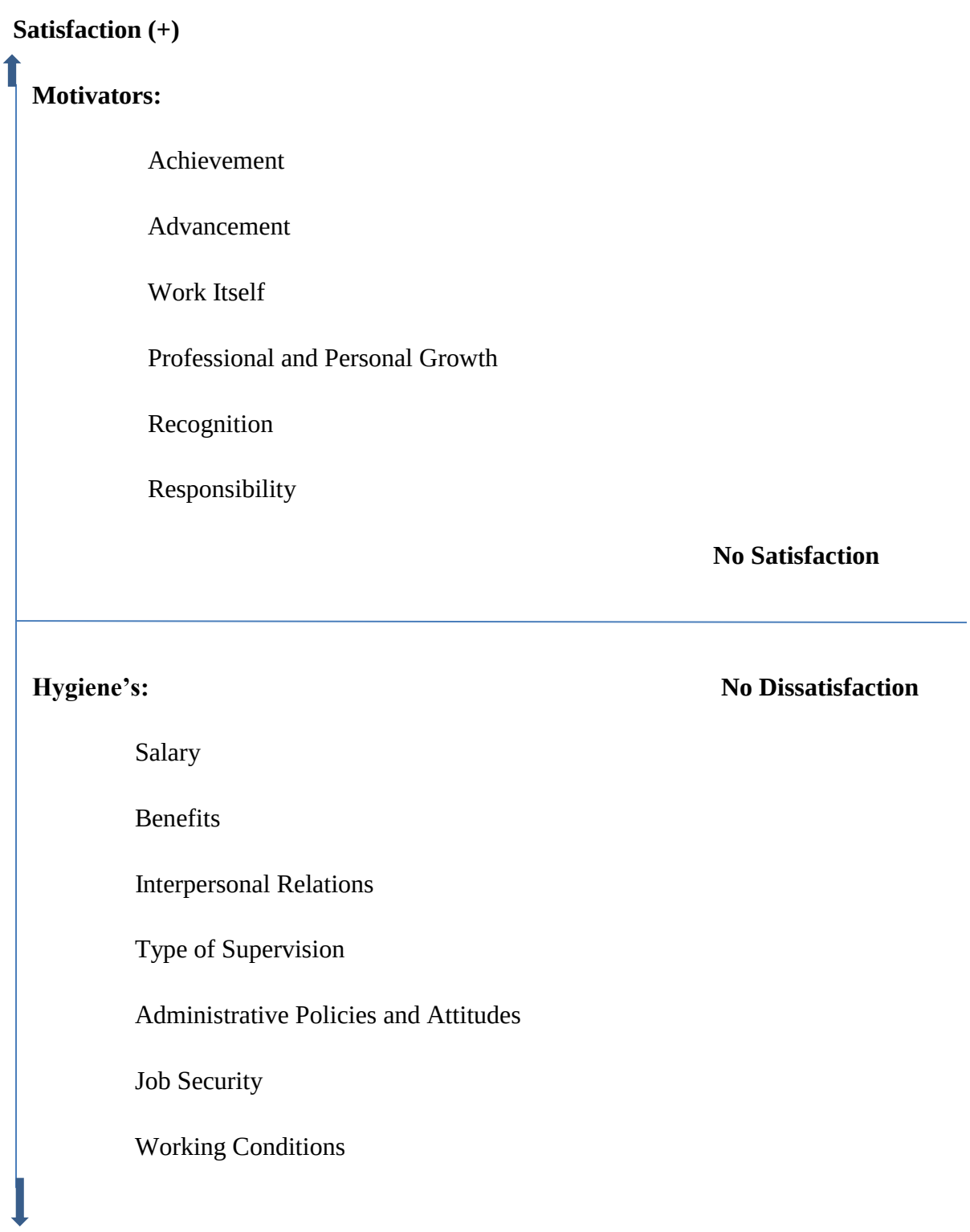
According to the basis of the Two Factor Theory, the theory can be summarized as accordingly

> *In summary, two essential findings were derived from this study. First, the factors involved in producing job satisfaction were separate and distinct from the factors that led to job dissatisfaction. Since separate factors needed to be considered, depending on whether job satisfaction or job dissatisfaction was involved, it followed that these two feelings were not the obverse of each other. Thus, the opposite of job satisfaction would not be job dissatisfaction, but rather no job satisfaction; similarly, the opposite of job dissatisfaction is no job dissatisfaction, not satisfaction with one's job. The fact that job satisfaction is made up of two unipolar traits is not unique, but it remains a difficult concept to grasp* (Herzberg 1968: 75–76 as cited in Evans & Olumide-Aluko, 2010 p.75).

Therefore, it is important to recognise that money is a motivator and as a hygiene factor it is important for management to recognise that it dissatisfies and should be an eye opener for

management. Management should therefore address these factors so as to prevent dissatisfaction (Gupta, 2007). It is therefore important that management creates and provides motivators for their employees (Gupta, 2007).

Diagram 2.1: Illustration of the Two-Factor Theory, Source: Thompson (1996).



Dissatisfaction (-)

The Two-Factor Theory suggests that the performance of employees will increase and be effective if employees are provided the opportunity to accomplish meaningful work. Engaging in the tasks has outcomes which are intrinsically meaningful and worthwhile, and most importantly, employees are provided feedback about what they do (Sinha & Trivedi, 2014). The theory provides an indication that employees become engaged when they feel a sense of return in what they do and what they want to achieve; this leads to job satisfaction (Sinha & Trivedi, 2014).

The theory is applicable for the study because it shows the importance, and provides the understanding of organizational development and success. It considers that it is important to understand the premise of organizational behaviour and therefore considers the importance of the functioning and behaviour of groups and individuals (Hollway, 1991). The theory provides an understanding that it is important that organizational developers and managers look into giving different generations responsibility, allowing them to have a life, giving them what matters the most, providing feedback and recognition, as this has been seen as important for performance, allowing employees to be flexible (DuBrin, 2008).

2.12. CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter has discussed important aspects which seek to answer the aim of the research topic. It has effectively provided the definition of key terms, the background of the workplace, differences in generations found in the workplace, the expectations which generations seek when entering the workplace, the values and ethics, and why they are important, in the working environment. It has further provided an understanding towards performance and motivation, so to provide understanding what increases and decreases the performance of employees. The chapter ends off with providing insight to engagement within the workplace, the challenges which employees face, their coping strategies and also a theoretical framework which was used to guide the undertakings of the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of the methodology chapter is to provide a description of the research approach, research design, population and sampling, research instrument, data collection, research analysis, trustworthiness, limitations of the study and ethical considerations. In this chapter the researcher has stated, expanded and provided an understanding to the application of the methods which have been used and their relevance to the research topic.

3.2. RESEARCH AIM

The aim of the research is to understand how generational differences impact on employee relationships with co-workers on individual performance and engagement in the workplace.

3.3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

vii. To explore and describe differences of generations within the organization

viii. To explore and describe employee workplace expectations of different generations within the organization

ix. To explore and describe how performance is affected when working with co-workers of a different generational group

x. To explore and describe engagement when working with members of a different generation group

xi. To explore and describe problems experienced by different generations when interacting with other co-workers

xii. To explore and describe strategies employed by different generations, to address the challenges experienced when working with employees of a different generational group

3.4. RESEARCH APPROACH

The qualitative research approach was chosen because it is exploratory; it also provided distinguishing factors about members of the different generations, which allowed for interpretation and reflection on accounts made by participants. Qualitative research is defined as an approach that seeks to explore and understand the significance, which individuals and a collective of people have, towards a social or a human concern (Creswell, 2009). The approach allowed for participants to share their opinions, experiences, accounts and feelings of the social aspect being researched. It made it applicable to understand how generational differences impact employee relationships with co-workers on individual performance and engagement in the workplace through the accounts provided.

Using the qualitative research approach, the researcher was able to gather and have understanding of the participants' experiences within the workplace. Creswell (2009) describes how the approach will often allow the researcher to understand how people construct meaning and how they make sense of it. This was possible as participants were able to share social and historical aspects which were based on the interactions which happened within the workplace. The approach showed that the meanings were often influenced by different beliefs, values, as well as norms, which are held by the different generations. However, the approach also helps recognise that there were similarities held by the different generational groups.

It can therefore be argued that a qualitative study considers the importance of understanding the human capital, placing attention on situations and encounters which have implications within society and practice (Sinclair, 2008 as cited in Shaw & Gould, 2001). The approach showed that it is important in probing towards aspects which are important in the participant's life. Through the approach, participants were able to establish their own common-sense structures and interpret their own experiences and their significance (McLaughlin, 2007).

3.5. RESEARCH DESIGN

The narrative research design was used for the study. Narrative research design is considered to be a strategy of enquiry in which the researcher has an understanding of the lives of the individuals through the accounts which they tell (Creswell, 2009). It is best understood as a research design that allows the researcher to understand the world of an individual through his or

her account and experience (De Vos et al., 2011). The main attention is on the individual and his or her subjective definition and experience (Schwandt, 2007 as cited in De Vos et al., 2011). It holds the assumption that the subjective meaning, and, making sense of social events, is often discovered through narratives of participants representing human experience (Bold, 2011).

This design applied to the research as the researcher sought to understand what the participant's subjective experiences are, placing understanding towards certain encounters (Schwandt, 2007 as cited in De Vos et al., 2011). This was achieved through conversations with participants which also encompassed story telling. The conversations held with participants allowed for further identification and exploration of meaning, and presented the possibility of exploring issues raised (Bold, 2011). Different generational groups were therefore able to provide all important aspects about their experience in the workplace. This has been seen to provide the researcher with the opportunity of understanding how participants make sense of events, which are prominent within their lives (Morrill, 2000).

The use of the narrative design presented the possibility for participants to establish their own stories and effectively allowed the researcher to pay attention to how they unfold, and more especially, how they ended (Morrill, 2000). The design was applicable for the study because it attended to participants' personal conditions such as their feelings, hopes, desires, and expectations, as well as the social conditions under which the experiences unfolded (Clandinin, 2016). The questions asked allowed participants to express their encounters and meanings of those encounters; gently allowing for a sequence of events to unfold through conversations guided by questions asked to the participants.

3.6. POPULATION, SAMPLING AND SELECTION CRITERIA

The sample and the parameters of the population are important in allowing a researcher to identify the population, the sampling technique, the sample strategy and the selection criteria. The use of an effective sampling procedure allowed the researcher to narrow the focus towards a specific population which allowed for the collection of data at a later stage. It is often that in qualitative research, researchers study only a single setting which is encompassed by individuals who form part of the population (Royse, 2011).

3.6.1. Population

The research was conducted at the Devonshire Hotel situated in Braamfontein which constitute approximately 90 employees. The research was done at this hotel because the researcher wanted to uncover the workplace experiences within the hotel industry. This was because an understanding of the relations established within a particular setting encompassed by certain dynamics would be possible to uncover. The Hotel was also accessible and had participants who were willing to participate in the study. It was also the only organization that provided permission to conduct the study as opposed to the other organizations which were previously approached. It was also chosen because the researcher had the perception that it encompasses a variety of generations.

Employees from this industry are different from others because they are often exposed to younger generations continuously entering the industry as employees, trainees or interns. Younger generations have an interest in learning more about the hospitality sector and the opportunities provided. Within the same industry there are older employees, with a wide span of 20 years' experience, who know more about the industry, and are willing to impart the knowledge to the younger generations. Carey (2013) defines a population as a collection of people that form part of the interested research area. Often a population group has characteristics which are similar and common which enable them to be bound together (Elder, 2009). Through the population, the researcher was able to derive the sample group used to represent the population group.

3.6.2. Sampling Technique

The non-probability technique was utilized because it allowed the researcher to have a sense of the wide and diverse experiences of the sample group (De Vos et al., 2011). The non-probability sampling technique shows that not every element of the population will have an opportunity to partake in the study which can therefore limit the general ability of the findings (Creswell, 2009). Given that the sampling technique limits the general ability of the findings, this did not mean that the findings of the study were less accurate because the sample group was small.

3.6.3. Sampling Procedure

The purposive sampling procedure was utilised which allowed the researcher to focus on the main characteristics of the population that are of interest to the researcher (De Vos et al., 2011). This sampling procedure often ensures that the researcher chooses the sample group based on the characteristics they embody, and typical attributes of the population, which will ensure that they meet the needs of the study (De Vos et al., 2011). The strategy allowed the researcher to make use of her own judgment on selecting participants. This enabled the researcher to choose participants based on the selection criteria established. This procedure was chosen because it was going to assist the researcher in understanding the experiences of the generations within the workforce (Tshaya, 2015).

Recruitment of participants

The manner in which participants were recruited for the study was that the researcher approached the supervisor of each department, and then conversations were held with potential participants, informing them about the research aim and objectives. Only interested participants agreed to partake in the study and a time and date was set to conduct the interviews. Employees who had an interest were encouraged to approach the researcher to schedule a time and date to be interviewed at the hotel. The researcher worked upon the availability of the participant and a venue which upheld confidentiality was utilised to conduct the interviews. The participant would then be provided with the participant information sheet and consent form. Once the participant had read the participant information sheet, questions which the participant had, had been answered and the consent form was signed then only the interview was conducted.

3.6.4. Participants and selection criteria

For the purpose of the study there were 16 participants, 9 females and 7 males, who participated in the study. They were all African and have been working at the Devonshire Hotel for over a year, however have more than 2 years working experience in a similar job at another hotel. The selection criteria included the following:

i. Individual must be an employee of the Devonshire Hotel in Braamfontein
ii. Employee age must range between 24-65 years, and can either be male or female

iii. Employee should have at least 2 years prior working experience in a recognised work space.

iv. Employees should have a good comprehension of English. However, for participants who felt comfortable, being interviewed in English, an African language both understood by the researcher and the participant was used as a medium for the interview.

As a quest to increase the trustworthiness of the study, the initial request was to ensure that two key informants were interviewed of which one could be a Human Resource Manager and the other a worker representative. However, due to the unavailability of the Human Resource Manager, only two worker representatives from the Hotel, Liquor, Catering, Commercial & Allied Workers Unions were interviewed as the key informants for the study. The key informants were able to provide the basis of verifying the experiences and encounters of the different generational groups.

3.7. RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The semi-structured interview schedule **(Appendix C)** was used to gather data from the participants. Also, a semi-structured interview schedule was also used to gather data from the key informants **(Appendix D).** This instrument was used because the researcher had an interest in gaining a detailed understanding of the participant's occurrences and perceptions about their situation which pertained to the topic. The semi-structured interview schedule made use of open ended questions and it allowed participants to share their experience effectively. This open framework ensured that effective communication between the participant and researcher is established (Groleau, Young & Kirmayer, 2006). This further provided the opportunity for uncovering thoughts, perceptions, feelings and opinions, through the use of probing.

The semi-structured interview schedule was chosen by the researcher because of the nature of problems being studied, more especially because the researcher wanted to have an interaction with the participants and provide them with the opportunity to be involved in the research process. The questions were structured in a manner which ensured that participants provide a descriptive account of their experience and then aimed towards an individualistic account. The instrument ensured that the researcher understands the participant's experience, perception and belief towards a particular situation, particularly on how generational differences impact

employee relationships with co-workers on individual performance and engagement in the workplace.

The use of closed ended question was often used to validate a response, however, through the follow up question, which was open ended; this enabled the participant to further explore how these employee relationships with co-workers had an influence on their performance and engagement within the workplace. As explored by Walsh (2001) it is important to recognise that this instrument can often reveal information which is unforeseen by the researcher. It is also important to recognise that the semi-structured interview schedule provides the opportunity of being aware of the emotional response of participants (Sibanyoni, 2014).

Making use of this research tool brought about advantages and disadvantages, which were taken into account (De Vos et al., 2011). One advantage was that participants were able to describe and explore their lived experience in their own words. The disadvantages were that when participants were not fully engaged this limited their responses, making certain aspects not fully explored, despite probing being utilised. However, in some instances participants were able to explore certain aspects and often at times went off on a tangent, providing information which couldn't be used to answer the objective of the study. It was the researcher's responsibility to ensure that the researcher guides the process of the interview so as to overcome such challenges (De Vos et al., 2011).

3.7.1. Pretesting Research Instrument

According to (Carey, 2013) it is important that the research instrument is pretested before the actual data collection process. A pre-test is a small test which often checks the structure of the interview instrument (Zengele, 2006). The research instrument was pretested before the data was collected. A pre-test was conducted and it enabled for the structure of the instrument to be checked, identifying the strengths and the weaknesses. Once this was done, the instrument was pretested again and this ensured that the instrument is adjusted accordingly. Adjustments were based on certain English terms and the structure of the question being asked. The data of the pre-test was not included in the data analysis of the study. However, it provided an indication towards how the researcher should phrase certain questions, how to ask participants the questions and provided an indication of the expected length of the question.

3.8. DATA COLLECTION

Data collection was through individual face-to-face interviews for the purpose of this study. This method allowed the researcher to have control over the line of questioning and guide the process for the participant (Creswell, 2014). The researcher used this method because it ensured that a constructive conversation with the participant, eliciting important information, is created (Carey, 2013). In addition, face-to-face individual interviews were chosen so that participants become experts of their lived experience, and build upon the literature, and explore the objectives of the research question (Carey, 2013).

Interviews lasted for less than 25 minutes and participants were asked the same questions. This ensured that trustworthiness is achieved for the study (Creswell, 2009). The researcher paid attention to how participants shared their story and to their non-verbal behaviour as they were sharing their experience. Interviews were conducted in a space in which the participant was comfortable, and did not open the participant and researcher to any distractions. The data was captured using a phone recorder only with the consent provided by the participant. In instances where the participant was uncomfortable to be recorded, the researcher wrote process notes.

3.9. DATA ANALYSIS

It was only after the data had been captured that it was transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis. According to Creswell (2014), data analysis is the process of making sense of the data through reasoning, conceptualizing and theorizing. It is through data collection that the researcher often has the ability to interpret the findings (De Vos et al., 2011). The researcher made use of thematic analysis as a means of analysing the data. Thematic analysis is the process of encoding information whereby the researcher will develop codes or words or phrases that will serve as labels for sections of the data (Attride-Stirling, 2001; Boyatzis, 1998). Thematic analysis allowed the researcher to effectively arrange findings into specific themes and codes, which have been derived, and then to interpret the meaning (Creswell, 2014).

The thematic data analysis allowed for the researcher to research the objective. Attride-Stirling (2001) shows that themes often arise from participants sharing specific events, quotations, patterns and occurrences; this was evident from the study undertaken. This form of analysis ensured that the researcher remained objective and did not impose on what participants shared

during the course of the data collection. This was important because a comprehensive analysis of the participant's experience was important to provide accurate findings.

The process which the researcher used to analyse the data was taken from Creswell's (2014) six steps of analysing qualitative data. The researcher ensured that she firstly, transcribed the recordings; secondly, looked at what participants shared and made sense of what was shared; and thirdly, the process of actively placing words and the participants' accounts in specific categories so as to establish codes which were predicted and those which were scarce. This was followed by the establishment of themes which highlighted the descriptive accounts of the participants. Carey (2013) shows that the provision of themes results in constructive arguments being established, which are important for the interpretations of the data.

In the fifth step, the researcher was able to discuss the findings, and this was done through explaining the theme, and providing quotations and existing literature which speaks to the sub-theme. The themes were taken from the transcripts established and the interpretations were kept at a specific length. This was to ensure that the researcher does not alter what participants shared, resulting in the raw data being authentic. The analysis ended off with interpretations of the data.

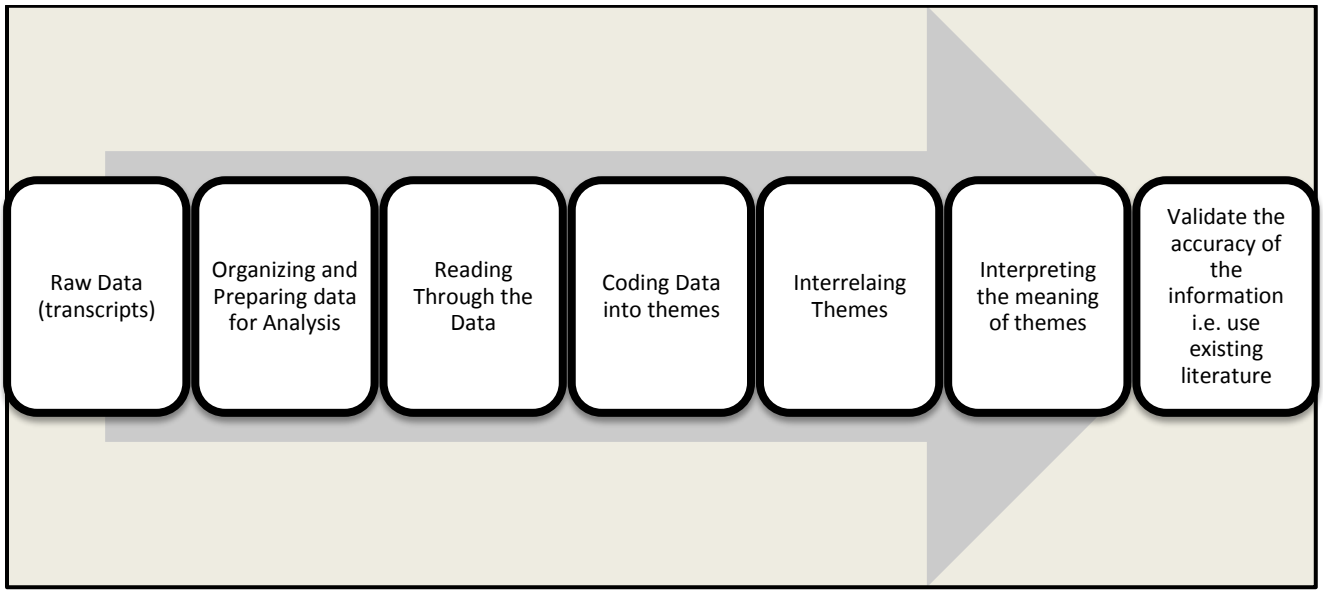


Figure 3.1. Data Analysis in Qualitative Research: adopted from Creswell (2014)

3.10. TRUSTWORTHINESS

Shenton (2004) shows that there are different strategies which can be used to establish trustworthiness for a qualitative study. The strategies used to ensure trustworthiness for the study include credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability. The sections below substantiate how each aspect was utilized to ensure trustworthiness achieved by the researcher.

3.10.1. Credibility

Credibility is considered as the internal consistency that ensures that there is accuracy achieved in the study (Morrow, 2005). It also places emphasis in recognising how we ensure rigor, and effectively communicate how we have done so. The researcher ensured that the study was credible by means of audio recordings and having a process note which was later transcribed.

3.10.2. Transferability

Transferability is the process which ensures that the study can be applied to other contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This aspect allowed the researcher to understand whether or not the findings could be general, and to address the specific issues on how the researcher can actually go about making specific aims. Transferability was achieved by using purposive sampling; it was also achieved by providing detailed descriptions of findings which was interrelated with specific literature. Although generalizations may be limited to other industries such as the retail and clothing, or the mining sector, it can be said that similarities may arise in the hospitality sector as the study was conducted for this sector.

3.10.3. Dependability

Dependability is considered to be the process whereby the researcher ensures that the procedures of the study were stable throughout, such as interviews being done by the same researcher and the technique utilized for analysis is also stable (Morrow, 2005). Dependability seeks to ask whether the process was logical, well documented and effectively audited (Ligege, 2016). This aspect was achieved by ensuring that there is an availability of audio recordings and process note-taking, as well as verbatim transcriptions to validate the recordings. Recordings of both the participants and key informants were placed in a password protected laptop should an audit be required.

3.10.4. Conformability

Conformability will ensure that a neutral stance is achieved and developed by the participants and not the researcher (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This was achieved when the researcher ensured that the results were not altered for the satisfaction of the researcher, and showed that the truthfulness of the study lies in the data which was analysed accordingly. It was achieved through the submission of transcripts and the description of the methodology used.

3.11. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The ethical considerations were clarifications of the researcher's obligations and role in carrying out this research study. When researchers undertake a research study they often have the ethical obligation of ensuring that their participants are effectively protected from any harm, which may arise (Lowenberg & Dolgoff, 1996). The ethical considerations were taken using applicable measures (Rubin & Babbie, 2005). These ethical considerations effectively monitored the researcher so as to avoid any ethical issues from arising whilst carrying out the study in an ethical manner (Padgett, 2008). The ethical considerations which were taken into account include anonymity, informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality and privacy. Each aspect has been discussed accordingly below.

3.11.1. Anonymity

The researcher fostered privacy as a means of achieving this ethical obligation. The participants were not expected to reveal their identifying information such as their full names, their national identification numbers or their dates of birth. This provided the researcher with the inability of linking information to a particular participant (Monette, Sullivan & DeJong, 2011).

3.11.2. Informed Consent and Voluntary Participation

Once ethics clearance was obtained from the Human Research Ethics Committee (non-medical), the researcher commenced with interviews. Each participant was provided with the participant information sheet **(Appendix A).** The researcher ensured that accurate and complete information about the research study was provided to participants before data collection commenced. Participants were informed that the study was voluntary and that they had every right to withdraw from the study if they felt uncomfortable. The participant was provided with a

participant information sheet and allowed time to read through it, provided that they agreed to participate in the study. Each participant was then asked to sign the written consent (Appendix B) before the research study commenced (Rubin & Babbie, 2005; De Vos et al., 2011; Padgett, 2008). Consent was essential from both the Human Research Ethics Committee and participants so that data collection could commence.

3.11.3. Confidentiality and Privacy

Participants were informed about the nature of confidentiality and privacy. The researcher ensured that the participant's private information was not divulged and that the handling of their confidential information would be regulated in a confidential manner, ensuring that the information they provided was not linked to the participant (De Vos et al., 2011). The use of pseudonyms was to ensure that confidentiality is upheld. this would conceal the participant's identity (Padgett, 2008). The researcher ensured that process accounts and recordings of participants would be destroyed after two years from the date of publication or after six years if the study does not get published.

3.11.4. Do no harm

The researcher ensured that the participants are not exposed to any harm during the course of the research study. Furthermore, the researcher used this ethical obligation to protect participants from any emotional distress or harm (De Vos et al., 2011). However, if a participant experienced emotional distress during the course of the interview, the interview was to be dismissed and they were referred for professional counselling, at no cost, to Margaret Sebetha, who is a qualified social worker at Sechaba Community Centre. Participants who had an interest could contact her on 011 962 9003 or alternatively on 076 128 5643, or via her email address at sebethalerato@gmail.com. However, participants were not exposed to any harm and none of the participants made contact with the social worker as verification was made with the social worker.

3.12. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

There were various limitations which presented themselves during the undertaking of the research study; however, the researcher found means in which these limitations could be resolved. These limitations included the research instrument, participants and the sampling procedure. The paragraphs below substantiate how these aspects were achieved:

3.12.1. Research instrument

The research instrument was designed using English; however, many of the participants wanted to be interviewed in an African language which they were comfortable with. This posed as a challenge because it was difficult to translate some of the English terms to Zulu or Setswana. Furthermore, this might have posed as a challenge in the comprehension and articulation of what the question sought to bring forward, and may have accounted for a variety of responses from the participants. The researcher ensured that the limitation was overcome by using a simple English term which was understood by the participant. The response of the participant also provided an understanding on whether or not they understood what was being said and further elaborations of the question were provided for the participant.

3.12.2. Data Collection

Participants approached were often reluctant to take part in the research study. This often resulted in participants asking people, whom they knew, to take part in the study. In some instances, some participants would set up appointments to be interviewed however, due to their job expectations; they would withdraw from the interview, leading to participants being interviewed haphazardly. Furthermore, this was combined with the unavailability of the Human Resource Manager for an interview. The researcher approaching people during their tea breaks or lunch breaks so that they could be interviewed, overcame this limitation; this resulted in interviews being conducted appropriately. Interviews were held with two worker representatives, due to the unavailability of the Human Resource Manager for an interview.

3.12.3. Sampling Procedure

The number of participants interviewed limited the possibility of providing generalizations to the entire population of both the older and younger generations. The possibility of contextualizing the findings assisted the researcher to overcome the challenge, because it ensured that an understanding on how generational differences influence employee relationships with co-workers in individual performance and engagement is brought about. Furthermore, this provided the opportunity to make comparisons and constructs between generations.

3.13. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provided the methodology which was used for the study. These methods ensured that the study was carried out and completed as it provided an understanding towards the research approach, design, population and sample, the research instrument, data collection, research analysis, limitations of the study, and the trustworthiness for the study. This chapter showed that it is important to have the adequate methodology aspects so to ensure that the aims and the objectives for the study are achieved and proper interpretations are later provided.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents results together with the discussion of the research findings. The chapter will first outline description of demographic information of study participants. The chapter moves to a discussion of themes as provided on table 4.2 below. The themes include understanding differences, access to opportunities, influences on performance, engagement needs, encountering difficulties and survival strategies. The main findings of the research are also discussed, and the chapter ends with a chapter summary, which concludes the chapter and provides a synopsis of the findings found. The researcher has ensured that the findings are presented in verbatim and set against literature reviewed, which supports or goes against the participants' claims provided.

4.2. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF PARTICIPANTS

Table 4.1 provides a summary of the demographics of the participants who took part in the research study.

Table 4.1. Demographics of participants

Demographic Factor	Sub-Category	No.
Gender	Female Male	9 7
Racial Group	African	16
Generational Group	Baby Boomer Generation X Generation Y	1 5 10
Work Experience	0-5 years 6-10	13 1

	11-15 15-20	0 2
Educational Level	Grade 5-11 Matric Diploma Degree	4 7 4 1
Department	Kitchen Housekeeping Reservations Marketing Other	5 4 4 1 2

The participants interviewed were employees selected from the Devonshire Hotel situated in Braamfontein, and encompassed different generational groups. There were 16 participants interviewed, their ages ranged from 24 to 59 with age being a determining factor for the generational group which they encompassed. There were ten participants who were members of the younger generation (Generation Y) and six participants were members of the older generation (Baby Boomer and Generation X). It has been shown that a majority of people encompassed in the workplace is a member of Baby Boomers, Generation X or Generation Y (Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman & Lance, 2010).

Nine participants were female and seven participants, males. All participants were African and all participants had acquired work experience of more than 2 years. The majority of participants have a Matric certificate however; a minority has attained a formal qualification from a recognised college or university. Interviews were conducted in English however; participants who felt comfortable speaking an African language were interviewed in an African language understood by both the participant and the researcher. The interviews were then later transcribed in English for University purposes. The use of generation grouping was utilized for the study so as to assure anonymity and confidentiality.

4.3. THEMES AND SUBTHEMES

Provided below is table 4.2 which provides an indication of the main themes and the sub-themes which were derived from the research study.

Objective	Theme	Sub-theme
1. To explore and describe generations within the organization	Understanding differences	i. Respect versus fair and equal treatment ii. Motivators
2. To explore and describe employee workplace expectations of different generations within the organization	Access to Opportunities	i. Learning ii. Growth
3. To explore and describe how performance is affected when working with co-workers of a different generational group	Influence on performance	i. Learning ii. Poor Recognition iii. Poor Team Work iv. Self-Motivation v. Acquiring skills
4. To explore and describe engagement when working with members of a different generation group	Engagement needs	i. Lack of Appreciation ii. Motivation iii. Better Salaries iv. Care from co-workers
5. To explore and describe problems experienced by different generations when interacting with other co-workers	Difficulties encountered	i. Poor Treatment from Management ii. Co-worker Resistance iii. Bullying
6. To explore and describe strategies employed by different generations to	Survival Strategies	i. Keeping Quiet ii. Communication

address the challenges experienced when working with employees of a different generational group		

The themes emerged in similarity to the objectives, which were set for the study. Each theme will be discussed in comparison to the objective of the study and a detailed analysis is provided so as to certify the evidence, which was provided by the participant. The evidence is shown in italics and literature is used to support the claim or go against it, and to show a gap in knowledge under the claims made by the participants or the key informant.

4.4. EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

The section below provides the empirical findings which emerged within the study. The section seeks to discuss each them and sub-theme. Each subtheme will be explored, a quotation will be provided, as well as a literature review which supports or goes against the finding, will be provided.

1. Theme One: Understanding Differences

This section seeks to provide understanding towards the differences which are prominent between members of the older and the younger generation. The study demonstrated that there were existing differences between generational groups. Differences emerged when participants elaborated on their perceptions of workplace ethics and factors which motivate them within the workplace. Participants had differences on what workplace ethics were and the aspects which motivated them within the workplace.

1.1. *Respect versus fair and equal treatment*

Participants showed different understandings of what workplace ethics are within the workforce. Participants did not define what ethics were; however, they provided understanding towards what they thought the important values were which are associated with ethics. The older generation felt respect and honesty was important whereas, the younger generation provided an understanding that with respect comes treating yourself and others fairly and equally.

I think respect (silent), I mean just being respected and treated equally regardless of whether you're black or white, just, you know, have a common ground (Generation Y, Female)

It was basically honesty, be honest in the work that you do and deliver, what else (thinking,) oh, and also having respect for one another and people…being honest because we work with different people and our jobs are actually different (Generation X, Female).

McConnell (2016) demonstrates that often employees will look for an employer who will treat them with respect and who is honest with them, allowing employees to uphold ethical behaviour. Participants showed that their understandings of ethics were viewed on what ethical values are rather than providing a definition of what ethics were. The findings suggest that differences which exist amongst generations have been seen to limit them to specific traits, beliefs, aspirations, expectations, understandings, life experiences and learning experiences (Bowes, 2008).

Furthermore, it has been shown that in order for good conduct and behaviour to be prevalent within the workplace it is essential that the fair treatment and respect for employees is upheld (Levitt & Harwood, 2009). In this case participants have provided differences to what entails ethical behaviour. Respect, fair treatment and trust are regarded as being important for employees because they build their co-worker relationships on these aspects and because there is a paramount difference and expectation within the workplace (Wiley & Kowske, 2011). Different generations have shown that ethical behaviour constitutes what they value and this has been shown through the ethical values which participants mentioned. The difference here is that younger participants feel that treating people fairly and equally is more important, whereas, the older generation perceive respect and honesty as being paramount.

1.2. ***Motivators***

Participants revealed that there were differences which exist amongst them when asked to share what the factors were which motivated them in the workplace. It was evident that from the younger generations that the excitement of coming to the workplace, and the work which they have to do, motivated them. Participants from the younger generations also said that the

interactions which they have with people, not only their co-workers, but their guests, motivated them. Members of the younger generation revealed that carrying out work expectations and tasks excited them.

> *Yes, you could say that, the work itself, the job that I do, I mean checking the guests in and checking them out, and also interacting with them, having small conversations with the guests* (Generation Y, Female).

In contrast to the younger generation, the older generation said that they were motivated by the relationships which they shared with their co-workers. This comes after participants shared that it was having the ability to see their co-workers and having the possibility of engaging in conversations with each other. Members of the older generation seldom paid attention to work however, felt that the positive, interpersonal relationships they have with their co-workers motivated them.

> *I could say it is the people who I work with, I mean my colleagues, and they make me enthusiastic in the workplace* (Generation Baby Boomer, Female).

> *Seeing people and talking to the ugly faces that I see here every day (laughing), when you talk about your problems and laugh about it because some employees are good at motivating and that's why we laugh about things but behind that smile something is not right* (Generation X, Male).

Hertzberg's conception of motivational factors in the workplace show that when motivational factors such as work itself and interpersonal relationships are present, this can result in effective satisfaction and a decrease in dissatisfaction (Nelson & Quick, 2013). The way people feel about the work that they do, the people whom they work with and how their organization treats them, has an influence on what will motivate them and their performance within the context (Amabile, 2001). Although extrinsic rewards, such as salary, are considered important, it has been shown that intrinsic rewards are considered to be equally valuable to employees (Wei & Yazdanifard, 2014).

2. Theme Two: Access to Opportunities

This theme came about when participants were asked to share their expectations of the workforce. The study demonstrates that there were actually differences and similarities between the different generational groups. Generations shared that their current workforce was not their ideal workforce. It was due to certain social and environmental factors which forced them to settle for a job which was available to them at that present time. The issue of being in their current workforce was not by choice and there was also an indication that neither was it their ideal workplace. This then had an influence on the expectations pertaining to access to opportunities. Participants expected to learn and grow within the workforce.

2.1. *Learning*

Participants emphasized that the opportunity to learn was important. From the different generational groups, the positive thing for them is to work with members of another generation group; this showed that to some extent there were no identified differences between generations. Working with co-workers of a different generational group meant that they will be able to acquire knowledge from the individual of the opposite generational group. Learning from one another showed that participants expected to establish good relations and more importantly the acquiring of knowledge which would advance them professionally and personally. Younger generations felt that it was important for them to learn and gain from the older generation as they had more working experience.

> *In Zulu, they say learning always goes forward, meaning it's important to ask and learn from someone who has done it and been there, because they get it and you get their side of the story and maybe you would understand things a little better. Whereas people in our generation group are in the process of teaching ourselves, we are learning a lot of things because we learn from the older generation. We are at a point whereby we are trying to grab everything in and learn as much as we can from the older generation* (Generation Y, Female)

In contrast to the younger generation, the older generation showed that imparting skills to the younger generation is important. The older generation valued this aspect of ensuring that they

were able to share their knowledge with the younger generations. The older and younger generations valued the exchange and transfer of knowledge within the workforce.

> *I think it is a very important thing and a good thing because once an old man was once a young man, and once an old woman was once a young woman. So, it is the road that everyone travels and so we need to teach or leave the experience to the next generation, and that is how the workplace is able to grow and the knowledge is retained* (Generation X, Male).

The findings are in line with the Two-Factor Theory as it emphasizes that employees seek advancement in order to be motivated in the workplace (Thompson, 1996). Advancement can be executed through opportunities which positively impact the employee and result in job enrichment (Nelson & Quick, 2013). Learning from one another is often possible through socialization where the younger generation and the older generation are able to transfer their knowledge, values and norms as well as practice; this allows for the maintaining of the social system (Djabi & Shimada, 2013). The findings have shown that each generational group values what they acquire from the other generation group. They are able to recognise the value which one possesses. Therefore, the exchange of knowledge in the workplace is imperative often and in most cases for the development of the company and retention of employees (Vendramin, 2009).

2.2.***Growth***

Assessing the opportunity for growth was seen paramount amongst the different generational groups. Employees emphasized that growth was important both personally and professionally. The findings revealed that growth was an important expectation. However, their current workplace did not have initiatives and strategies in place, to promote personal and professional growth. Employees placed emphasis on their expectation of their workplace to be one which fosters growth and development. This shows that professional growth and personal growth are important as they lead to satisfaction (DuBrin, 2008). With a decline in growth, employees are likely to be dissatisfied (DuBrin, 2008). This perception was shared by a Generation Y participant below:

> *I feel as though it doesn't motivate you as a person, and it doesn't give you growth, it doesn't see your worth, the work that you do and the worth that you bring in, they don't see that* (Generation Y, Female).

The older generations expectations are similar to those of the younger generation. They expect a workplace which provides growth opportunities however, such expectations were not fulfilled. The generation X participant remarked as followed:

> *I feel as though there are some things which are not being offered and exposed to…there is a little bit of things such as employment growth, development and sometimes our salaries are not good enough for the life style of today* (Generation X, Male).

Employees who feel that there is a limitation to opportunities for career advancement within the workplace may experience a decrease in satisfaction (Kombo, Obonyo & Oloko, 2013). The theory supports these findings as it shows that employers should give employees, regardless of their age, the opportunity to experience high enthusiasm by providing them opportunities for advancement, recognition and establishing good hygiene factors, which include good working conditions, good security and often good pay, supervision, good relations, excellent company policies and administration (Griffin, 2007). The absence of these factors may result in dissatisfaction (Thompson, 1996).

3. Theme Three: Influence on Performance

This theme provided an understanding of employee performance within the workplace. Participants provided that learning, poor recognition, poor team work and acquiring skills influenced their performance. Maingi & Makori (2015) argue convincingly that there are certain features of performance which affect the manner in which employees are able to perform. A good working environment is created because better working environments motivate employees to work even better, therefore increasing their performance (Nguyen, Dang & Nguyen, 2013).

3.1.***Learning***

Although learning was expressed to be an expectation it was also expressed by participants to be something which influences their performance in a positive manner. The finding was captured in the following response:

> *I can say with us, the new generation, we more of the book type/ kind of person whereas the other generations will come up with stuff and say instead of doing this, do that, you know. It helps; it grooms you as a young person that okay this is what I have learned. You always take it years back, that you know this is what has happened and we did things, how we did this and that. So, remember, like as a chef, the way he used to do his malva pudding, I mean the way he does, it's just I think it is just the best. People will ask me where have you learned that. It just shows that with age comes experience* (Generation Y, Female).

Similarities evident here were that participants from the older and younger generation valued the knowledge and the skills transfer. Younger generations expressed the view that when they are able to learn they incorporate what they have learned into their work. Moreover, the older generation indicated that learning was important, and that imparting knowledge and skills was essential. The participants said that when they interact with the younger generation they become enthusiastic in their work, their relationships improve and more especially, their performance becomes enhanced. Participants felt that it energized them and encouraged them. They added that it allowed them to feel valued and wanted. Older generations also appreciated the fact that they receive insight from the younger generation on how things are done. One generation X participant remarked as follows:

> *The younger generation they sometimes rejuvenate you; at the age that I am they take me back to the same age that I was, and at the same time they are full of energy and are vibrant, and some of them, they are rebellious and they think they know (laughs), more especially the ones that think that they are more educated and wouldn't want to listen to the elders because they feel that they have the better way of doing things, or simply the new generation way, or some of them will say that's an old way of doing things so let us do it the new way, so of which sometimes they are able to teach you things which you*

> *didn't have a chance to learn when you were their age. So, I can say we learn from one another especially for those who are eager to learn and want to learn* (Generation X, Male).

In a study done by Cerny (2015) it was shown that older generations have been considered to have an advantage over the younger generations as they encompass specialised knowledge and experience. Therefore, when older and younger generations are provided the opportunity of working together and exchanging knowledge this results in a positive impact for employees, and often advances their performance in the workplace and the social interactions which exist (Foss, Minbaeva & Pedersen, 2009).

3.2. ***Poor Recognition***

Participants expressed that their performance was influenced negatively when they encountered lack of recognition in the workplace. Younger generations expressed that often this followed through with jealousy from their younger counterparts. The findings demonstrate that lack of recognition resulted in the absence of appreciation in the workplace and suggested that employees want to be recognised and wanted. This shows that recognition can be a cost-effective method for increasing performance of employees (Bradler, Dur, Neckermann & Non, 2013).

Generation Y participant said:

> *I can say negativity and not being appreciated you know, being made to feel that what you are doing is not recognised and not seen, basically not being appreciated* (Generation Y, Female)

There are identified similarities between the younger and older generation. The older generation expressed that when they were not recognised this affected their performance in the workplace. The older generation, with more experience on the job, felt that it was not enough showing a person how the job is done and not being recognised for that. It was important that they are recognised so that they can still educate others who will be entering the workplace. In support of this view, the participant made the following remark:

> *Our managers do not recognise us, so when they show that they hardly care about you then that affects you as an employee, so you ask yourself questions like: why I should be doing something specific when I know very well that I am not happy, you know…for instance, since I have been here, all these supervisors I have to show them the work so I feel as though sometimes I am just here because I have to work, but there is nothing that gives me the motivation and direction in terms of the work that I do. So now I am only coming because I want my children to have a plate of food and then you end up not performing well. Example, you will start thinking there are no jobs and at the same time you do not like that mentality, so the performance decreases* (Generation X, Female)

Recognition in Hertzberg's conception is a motivator and shows that employees at times, regardless of their age, often want to feel valued and recognised (Thompson, 1996). The study showed that when there is an absence of recognition they will, most likely, be dissatisfied (Thompson, 1996). This has been seen to affect the performance of the individual because they are not motivated to achieve what they want to achieve and contribute to the success of the company (Aswathappa, 2005). These findings support Herzberg findings (Lingard & Rowlinson, 2005), that the factors which are responsible for motivating employees within the workplace are different and distinct from those which prevent people from being satisfied within their working space. The aspect of employee performance shows that work motivation is central towards performance, followed by work capability and opportunity (Ivancevich J. et al. 2005 as cited by Pandza et al., 2015).

3.3. ***Poor Team Work***

When people in the organization do not co-operate as a team this has been seen to affect and influence the performance of employees negatively. The quotation below supports the findings:

> *It happens mostly if there is someone who does not want to co-operate and if we don't want to work as a team, it affects the workplace. So, some of them, they are from different cultures and they do things in their way or their culture way. So sometimes you find that you know it affects work performance or your enjoyment and being free at work* (Generation X, Male).

This finding was mostly supported by the older generation compared to the younger generation. The older generation felt it was important that they work together as a team. It was identified that when there was poor team work their performance was affected negatively, because they would also find themselves doing work which was supposed to be done by another individual. In some cases, it was expressed that when their co-workers fail to meet their job expectations, it reflected badly on them as they are the supervisor. One generation X participant remarked as follows:

> *If a customer complains it shows as if you, as the head chef, do not know your work. Whereas the customer will be complaining about something which you showed them already, I would have also printed the menu for them and you show that this is how the work is done, so when they do the thing wrong that affects me because it shows as if I don't know my job whereas it is the staff, and the staff does not understand. I mean I cannot do their work, we hired them so that they can do the job themselves, I mean everyone has their own job here but once they come together they relax a lot and sometimes you think maybe I can do this alone* (Generation X, Male)

When employees, together with employers, are able to sit down and discuss issues, this allows for a co-operative working environment (Tarricone & Luca, 2002). This often works effectively when people who are able contribute, listen to concerns and seek solutions as a team; it motivates employees and often improves their performance (Tarricone & Luca, 2002). Teamwork has been shown to boost the company performance as well as the wellbeing of employees (Kombo, Obonyo & Oloko, 2013). However, when there is poor teamwork, it affects the performance of employees (Kombo, Obonyo & Oloko, 2013). The ability of employees working in teams establishes the autonomy which is required in decision-making, responsibility which often results in effective support, and more especially, job satisfaction (Kombo, Obonyo & Oloko, 2013).

3.4. ***Self-Motivation***

Participants from the younger generations expressed that they often felt that age was just a construct and did not influence their performance in the workplace, more especially when interacting with the older generations. Participants felt that they are able to carry out what is expected of them and still do it accurately. Participants showed that it was the responsibility of

the individual in ensuring that their performance is of a good standard. This response was often common in younger generations who showed confidence in what they do in the workplace. The remarks below support the claims made:

> *I cannot say there is something which can influence the performance because as a person you have to push yourself and tell yourself that no one can defeat you, so you must have self-drive and determination* (Generation Y, Female)

> *No, it doesn't; because age is just a number. To me, you might be older, but you may not actually be experienced as I am, and you might be older and be more experienced than I am, but being older normally means that you just have an advantage over me because your age is more and you have seen more than what I have seen, but life wise you are just older than me* (Generation Y, Male)

Although Maingi and Makori (2015) argue that certain factors such as salary level, exposure to training, team work and the level of skills which the employee encompasses has an influence on their performance, it can be argued that self-determination and motivation also influences the performance of the employee (Maingi & Makori, 2015). This is because these aspects internally motivate the individual to do better and wants to achieve more, therefore allowing them to enhance their performance (Ryan & Deci, 2017). The findings support existing literature on generation Y members which suggest that being optimistic, self-driven and independent are important factors which ensure self-motivation (Tolbize, 2008). Furthermore, these findings support the notion of intrinsic motivation and the self-determination theory which stipulates that when people motivate themselves from within rather than expect external rewards, this can lead to an increase in performance and achievement of goals within any context (Coon & Mitterer, 2012).

3.5. ***Acquiring Skills***

Participants from both older and younger generations expressed that performance can effectively be improved if opportunities which establish growth and skill development were provided through training. Participants conveyed that acquiring skills was important because it would increase their performance in the workplace. Skills which aligned with their job expectations were considered to be important, especially when enhancing their performance. Participants from

both older and younger generations expressed the importance of utilizing skills acquired in the execution of their work tasks, showing that interventions which will raise this expectation are essential. One generation X participant remarked as follows:

> *We need to be skilled, the only thing in the workplace that can happen is if the company can equip and school their workers regardless of age; this is because somewhere, somehow, one will have to go on pension and you might maybe use the skills which he has learned from the workplace and he might maybe leave after work after maybe resigning* (Generation X, Male)

The finding was also supported by the following response:

> *Training, Training, and Training… look, we are in different calibres, different jobs and duties to do. So, if a person is trained in the duties which they have to do then that will help a lot in improving their performance* (Generation Y, Male)

These findings were also supported by the claims, which were made by the key informants, that acquiring skills and training was important especially when enhancing the performance of employees.

> *…to educate, do workshops, seminars with both young and old so to try and address this, sometimes it works and you know that sometimes people listen and go back to work or it goes back to square one. However, we are trying through training and seminars and all that* (Key Informant, Worker Representative, Male)

The improvement of generational performance has been seen to be done through progressive policies, mentoring and training in the workplace, where different generations are able to learn from one another (Hewlett, Sherlan & Sumberg, 2009). Through training employees one can effectively improve their performance as they will have the ability to manage themselves, problem solve and advance their aspect of "*continuing learning consciousness*" (Dorjkhuu, 2013). The study demonstrated that it is important that the workplace invests in the technical

skills, social, innovation skills and promotes the relationship between the employer and the employee so that employees can also feel as though they are able to benefit from their workplace (Kombo, Obonyo & Oloko, 2013).

4. Theme Four: Engagement Needs

The study demonstrated that participants felt that there were various factors which they needed, in order to be fully engaged within the workplace. However, the factors, which they need, were absent or were not provided more often, and in ways which they, as employees, would like them to be. This then resulted in them being less engaged. Participants showed that engagement was often influenced by three predominant factors which include the lack of appreciation, motivation and better salaries. Additionally, participants demonstrated that receiving care from fellow co-workers was important as this had a positive influence on their engagement. Often, it was the positive aspect which pushed them to work in a manner which they wanted to.

4.1. *Lack of Appreciation*

The findings reveal that participants felt that the factor which influenced their engagement in the workplace was actually appreciation. Members of the younger generation provided an indication that when there was an absence of appreciation this negatively affected their engagement. In some instances, the older generation provided an indication that when their managers are able to recognise and appreciate what they do, this influenced their engagement in the workplace positively. The similarities here were that members of the older and the younger generations all seek to be appreciated. However, it is observed that their current workplace does not provide this.

> *It's that thing of whereby you work and the work you do is not appreciated in the workplace, actually I can say that the absence of compliments and negativity which is prominent* (Generation Y, Female)

> *For instance, it is when you reflect and see that as an employee you are working very hard, and the person who is your manager can also see that, that is what gives me strength* (Generation Baby Boomer, Female).

Findings for this study are supported by Abercrombie (2014) who states that appreciation encourages employees to be further engaged, often motivating an increase in performance. When employees feel more engaged they will be able to contribute effectively as opposed to when they are not engaged. Hertzberg findings supports participants views as it indicates that in order for employees to feel satisfied at all times it is often through aspects which include appreciation and which can be fostered through recognition within the workforce (Thompson, 1996).

4.2. ***Motivation***

In order for employees to be entirely engaged, members of the younger generation, as opposed to the older generation, indicated that it was important for them to be motivated. Participants said that the motivation which they would receive would have a positive influence on the work which they do. Alternatively, when motivation was seldom received, it would influence their engagement negatively. Often, at times, this would result in them changing jobs and would alter their commitment and obligation to work which would also decline. Participants showed that when they first began a job they would have passion for it however, due to the lack of motivation received and the challenges which they faced, this influenced their engagement. In this regard, one participant said:

> *I cannot say that there is something which actually influences my engagement directly. When I first entered this workplace yes, I was passionate about certain things however, like with my previous job, I saw that I did not like what I was doing after sometime, so that affected the engagement. However, I left the office work because I could see that I love serving people, interacting with people. So now that this workplace is not motivating enough, I can say that passion which I had as a new employee has somehow left, it is also the same with other new employees who have recently entered the workplace; they have this passion for their work and then as time goes by they realise that this industry has a lot of challenges* (Generation Y, Female)

In contrast to this, some participants felt that when they are motivated this results in a positive feeling. The feeling of being motivated also brought about recognition and that influenced their engagement in the workplace positively. Furthermore, in order for employees to be engaged,

constant appreciation and motivation is essential. This can be achieved when managers discover what interests their employees (Coon & Mitterer, 2012). Motivation not only influences the engagement of employees positively, it also influences their performance as well. Aspects which ensure that an employee is continuously motivated are important and prevent employees from feeling dissatisfied within the workplace (Griffin, 2007). Griffin (2007) argues that when employees are motivated they are likely to perform well and engage well.

4.3.***Better Salaries***

Better salaries were seen to influence the engagement of both the older and the younger generation. Participants expressed the view that better salaries were needed to influence their engagement positively. The findings revealed that when employees work hard they should be rewarded for the hard work and effort which they put into their work. However, when there is an absence of better salaries, the employee engagement deteriorates and, the quality of work and service provided, declines. A Female Generation Y participant said:

> *Sometimes you come to work and you tell yourself that I am going to work and then when you think about a lot of things you realise that the salary that I am getting here it is too little so but then you tell yourself that it is better than nothing. However, sometimes you just get bored and so you start to think that you know I am working hard but at the end of the day I get a small salary* (Generation Y, Female)

This view was supported by a generation X female participant as follows:

> *What can I say, but you know with me I know how to do my job you know, there are actually not a lot of things which affect it but maybe if they can give me a better salary. Like today it's the 31st of January and I must say I am not certain that I will get my salary* (Generation X, Female)

These findings support the notion made by the key informant, that often employees require better salaries in order to be fully engaged within the workplace. The provision of better salaries also aligns to better working conditions. The quote below supports the findings:

Different generations need better living conditions, they need better salaries and yes, I can say that's basically it (Key Informant, Worker Representative, Male)

Being motivated and therefore fully engaged does not only come from the intrinsic factors, it also comes from the extrinsic factors such as one's salary. One-way employers have been seen to make their employees happy is through better salaries (Griffin, 2007). This aligns with the theoretical framework which shows that when employees do not receive better salaries often there will be an absence of satisfaction however, it is also important to understand that at times it can lead to dissatisfaction (DuBrin, 2008). The findings of the study are supported by Abercrombie (2014) who states that engagement is achieved through vigour, which is known as the energy and the high levels which are evident to do the work, and absorption which is regarded as being captivated in the work that you do as an individual. However, when vigour and absorption are absent, employees become less engaged.

4.4.***Care from co-workers***

Despite the absent factors which generations felt they did not receive, receiving care was important, and support was an important factor for the different generations. This influenced their engagement positively. Generations, both young and old, emphasised that they perceived that their co-workers do indeed care about them. Members of the younger generation felt that their co-workers were able to provide understanding and were supportive as they would check on how they were doing and how their personal lives were going. Members of the older generation shared the same perception with the younger generation. As per the following remarks:

Yes, they do, let's say you were not at work, they ask where you have been; if there is like a mistake that you did they are able to guide you and show you how to fix that mistake, and they are to show what will get you in trouble. In some cases, let's say that you are not feeling well and you were absent from work as a result, they are able to call you and ask how you are doing, things like those show that they care (Generation Y, Female)

The provision of care for younger generations did not stem only from how they were doing, but also aspects such as guidance and support. Generations expressed that their co-workers cared about them because they would also guide them, more especially in what they needed to know in order to survive the workplace. In contrast to the younger generation, findings suggest that the older generation felt that their co-workers cared about them however, they felt that not every co-worker within the workplace did portray this. Older generations felt this was because an individual would pretend they care whenever they were present however, once they had left, co-workers did not express the care. This view is supported by the following statement:

> *...you know with some people they will smile when they see you but once you turn your back they will bite it, they will talk ill of you. I wouldn't give it 100, yes, they might care about you but when you are gone you are gone, you are not here, there is a lot of you know they act as if they care but when you are no there they don't worry about you* (Generation X, Male).

Co-worker support has been shown to be a great contributor towards engagement in the workplace. These findings suggest that engaged employees are often employees that have good working relationships with their co-workers and as a result experience a positive feeling. However, when these do not arise it poses as a challenge, resulting in poor communication and poor team work. In support, Bakker & Demerouti (2008), state that a positive feeling was associated with helping others and portraying care for others, and more especially, enjoying the work that they do.

Moreover, the existence of workplace trust, fair relationships and interactions, results in more engaged employees (Okello & Gilson, 2015). This is because often co-workers have shown to have the ability to enhance the performance and engagement of employees as they are able to add enjoyment in the workplace (Ryan & Deci, 2017). These findings support Thompson's (1996) view that it is important to recognise that when interpersonal relationships are poor this may lead to no satisfaction in the workplace; therefore, provisions should be established so that employees can be satisfied.

5. Theme 5: Encountering Difficulties

The study revealed that participants felt that the hotel industry was one of the most challenging and demanding industries which they have ever worked in. Older and younger generations expressed similarities with regards to challenges which they faced within the workplace. According to the participants, these challenges come from poor measures which have been placed by management as a quest to avoid and deal with such challenges. Participants demonstrated that the challenges which are faced include poor treatment from management, co-worker resistance, and bullying. The subthemes are discussed below.

5.1. *Poor Treatment from Management*

Participants from both the older and younger generation felt that poor treatment from management was the biggest challenge which they encountered. Participants showed that the challenges were not amongst co-workers themselves, but were often directed to management. In some instances, participants felt that at times they did not understand what exactly management wanted or expected from them. This often was difficult for participants to even raise other challenges which they faced, because of being afraid of the response they would most likely receive from management. This finding is supported by male generation X participant:

> *The challenge is not with co-workers, it's with management, it is workers against employer, however if you confront this thing you get a hostile response and feeling from left, right and centre and see if you make a mistake, and make sure you don't make a mistake. Now you will be treated differently and reminded of the thing, so you keep watching your back* (Generation X, Male)

In contrast to the older generation, younger generations show that although their supervisors were not treating them well, they felt that their expectation of how they want to be treated as employees was not revealed by management.

> *Our superiors are not treating us well, and their treatment is not up to standard. I mean the way we expect to be treated and how we have to be treated as employees* (Generation Y, Male)

It is important to recognise that different generations may experience different challenges, and not all members of the same generation group may experience that challenge. Existing literature shows that employees often expect management to provide fair treatment and a safe working environment (Alam, Saeed, Sahabuddin & Akter, 2013). It has also been shown that companies often want what is best for their employees however, they have poor strategies on executing this. Literature supports and shows that when superiors do not treat employees in a manner which they would like to be treated, this often results in stress and employee withdrawal (Kelloway, Sivanathan, Francis & Barling, n.d.).

5.2.*Co-worker Resistance*

Resistance was also highlighted to be a challenge which participants faced within the workplace. The findings suggest that the older generation felt more resistance as opposed to the younger generations. Both the older and the younger generations felt that often at times, when they had to assist someone and guide a new employee, they would often experience resistance. The older generation suggested that guiding them and showing them how things are done, was to enable them to make the job simple and easier, so as to avoid future negative repercussions which may result. The older and younger generations indicated that the hostile response received posed as a challenge, more especially when they know they would be working with the person and they were their superior. The participant said:

> *…when you try and shed light to situation you find it difficult to do so because they are your senior and you can see what they are doing is not correct, but they do not want to accept that I am showing them the correct thing, and it looks as though I am belittling their position in the workplace* (Generation X, Female)

The finding was also supported by another participant with a similar view, who said:

> *It has to be the rule used by the superior, for instance if let's say we receive a new supervisor and we try and show them that this is how something is done and they say no. So, when we try and show them the work they think that we are trying to take their job however, that is not the case, because we want to help the person so that in future we are*

> *not blamed for the things and also, they do not blame us in return, what we basically want is to work effectively with the person* (Generation Baby Boomer, Female)

The findings drawn from the interviews indicate that resistance emanates from the poor treatment which employees receive within the workforce from management and at times their co-workers. This shows that when resistance emanates within the workforce, this often results in poor employee engagement. Hertzberg's idea of interpersonal relationships shows that when positive interpersonal relationships exist this allows for a good working environment however, when this is absent, it often results in dissatisfaction (Evans & Olumide-Aluko, 2010).

5.3. ***Bullying***

Older and younger generations felt that bullying was also a challenge which they experienced within the workplace. Bullying emerged from someone who was superior to them which made it difficult for them to engage and express themselves. Participants felt that bullying happened when someone would exercise their authority in a negative manner. It often resulted in the employee being uncomfortable and belittled. My observations of participants were that they were reluctant to further elaborate on the aspect of bullying because they felt it was a personal matter that couldn't be discussed. The findings suggest that both the older and younger generations were aware of bullying however, they did not know how to address it accordingly. The following quotations support the findings:

> *When someone is being bullying and is being bossy, that is a challenge for me (reluctant to elaborate)* (Generation Y, Male)

The finding was also supported by another participant with a similar view, who said:

> *As I have said before, you find that some of our managers take advantage, like for example I am a manager and I will do whatever I want to do, and I will say whatever I want to say to whoever, because I am a manager. So they basically breaking you down and they demotivate you as a person… Like there are people who are trying to demotivate me and I don't know like I don't know where it is or maybe like where it is coming from and you know I can see* (Generation Y, Female)

This finding links with the base of the Two-Factor Theory which looks at the type of supervision received and whether or not it will lead to no satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Thompson, 1996). Bullying often arises when negative actions arise and the individual does not know what to do in order to defend themselves against such actions (Peyton, 2003). Further, it can be said that bullying results in a loss of interest in work values and expectations (Cook, 2008). When there is a decline in supervision this has been seen to lead to dissatisfaction. Supervision is important however, when leaders often exercise power which makes employees feels uncomfortable, this can have a negative effect on them (Peyton, 2003). The extent of bullying which employees experience shows that there is a need to identify how employees cope with these challenges.

6. Theme Six: Survival Strategies

Survival strategies were seen as important as methods of dealing and coping with challenges which both the older and the younger generations encountered. Survival was essential for both the older and the younger generation as it was a form of method utilized to ensure that further negative repercussions, which will affect their employment, are avoided. The findings suggest that surviving was possible if they adhered to two aspects which included keeping quiet and communicating with the individual or someone from management.

6.1. *Keeping Quiet*

The findings suggest that participants from both the older and the younger generations would keep quiet or distance themselves as a method of dealing with challenges experienced. The older and the younger generations showed that they were afraid of dealing with or confronting the situation because it may lead to a loss in employment. Findings suggest that employees from the older and the younger generations did not see the point or use of losing their employment because of arguments which may arise, because the individual decided to confront the situation. The quotations below support the findings:

> *Well, we actually just keep quiet and distance ourselves when situations like these faces us. We cannot afford to lose our jobs from arguments if you know what I am saying* (Generation Y, Male)

This view is also supported by the following statement:

> *I normally keep quiet and keep them to myself, because once I start dealing with them I might be dismissed at work or even lose my job* (Generation X, Female).

These findings are supported by existing literature which shows that employee withdrawal is the intention that the employee partakes in in order to avoid a particular situation or aspect which elicits stress (Somers, 2009). The different generational groups, from both the older and the younger generations, show that withdrawal was important as it drains the emotional and cognitive aspects further it is often used in order to prevent the loss of jobs or employment (Sliter, Sliter & Jex, 2012). However, withdrawing has been seen to decline the performance of the individual further, it would result in an increase in absenteeism and late coming to work (Sliter, Sliter & Jex, 2013). The findings further are in line with Cook's (2008) notion that employee withdrawal often results in employees who are not engaged.

6.2. ***Communication***

When participants were asked what other methods they make use of to deal with the problems which they encounter, members of the older generation expressed that they communicate with the individual or they simply talk to someone from management whom they can trust. This had to be someone whom they knew would understand what they were feeling and going through. The Baby Boomer participant said:

> *We try and sit the individual down; we talk with them and try to reason, however if that fails we normally go to their manager and inform them about the individual. But we first try to speak to them because we do not want the person to think that we want them to be fired from their job and it is not like that, we are just trying to show the person that this is how things are done* (Generation Baby Boomer, Female)

The above-mentioned findings were also supported by the key informant who supported the view of the older generation and who said:

> *They only cope sometimes when the employer steps in, they will show them their policies and I don't want this and I don't want that. You are all my employees, then that problem will be sorted, but often sorting it amongst themselves is sometimes not easy* (Key Informant, Male).

In contrast to the older generation, the younger generation felt it was important that communication was done first as a team, before another relevant individual is communicated with. The participant elaborated as follows:

> *We often sit down as a team and find a way forward and a solution, and then work with it.* (Generation Y, Female).

The findings suggest that communication, and working together as a team, was often important in solving the problem or concern. If failure to communicate between employees came about, then employees would speak to someone from management whom they can trust and can share their concerns with. These findings are supported by literature which shows that when employees together with employers are able to sit down and discuss issues this allows for a co-operative working environment (Tarricone & Luca, 2002). The theoretical framework shows that when factors which uphold motivation in the workplace are taken into consideration and upheld, this enables employees to work together effectively and communicate the concerns and challenges they are encountering.

4.6.CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter has provided findings of the study, taking into account the views of participants and that of the key informants. Each theme was elaborated on, substantiated with a quote, and supported with literature which supports or goes against what has been found. The next chapter provides main findings, recommendations and conclusions for the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a main summary of the findings which emanated from the study. Evidence of how each objective was achieved is explored, as well as the empirical findings and conclusions are given in this chapter. Thereafter, recommendations for the organization, social work profession and future studies are provided, ending with a chapter summary which summarizes the contents of this chapter.

5.2. SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study was to understand how generational differences impact employee relationships with co-workers on individual performance and engagement in the workplace. The study was qualitative in nature, and semi-structured interviews were conducted. 16 participants employed at the Devonshire hotel, with more than 2 years' work experience, were interviewed. The objectives of the study sought to explore and describe generational differences, generational expectations, how performance is affected when working with members of a different generation group, engagement when working with members of a different generation group, problems experienced by different generations when interacting with other co-workers, and coping strategies utilized. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the research data.

5.3. SUMMARY OF EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

The following section is organized according to the objectives of the study. The summary provides evidence of how the objective was achieved, the empirical finding and conclusion of the objective.

5.3.1. OBJECTIVE ONE: To explore and describe differences between generations within the organization

The objective was successfully achieved in both the literature review and findings chapter. See chapter 2 sections 2.6 on generational ethics and values and 2.11 on the theoretical framework

the Two-Factor Theory and for the empirical evidence see chapter 4 sections 4.1 on understanding differences.

Empirical finding

- The empirical findings show that there are differences which are evident amongst the different generational groups.
- Ethics seem to be centred on personal perceptions and morality. There is an agreement that behaviour is modelled by values such as fairness and equality.
- However, how these values play out tend to be viewed differently by the different generational groups. The younger generation value social interactions with customers whereas, the older generation value interpersonal relationships with co-workers within the workplace.

Conclusion

- Based on the above findings it can be concluded that differences between generations align with their conception of ethics and motivating factors. In this instance, it is clear that intrinsic factors motivate the younger generation rather than extrinsic factors.
- From this finding, it can be argued that motivators are important however, these are different amongst generational groups.

5.3.2. OBJECTIVE TWO: To explore and describe employee workplace expectations of different generations within the organization

The objective was achieved in the literature review chapter see section 2.5 on generational expectations of the workplace and empirical chapter, see chapter 4 section 2 on access to opportunities.

Empirical findings

- Access to opportunities was a paramount expectation for all generational groups. The participating employees felt that their workplace was not their ideal workplace.
- Because of the lack of opportunities and the impact of social and economic factors within our country, they were influenced to opt for employment which was available.
- Learning and growth within the workplace was an enormous expectation for all generations.

- Growth was essential for both generations because it ensured that there was satisfaction, moreover the older and younger generation wanted their employer to establish initiatives which would ensure their growth within the workplace.

Conclusion

- The above empirical finding makes evident the recognition towards social inequality within South Africa, which is perpetuated by the lack of opportunities, resources, assets, money and jobs.
- It can be argued that there is a strong relationship between the choices which people can make and how they are influenced by the available economic factors.
- Moreover, learning would enable the employee to grow professionally and personally, which would have a positive impact on the employee and their experience within the workplace.
- Employees, irrespective of their age, have factors which can actually lead to enthusiasm and often growth is one aspect which may result in satisfaction.

5.3.3. OBJECTIVE THREE: To explore and describe how performance is affected when working with co-workers of a different generational group

The objective was successfully achieved in chapter 2 section 2.7 on generational performance and motivation. Chapter 4 section 3, on influence on performance provides the empirical evidence on how the objective was achieved.

Empirical Findings

- The transfer and exchange of knowledge was essential for all generational groups, more especially as it influences their performance positively.
- When factors such as recognition are present, this will enable generations from the older and the younger generations to perform optimally.
- Failure to work co-operatively seemed to negatively affect performance of the older generation more especially as it reflects negatively on them when they encompass the role of a supervisor.
- Employees of the younger generation showed that they are confident in what they do; as self-motivation and determination is always essential in performing efficiently.

Conclusion

- The skills development of employees has been regarded to be important within the workplace as it enhance performance.
- Based on the above empirical findings the older and the younger generation show that performance is influenced by learning, poor recognition, poor team work, self-motivation and acquiring skills.
- Factors such as learning, self-motivation and acquiring skills enable both generation groups to contribute effectively to the success of the organization. Whereas, factors such as poor recognition and poor team work, have shown to bring about dissatisfaction, decreasing the engagement and performance of employees.

5.3.4. OBJECTIVE FOUR: To explore and describe engagement when working with members of a different generational group

In chapter 2 sections 2.8 on generational engagement in the workplace and chapter 4 sections 4 on engagement needs, provide evidence that the objective was achieved.

Empirical Findings

- Engagement needs which motivate both the older and the younger generation were essential however, these were absent within their work environment.
- The younger and the older generations show that appreciation is essential. This was the same with motivation where younger generations felt it was also essential for them to be fully engaged.
- This comes with recognising that difficult challenges which they encounter can often demotivate them therefore, constant motivation would be essential for them to perform efficiently.
- The older and the younger generation showed that extrinsic motivation through salaries is essential, more especially when employees work hard and ensure that their work expectations were met.

Conclusion

- Based on the above findings it is evident that the absence of engagement needs results in both generational groups to be less engaged however, through the care which they receive from their co-workers this can enhance their engagement.
- The receiving of care from the co-workers show that positive working relationships were essential as they established a sense of support.
- Furthermore, this showed that it was essential for employees to be engaged.
- In order for employees to be engaged, employees need to be appreciated, they need better salaries, motivation and to be cared for by co-workers and managers.

5.3.5. OBJECTIVE FIVE: To explore and describe problems experienced by different generations when interacting with other co-workers

This objective was achieved as evidence is provided in chapter 2 see section 2.9 on causes of generational challenges, it was also achieved in chapter 4 see section 5 on difficulties encountered.

Empirical Findings

- Problems expressed by both the older and the younger generations were poor treatment from managers.
- Although poor treatment was expressed, resistance experienced by both generations from their co-workers presented itself as a challenge. This often affected the execution of work tasks and the relations between employees.
- The older generation made emphasis that this resistance was evident because one did not want to feel as though their job would be taken away from them.
- Moreover, these findings showed that when another individual exorcises their power in a negative manner this often demotivated the employee, therefore bullying was also a workplace challenge commonly experienced by younger generations.

Conclusion

- Employees are likely to feel a sense of alienation and helplessness when not treated with the level of respect and dignity which they deserve.

- The findings suggest co-worker resistance is a challenge and employers should ensure that they are able to establish working conditions which can motivate employees and assist them in working in a collaborative manner.
- The above findings show that there are challenges which affect the older and the younger generations within the workplace thereby affecting their performance and engagement.
- These challenges include poor treatment from management, co-worker resistance and bullying.

5.3.6. Objective Six: To explore and describe strategies employed by different generations to address the challenges experienced when working with employees of a different generational group

This objective was achieved as indicated in chapter 2 section 2.10 on coping strategies within the workplace and the empirical evidence on chapter 4 section 6 on survival strategies.

Empirical Finding

- Survival was an essential strategy in coping within this challenging experience within the hospitality sector.
- Younger generations and older generations show that keeping quiet and distancing from situations would not only safeguard their well-being, but it would ensure that their jobs are safe.
- Often members of the older and the younger generation showed keeping quiet was essential in dealing with challenges experienced so as to avoid losing their jobs.
- Communicating with an individual from management was seen essential in dealing with the challenges encountered.
- Although communication was essential, both the older and the younger generation indicated that communicating did not resolve any of the issues brought forward.

Conclusion

- Based on the above findings, despite challenges which are faced by the older and the younger generations, there are specific coping methods used.
- These methods include keeping quiet or communicating with an individual from management.
- Keeping quiet is an internal coping strategy whereas communication is an external form of communication.

- Therefore, the findings show that it is important to recognise that in order for employees to work effectively, communication is essential for dealing with challenges encountered.

5.4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above empirical findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are made for the industry, occupational social work and future studies.

5.4.1. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE INDUSTRY

- Organizations are encouraged to put forward structures and programmes that encourage the development of both the older and younger generation. This can be done through opportunities for training and supporting the career development of the employee.
- It is recommended that organizations provide on-going feedback and recognition to both the older and younger generations.
- Organizations should ensure that a climate of support, recognition and empowerment is established for all generational groups. This can assist employees to develop a sense of trust and effective collaboration with their employer.
- Organizations are encouraged to pay attention to the needs of both the older and the younger generational groups, more especially ensuring that their needs are met.

5.4.2. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OCCUPATIONAL SOCIAL WORK

- At a micro and meso level, occupational social workers should encourage the older and younger generations to be more proactive in the workplace. This enables all generations to be actively involved in enhancing their engagement and performance.
- Occupational social workers at a macro level are encouraged to develop strategies which can assist the employer in identifying and understanding the workplace experience and needs of all generational groups.
- Occupational social workers are also encouraged to educate management and employees on fair treatment within the workplace, and the importance of treating people with respect and dignity.

5.4.3. RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE STUDIES

- It is recommended that future studies look into leadership in the workplace and the influence it has on engagement and performance of different generations. This can provide an understanding on whether or not employees are able to effectively engage with one another and perform efficiently if the leadership provided is effective or not, more especially by members of management.
- It is also recommended that future studies look into the interventions established by occupational social workers who ensure that engagement and performance of the different generational groups are efficient. This can provide an indication towards what occupational social workers do to ensure employee advancement and also organizational success.

5.5. CHAPTER SUMMARY

The findings of the study suggest that yes, there are indeed differences between generations however, and recognition should be provided that there are also similarities which exist amongst generations. The study has shown that engagement and performance is important in the workplace however, when it is poorly recognised and upheld, a decline is most likely to happen irrespective of the generation group which the employee encompasses. Furthermore, the study has shown that occupational social workers should guide management and establish interventions which will ensure organizational success and more especially, will cater for the human capital of the organization.

Reference

Abercrombie, B.A. (2014). *Multigenerational Workplace Satisfaction: Relationship between Generational Cohorts and Employee Engagement* (Doctoral Thesis). Oklahoma State University: Oklahoma

Alam, M.S., Saeed, A.S.A., Sahabuddin. M., Akter, S. (2013). Relationship between Employee Recognition and Employee Contribution in Service Industry. *International Journal of Business and Marketing Management, 1*(1), 1-8

Adler, E.S. & Clark, R. (2014). *An Invitation to Social Research: How it's done* (5th ed.). United States of America: Wadsworth Publishing

Amabile, T.M. (2001). *Motivational Synergy: Toward New Conceptualizations of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in the workplace* (Masters Dissertation). University of Brandeis, Waltham Massachusetts United States of America

Anderson, C. (2010). Special Articles Presenting and Evaluating Qualitative Research. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education, 74*(8), 1-7

Angeline, T. (2011). Managing generational diversity at the workplace: expectations and perceptions of different generations of employees. *African Journal of Business Management, 5*(2), 249-255

Appelbaum, S.H., Serena, M., & Shapiro, B.T. (2004). Generation X and the Boomers: Organizational Myths and Literary Realities. *Management Research News, 27*(11), 1-28.

APME, Classee, J.G., Thal, L.S., Kamen, R.D. & Rounds, R.S. (2004). *Business Aspects of Optometry: Association of Practice Management Educators*. United States of America: Elsevier Health Sciences

Arellano, K. (2015). *The Generational Shift in the workplace: Are we ready*. Integral Leadership Review. Retrieved from: http://www.integralleadershipreview.com

Aswathappa, K. (2005). *Human Resource and Personal Management* (4th ed.). New Delhi: Tata McGraw-Hill Publishing Company Limited

Aslop, R. (2008). *The trophy kids grow up: How the millennial generation is shaking up the workplace.* United States of America: John Wiley and Sons

Attride-Stirling, J. (2001). Thematic networks: an analytic tool for qualitative research. *Commission for Health Improvement, England, 1*(3), 385-405

Bach, S. & Edwards, M. (2012). *Managing Human Resources: Human Resource Management in Transition.* United States of America: John Wiley and Sons

Bakker, A.B. & Demerouti, E. (2008). Towards a model of engagement. *Career Development International Journal, 13*(3), 209-223

Bakker, A.B. & Hakanen, J.J., Demerouti, E. & Xanthopoulou, D. (2007). Job resources boost work engagement, particularly when job demands are high. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 99,* 274-284

Bakker, A.B. & Schaufeli, W.B. (2008). Positive organizational behavior: engaged employees in flourishing organizations. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 29,* 147-154

Baldwin, D.A. (2003). *The library compensation handbook: A guide for administrators, librarians and staff.* United States of America: Greenwood Publishing

Baptiste, N.R. (2009). Fun and well-being: insights from senior managers in a local authority. *Employee Relations, 31*(6), 600-612

Baran, M. & Klos, M. (2014). Competency Models and Generational diversity of a company workforce. *Economics and Sociology, 7*(2), 209-217

Bartley. S.J., Ladd, P.G., & Morris, M.L. (2007). Managing the multigenerational workplace: Answers for Managers and Trainers. *CUPA HR Journal, 58*(1), 28-34

Bergstrom, E. & Martinez, M.G. (2016). *The influence of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation on employee engagement: a qualitative study of the perceptions of managers in public and private sector organizations* (Degree Project). UMEA University: Sweden

Blauth, C., McDaniel, J., Perrin, C. & Perrin, P.B. (2011). *Age-Based Stereotypes: Silent Killer of Collaboration and Productivity* (No.Mo1360). Florida: United States of America

Boittin, K. & Theys, S. (2014). *Managing diversity of age in an age of diversity* (Master's Thesis). Linnaeus University: Sweden

Bold, C. (2011). *Using Narrative Research* (1st ed.). London: Sage Publications

Bosco, S.M. & Harvey, D.M. (2013). Generational effects on recruitment and workplace productivity. *Proceedings of the Northeast Business & Economics Association*, 17-20. Retrieved from http://www.nbea.us/

Bouwer, A. (2009). Occupational social workers as organizational change agents. *The social work practitioner-researcher, 21*(3), 389-406

Bowes, B.J. (2008). The business case for workplace diversity. *Journal for CMA Management, 81*, 14-16

Bowling, N. & Eshleman, K. (2010). Employee personality as a moderator of the relationships between work stressors and counterproductive work. *Journal of occupational health psychology, 15*(1), 91-103

Boyatzis, R.E. (1998). *Transforming Qualitative Information: Thematic Analysis and Code Development*. United States of America: Sage Publications

Bradler, C., Dur, R., Neckermann, S. & Non, A. (2013). E*mployee Recognition and Performance: A field experiment*. University of Maastricht: Netherlands

Brennan, B. (2010, January/February). Generational Differences. *Paper Age*, 26-28.

Bright, L. (2010). Why Age Matters in the Work Preferences of Public Employees: A Comparison of Three Age-Related Explanations**.** *Public Personnel Management, 39*(1), 1-14.

Buchbinder, S.B. & Shanks, N.H. (2011). *Introduction to Health Care Management*. United States of America: Jones & Bartlett Publishers

Burke, M.E. (2004). *Generational Differences Survey Report. Society for Human Resource Management*. United States of America: SHRM

Campbell, W.K., Campbell, S.M., Siedor, L.E. & Twenge, J.M. (2015). Generational Differences are real and useful. *Journal of industrial and organizational psychology*, *8*(3), 324-331

Carey, M. (2013). T*he Social Work Dissertation Using Small-Scale Qualitative Methodology* (2nd ed.). United States of America: Open University Press

Cennamo, L., & Gardener, D. (2008). Generational differences in work values, outcomes and person-organization values fit. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 28(8),* 891-906.

Cerny, D. (2015). Who Gives to Whom? - Generations in the Workplace and Perceptions of Transfer Processes in Business Enterprises. *International Journal for Infonomics*, *1*, (1), 5-10

Chi, C., Maier, T. & Gursoy, D. (2013). Employees Perceptions of younger and older managers by generation category. *International Journal of Hospitality Management, 34*, 42-50

Chima, S. C. (2013, May). *Global medicine: Is it ethical or morally justifiable for doctors and other healthcare workers to go on strike.* Paper presented at the 3rd Ethics, Human Rights and Medical Law Conference, Africa Health Congress, Johannesburg, South Africa

Chingumo, C. (2013). Marikana: fragmentation, precariousness, strike violence and solidarity. *Review of African Political Economy, 40,* 639-646

Chinguno, C. (2015). The unmaking and remaking of industrial relations: the case of Impala Platinum and the 2012-2013 platinum strike wave. *Review of African Political Economy, 42* (146), 577-590

Clandinin, D.J. (2016). *Engaging in Narrative Inquiry* (9th ed.). New York: Routledge

Claretha, H. (2012). *Valuing people and technology the workplace: A competitive advantage framework*. United States of America: IGI Global

Close, D.S. (2015*). Generational motivation and preference for reward and recognition in a South African facilities management firm* (Master's dissertation). University of South Africa. Pretoria

Cook, S. (2008). *The essential guide to employee engagement: better business performance through staff satisfaction*. London: Kogan Page Publishers

Coon, D. & Mitterer, J.O. (2012). *Introduction to psychology. Active Learning Through Modules* (12th ed.). Wadsworth: Cengage Learning

Collins (2017). *Definition of workforce*. Retrieved from: www.collinsdictionary.com

Conely, H. & Wright, T. (2016). *Gower Handbook of discrimination at work*. United States of America: Gower Publishing

Cureton, S.S. (2014). *The role of exchange ideology in coworker social support and work engagement* (Doctoral Dissertation). University of Southern Mississippi, United States of America. Retrieved from www.docplayer.net/26719984-The-role-of-exchange-ideology-in-coworker-social-support-and-work-engagement.html

Creswell, J.W. (2009). *Research Design Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches* (3rd ed.). United States of America: Sage Publications

Creswell, J.W. (2014). *Research Design International Student Edition. Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches* (4th ed.). United States of America: Sage Publications

Crumpacker, M. & Crumpacker, J.M. (2007). Succession Planning and Generational Stereotypes: Should HR Consider Age-Based Values and Attitudes a Relevant Factor or a Passing Fad? *Public Management, 36*(4), 349-369

Cruz, S. (n.d.). *Communicating across generations: training and development* (Training Manual). University of California: California

Czarnowsky, M. (2008). *Learning's role in engagement: An ATSD research study*. Alexandria, VA: ATSD

Danklefsen, E., Meyer, C. (2015, November 19). Generational Ethics: Are we really that Different. NJCPA. Retrieved from www.njcpa.org

De Vos, A., Strydom, H., Fouche, C.B & Delport, C.S..L. (2011). *Research at Grass Roots for Social the Social Sciences and Human Service Professions* (4th ed.). South Africa: Van Schaik Publishers

DeWitte, H. (2005). Job Insecurity of the international literature on definitions prevalence, antecedents & consequences. *South African Journal of Industrial Psychology, 31*(4), 1-6

Djabi, M., & Shimada, S. (2013). *How Does Generational Diversity Contribute To The Organizational Dynamic? An Empirical View* (Master's Thesis). University of Paris-Dauphine, Paris.

Dorjkhuu, O. (2013). *Employee Training Methods for Developing Economy*. National Academy of Governance Mongolia. Retrieved from www.tokyofoundation.org

Du, Y. (2011). *Communication Disconnect: Generational Stereotypes between generation X/Y and Baby boomers in American and Chinese organizational communication* (Master's Thesis). Liberty University: Virginia

DuBrin, A.J. (2008). *Essentials of Management* (8th ed.). United States of America: Cengage Learning

DuPlessis, A. (1990). Occupational Social Work Practice in McKendrick, B.W. (ed.). *Social Work in Action*. Haum Tertiary: Pretoria

Duquesnoy, P. (2011). G*enerations, leadership style and employee performance* (Master's Thesis). Tilburg University, Netherlands

Elder, S. (2009). *Sampling Methodology A Youth Employment Programme an International Office*. Switzerland: International Labour Organization

Employee Assistance Professionals Association (2005). *Standards for employee assistance programmes in South Africa* (2nd ed.). Hatfield: Pretoria

Ethics Resource Centre (2013). *Generational Differences in workplace ethics: A supplemental report of the 2011 National Business Ethics Survey Report.* United States of America: Ethics Resource Centre. Retrieved from: www.uni.edu.com

Evans, L. & Olumide-Aluko, F. (2010). Teacher Job Satisfaction in Developing Countries: A Critique of Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory Applied to the Nigerian Context. *ISEA, 32*(2), 73-85

Farrell, L. & Holkner, B. (2006). Making language work in hybrid workspaces: three tensions. *Studies in Continuing Education, 28*(3), 305-320

Fenzel, J.L. (2013). Examining Generational Differences in the Workplace: Work Centrality, Narcissism, and their relation to employee work engagement (Doctoral Thesis). University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, Unites States of America

Forges, J.P. (2014*). Motivation and its Regulation: The control within*. USA: Psychology Press

Foss, N.J., Minbaeva, D.B., Pedersen, T. & Reinholt, M. (2009). Encouraging Knowledge Sharing among employees: How job design matters. *Human Resource Management, 48*(6), 871-893

Furnnam, A. & MacRae, I. (2017). *Motivation and Performance: A Guide to motivating a diverse workforce*. United States of America: Kogan Page Publications

Gausepohl, S. (2016, December 5). *Tackling 4 Key Challenges of the Multigenerational Workforce*. Business News Daily. Retrieved from: http://www.businessnewsdaily.com

Gaziel, H.H. (2001). Correlates of job satisfaction: A study of the two factor theory in an educational setting. *The journal of psychology, 120*(6), 613-626

Giacalone, R.A. & Promislo, M.D. (Eds.). (2013). *Handbook of Unethical Work Behavior*. United States of America: Taylor & Francis

Giles, D. (2003). *Media Psychology*. United States of America: Routledge.

Griffin, R.W. (2007). *Fundamentals of Management* (6th ed.). United States of America: South Western College Publications

Graen, G.B., Linden, R.C. & Hoel, W. (1982). Role of Leadership in the Employee Withdrawal Process. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 67*(6), 868-872

Gratton, L. (2011). Forces shaping the future of work. *Business Strategy Review, 30*, 16-24

Groleau, D., Young, A., & Kirmayer, L. J. (2006). The McGill Illness Narrative Interview (MINI): an interview schedule to elicit meanings and modes of reasoning related to illness experience. *Transcultural psychiatry*, *43*(4), 671-691

Grondfeldt, S. & Strother, J. (2005). *Service leadership the quest for competitive advantage*. United States of America: Sage Publications

Gupta, B.L. (2007). *Governance and Management of Technical Institutions* (1st ed.). New Delhi: Ashok Kumar Mittal

Gursoy, D., Maier, T.A. & Chi, C.G. (2008).'Generational differences: An examination of work values and generational gaps in the hospitality workforce', *International Journal of Hospitality Management 27*(3), 448−458

Gursoy, D., Geng-Qing Chi, C & Karadag, E. (2013). Generational differences in work values and attitudes among frontline and service contact employees. *International Journal of Hospitality Management, 32,* 40-48.

Gursoy, D., Chi, C. G., & Erdem, E. (2013). Generational differences in work values and attitudes among frontline and service contact employees. *International Journal of Hospitality Management, 32*, 40-48

Hagemeier, L., Spicer, S., Nadasen, K., Draper, M., Thaver, L., Batley, K. (2009). *X-Kit undergraduate Sociology.* South Africa: Maskew Miller & Longman

Hahn, J. (2011). Managing Multiple Generations: Scenarios From the Workplace. *Nursing Forum, 46(3),* 119-127

Hamid, N.Z.A. & Hassan, N. (2015). The relationship between workplace environment and job performance in selected government offices in Shah Alam, Selangor. *International Review of Management and Business Research, 4*(3), 845-851

Hamidullah, M.F. (2015). *Managing the next generation of public workers: A public solution handbook*. United States of America: Routledge

Hanny, M. & Fretzwell, C. (2011). The higher education workplace: meeting the needs of multiple generations. *Research in Higher Education Journal, 10*, 1-12

Harrison, E. (2009). A new vision for employees health and wellness in South Africa: What can occupational social work offer. *The Social Work Practitioner, 21*(3), 370-388

Heathfield, S.M. (2016). *What is a workplace, Workplaces come in a variety of settings*. Retrieved from http://humanresources.about.com/od/glossaryw/g/workplace.htm

Held, V. (2006). *The ethics of care: personal, political and global*. New York: Oxford University Press

Hendricks, J. & Cope, V. (2012). Generational diversity: what nurse managers need to know. *Journal of advanced nursing, 69*(3), 717-725

Hess, E.D. (2012). *Grow to Greatness: Smart Growth for Entrepreneurial Business.* United States of America: Stanford University Press

Hess, N & Jespen, D.M. (2009). Career stage and generational differences in psychological contracts. *Career Development International, 14*(3), 261-283.

Hewlett, S.A. & Sherben, L., Slumberg, K. (2009). How Gen Y and Boomers will reshape your agenda. *Harvard Business Review, 87*(7), 71-76

Hoffman, C. & Lesser, E.L. & Ringo, T. (2012). *Calculating Success: How the New Workplace Analytics will revitalize your organization*. United States of America: Harvard Business Press

Hoole, C. & Bonnema, J. (2015). Work engagement and meaningful work across generational cohorts. *South African Journal of Human Resource Management, 13*(1), 1-11

Hollway, W. (1991). *Work Psychology & Organizational Behavior: Managing the individual at work*. United States of America: Sage Publications

Jex, S.M. & Britt, T.W. (2014). *Organizational Psychology, A scientist Practitioner Approach* (3rd ed.). USA: John Wiley and Sons

Johnson, L., & Johnson, M. (2010, November/December). Resolving Intergenerational Workplace Conflict. *Baseline Magazine*, 17

Karpus, J., & Johnson, M. (2015). From Boomers to Linksters: Managing the Friction Between Generations at Work. *Tire Business, 33*(12), 1-10

Kelloway, E.K., Sivanathan, N., Francis, L., & Barling, J. (2005). Poor leadership. In Barling, J., Kelloway, E.K. & Frone, M. (Eds.). *Handbook of workplace stress*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications

Kim, J.K. (2008). *Virtue and character strengths, coping ad quality of life for people with chronic illness and disability*. United States of America: ProQuest

Kombo, B.W., Obonyo, G.O. & Oloko, M. (2013). Effects of delegation on employee performance in savings and credit cooperative societies in kisii county, Kenya. *The International Journal of Business & Management, 2*(7), 203-226

Kumar, C.R. (2008). *Research Methodology* (5th ed.). New Delhi: APH Publishing Corporation

Labour Research Service (n.d.). *Knowledge is too important to be left in the hands of the bosses*. Retrieved from www.lrs.org.za

Lagen-Fox, J. & Cooper, C.L. & Klimoski, R.J. (2007). *Research Companion to the Dysfunctional Workplace: Management Challenges and Symptoms.* United States of America: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited

Lawson, J.W.R. (1998). *How to develop and employee handbook* (2nd ed.). United States of America: AMACOM

Levitt, J. & Harwood, L. (2009). *Your career and How to make it happen* (7th ed.). United States of America: Cengage Learning

Lieber, L.D. (2010). How HR Can Assist in Managing the Four Generations in Today's Workplace. *Employment Relations Today, 36*(4), 85-91

Ligege, F.J. (2016). *Exploring occupational services rendered at public high schools for teachers in Vhembe district Limpopo* (Masters Thesis). University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa

Lincoln, Y.S. & Guba, E.G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Newbury Park California: Sage Publications

Lingaard, H. & Rowlinson, S.M. (2005). *Occupational Health and Safety in Construction Project Management.* United States of America: Taylor and Francis

Lowenberg, F.M. & Dolgoff, R. (1996). *Ethical Decisions for Social Work Practice* (5th ed.). South Africa: F.E. Peacock Publishers

Lu, A.C.C. & Gursoy, D. (2013). Impact of job burnout on satisfaction and turnover intention: Generational differences matter. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research, 20*(10), 1-26

Lussier, R. (2008). *Management Fundamentals: Concepts, Applications, Skill Developments*. United States of America: Cengage Learning

Maingi, J. & Makori, M. (2015). Effect of workplace diversity on employee performance in Kenya: A case of Kenya school government. *Journal of Business and Change Management, 2*(59), 343-364

Management Study Guide (2017). *What is employee Relations*. Retrieved from www.managementstudyguide.com

Manetje, O.M. (2009). *The impact of organizational culture on organizational commitment* (Master's Dissertation). University of South Africa, Pretoria

Markos, S. & Sridevi, M. S. (2010). Employee Engagement: The key to improving performance. *International Journal of Business and Management, 5*(12), 89-96

Mattes, R. & Richmond, S. (2015). *Are South Africa's youth really a 'ticking time bomb'?: Afrobarometer working papers* (No.152). Cape Town: University of Cape Town

Mayer, B. (2015). *The conflict Paradox: Seven Dilemmas at the core of disputes*. United States of America: John Wiley and Sons

McConnell, B. (2016). *Hire Honesty: Then trust your employees*. United States of America: Archway Publishing

McKinlay, J. & Williamsam, V. (2010). *The Art of people management in libraries. Tips for managing your most vital resource.* United States of America: Elsevier

McLaughlin. H. (2007). *Understanding Social Work Research*. United States of America: Sage Publications

McNabb, D.E. (2004). *Research Methods for Political Science: Quantitative and Qualitative Methods* (2th ed.). New York: M.E. Sharpe

Meriac, J.P., Woehr, D.J. & Banister, C. (2010). Generational differences in work ethic: An examination of measurement equivalence across three cohorts. *Journal of Business and Psychology, 25*(2), 315-324

Meyers, K.K., & Sadaghiani, K. (2010). Millennias in the Workplace: A Communication Perspective on Millennials' Organizational Relationships and Performance. *Journal of Business Psychology, 25*, 225–238.

Miller, P., & Yu, H (2003). Organizational values and generational values: a cross cultural study. *Australasian Journal of Business and Social Enquiry, 1*(3), 138-153.

Milligan, S. (2014, November 24). Wisdom of Ages: How can employers capture the skills and knowledge of four generations. *HR Magazine*, 23-27

Monette, D.R., Sullivan, T.J. & DeJong, C.R. (2011). *Applied Social Research A Tool for the Human Services* (8th ed.). United States of America: Brooks/Cole Cengage Learning

Morril, C. (2000). *Investigating the Social World. Qualitative Data Analysis*. United States of America: Sage Publications

Morrow, S.L. (2005). Quality and Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research in counseling Psychology. *Journal of Counseling Psychology by the American Psychological Association, 52*(2), 250-26

Mula, A.B. (2014). *The impact of employment equity legislation on employee engagement within generation Y* (Master's Thesis). University of Pretoria: Pretoria

Naharuddin, N.M. & Sadegi, M. (2013). Factors of workplace environment that affects employees performance: A case study of Miyaza Malaysia. *International Journal of Independent Research Studies, 2*(2), 66-78

Nattrass, N. (2004). Unemployment and aids: the social-democratic challenge for South Africa. *Development Southern Africa, 21*(1), 87-108

Nelson, D.L. & Quick, J. (2013). *Organizational Behavior Science: The Real World and You* (8th ed.). United States of America: Cengage Learning

Nguyen, P.D., Dang, C.X. & Nguyen, L.D. (2015). Would Better Earning, Work Environment, and Promotion Opportunities Increase Employee Performance? An Investigation in State and Other Sectors in Vietnam. *Public Organizational Review, 15*, 565–579

Noah, Y. & Steve, M. (2012). Work environment and job attitude among employee's in a Nigerian work organization. *Journal of Sustainable Society, 1*(2), 36-43

Notter, J. (2013). *Conflict and generations in the workplace*. Retrieved at http:www.astd.org/Publications/Blogs/Management-Blog/2013/03/Conflict-and-Generations-in-the-Workplace

Noyoo, N. (2010). Human rights and social work in a transforming society: South Africa. *International Social Work, 47(3),* 359-369

Okello, D.R. & Gilson, L. (2015). Exploring the influence of trust relationships on motivation in the health sector: a systematic review. *Human Resource Health, 13*(16). DOI: 10.1186/s12960-015-0007-5

Padgett, D.K. (2008). *Qualitative Methods in Social Work Research* (2nd ed.). United States of America: Sage Publications

Pandza, J., Deri, L., Galambos, A., Galambos, T. (2015). Two-factor Analysis of Employee Motivation at "Post Traffic-Department in Novi Sad". *European Journal of Economic Studies, 12*(2), 101-111

Pew Research Centre (2017). *The Whys and How's of generation's research*. Retrieved from www.people-press.org

Peyton, P.R. (2003). *Dignity at Work: Eliminate Bullying and Create a positive working environment.* USA & Canada: Brunner-Routledge

Phillips, J.J. & Connell, A.O. (2004). *Managing Employee Retention: A strategic accountability approach*. United States of America: Elsevier Butterworth Heinemann

Picco, M. (2017). *Sexual Harassment a serious matter*. Legal Resources. Retrieved from: www.hg.org.

Pitt-Catsouphes, M. & Matz-Costa, C. (2008). The multi-generational workforce: workplace flexibility and engagement. *Journal of Social Service Research, 36*(1), 68-80

Pravamayee, S. (2014). Strategy to develop on effective workplace environment. *International Journal of Language and Linguistics, 1*(1), 57-61

Probst, T.M. & Brubaker, T.L. (2001). The effects of job insecurity on employee safety outcomes: cross sectional and longitudinal explorations. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 6*(2), 139-159

PriceWater and Coopers (2016). *Putting Purpose to Work: A study of purpose in the workplace*. Retrieved from www.pwc.com

Randle, J. (2006). *Workplace Bullying in NHS*. United States of America: Radcliff Publishing

Rice, C., Marlow, F. & Masarech, M.A. (2012). *The Engagement Equation Leadership Strategies for an inspired workforce.* United States of America: John Wiley Sons

Richmana, A.L., Civiana, J.T., Shannona, L.L., Hillb, E.J., & Brennanc, R.T. (2008). The relationship of perceived flexibility, supportive work life policies, and use of formal flexible arrangements and occasional flexibility to employee engagement and expected retention. *Community, Work & Family, 11*(2), *183-197*

Rosdahl, C.B. & Kowalski, M. T. (2008). *Textbook for basic nursing: Lippincotts practical nursing.* United States of America: Lippincotte Willimans and Wilkins

Royse, D. (2011). *Research Methods in Social Work* (6thed.). United States of America: Brooks/Cole Cengage Learning

Rubin, A. & Babbie, E.R. (2005). *Research Methods for Social Work* (5th ed.). United States of America: Thomson Learning Inc

Ryan, R.M & Deci, E.L. (2017). *Self-Determination Theory: Basic Psychological Needs in motivation, Development and Wellness*. New York: Guilford Publications

Saba, T. (2013). *Understanding Generational Differences in the Workplace: Findings and Conclusions*. Kingston: Queens University Industrial Relations Centre

Salahuddin, M.M. (2010). Generational differences impact on leadership style and organizational development. *Journal of Diversity Management, 5*(2), 1-6.

Sawitiri, D., Suswati, E. & Huda, K. (2016). The impact of job satisfaction, organization commitment, organization citizenship, behavior on employee's performance. *The international journal of organizational innovation, 9*(2), 24-47

Senge, P.M. (2010). *The fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of Learning Organization* (5th ed.). United States of America: Random House Publications

Sharma, S. (2013). Conceptualization and Application of Business Ethics and Social Responsibility: A comparative study of Mega Marts in Jaipur City. *International Journal of Jaipur National University, 2*(2), 144-48

Shaw, I. & Gould, N. (2001). *Introducing Qualitative Methods: Qualitative Research in Social Work*. United States of America: Sage Publications

Sheafor, B.W & Horejsi, C. R. (2012). *Techniques and Guidelines for Social Work Practice* (9th ed.). United States of America: Pearson

Shenton, A.K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Journal of Education for Information, 22*, 63-75

Shuck, M.B., Rocco, T.S. & Albornoz, C.A. (2010). Exploring employee engagement from the employee perspective: Implications for HRD. *Journal of European Industrial Training, 35*(4), 300-325

Sibanyoni, N.S. (2014). *Protecting the protector: exploring work-related challenges experienced by contract security guards employed by a security company in Johannesburg* (Master's Thesis). University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa

Sinah, K. & Trivedi, S. (2014). Employee Engagement with Special Reference to Herzberg Two Factor and LMX Theories: A Study of I.T Sector. *SIES Journal of Management, 10*(1), 22-35

Singh, V. (2014). *Exploring Intergenerational Communications at Workplace* (Doctoral Dissertation). Tata Institute Mumbai: India

Slitter, M., Slitter, K. & Jex, S. (2012). The employee as a punching bag: The effect of multiple sources of incivility on employee withdrawal behavior and sales performance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 33*, 121–139

Smola, K.W., & Sutton, C.D. (2002). Generational differences: revisiting generational work values for the new millennium. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 23*, 363-382

Snell, S.A. & Bohandler, G.W. (2012). *Managing Human Resources* (16th ed.). United States of America: Cengage Learning

Somers, M.J. (2009). The combined influence of affective, continuance and normative commitment on employee withdrawal. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 74*, 75-81

Sonnet, B. & Zerbarini, S. (2001, January-February Issue). Attracting and retaining top talent in a tight labour market. *Tampa Bay Magazine*, 177

South African Council of the Social Service Professional. Sacssp Code of Ethics. Retrieved from www.sacssp.co.za

Spaho, K. (2011). Organizational communication as an important factor of company success: case study of bosnia and Herzegovina. *Business intelligence Journal*, *4*(2), 390-393

Srinivasan, V. (2012). Multi generations in the workforce: Building collaboration. *IIMB Management Review*, *24*, 48-66

Sze, C.C. & Angeline, T. (2011). Engaging employees to their jobs: Role of exchange ideology as a moderator. *African Journal of Business Management, 5*(10), 3986-3994

Taiwo, A.S. (2010). The influence of work environment on workers' productivity: A case of selected oil and gas industry in Lagos Nigeria. *African Journal of Business Management, 4*(3), 299-307

Tarricone, P. & Luca, J. (2002*). Successful teamwork: a case study*. United States of America: HERDSA

Thompson, D.P. (1996). *Motivating others creating the conditions*. Larchmont New York: Eye on education

Tolbize, A. (2008). *Generational Differences in the workplace*. Unpublished Manuscript: University of Minnesota. Retrieved from www.rtc.umn.edu>2_18_Gen_diff_workplace

Tse, H.H.M. & Dasborough, M.T. (2008). A Study of Exchange and Emotions in Team Member Relationships. *Group & Organizational Management*, *33*(2), 194-215

Tshaya, S. (2015). *Challenges faced at Sizanani Community Centre in Soweto regarding delivery: Perspectives of the community workers* (Honours Thesis). University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa

Turner, P. (2003). *Organizational Communication, the role of the Human Resource Professional*. London: CIPD Publishing

Twenge, J.M. (2010). A review of the empirical evidence on generational differences in work attitudes. *Journal of Business Psychology*, *25*(2), 201-210

Twenge, J.M., & Campbell, S.M. (2008). Generational differences in psychological traits and their impact on the workplace. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 23*(8), 862-877

Twenge, J.M., Campbell, S.M., Hoffman, B.J., Lance, C.E. (2010). Generational Differences in Work Values: Leisure and Extrinsic Values Increasing, Social and Intrinsic Values Decreasing. *Journal of Management, 30*(5), 1117-1142.

Van Breda, A. (2009). The scope of occupational social work practice in South Africa. *The social work practitioner-research, 21*(3), 284-300

Van Breda, A. & Du Plessis, A. (2009). A model of occupational social work practice: A developmental social welfare critique. The Social Work Practitioner-Researcher, 21(3), 319-336

Van der Walt, S., & Du Plessis, T. (2010). Age diversity and the aging librarian in academic libraries in South Africa. *South Africa Journal of Libs & Information Sciences, 76*(1), 1-10.

Van Rensburg, S.J. (2013). *Respect in intergenerational relationships: adults' and young adults' motivations* (Masters Dissertation). North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa

Verschoor, C.C. & Mertz, J. (n.d.). Ethical attitudes differ among generations: Implications for accounting educators. Retrieved from: http://docplayer.net

Vendramin, P. (2009, March 26-29). *Age Diversity and Intergenerational Relations at the Workplace*. Paper presented at 4th Conference Young People & Societies in Europe and around the Mediterranean. Forli.

Von Holdt, K. (2003). *Transition from below: Forging trade unionism and workplace change in South Africa*. Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press

Waldron, V.R. & Kassing, J.W. (2010). Managing risk in communication encounters: Strategies for the workplace. United States of America: Sage Publications

Walsh, M. (2001). *Research made real: A guide for students*. USA: Nelson Thomas Publications

Wei, L.T. & Yazdanifard, R. (2014). **T**he impact of Positive Reinforcement on Employees' Performance in Organizations. *American Journal of Industrial and Business Management, 4*, 9-12

Westerman, J.W. & Yamamura, J.H. (2006). Generational preferences for work environment fit: Effects on employee outcomes. *Career Development International, 22*(2), 150-161

Wiley, J. & Kowske, B. (2011). *Respect: Delivering Results by Giving Employees what they really want*. United States of America: John Wiley & Sons

Woog, D. (2017). What older workers and younger workers can learn from each other. Monster. Retrieved from:www.monster.com

Wong, M., Gardiner, E., Lang, W., & Coulon, L. (2008). Generational differences in personality and motivation. Do they exist and what are the implications for the workplace? *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, *23*(8), 878-890

Yang, T., Shen, Y., Zhu, M., Liu, Y., Deng, J., Chen, Q. & See, L. (2015). Effects of Co-Worker and Supervisor Support on Job Stress and Presenteeism in an Aging Workforce: A Structural Equation Modeling Approach. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *13*(72), 1-15

Young, S.J., Struts, J.R., Ross, C.M. & Kim, K.T. (2013). Generational differences and job satisfaction in leisure services. *Managing Leisure, 1*, 1-19

Zemke, R., Raines, C., & Filipczak, B. (2000). *Generations at work: Managing the clash of veterans, boomers, and nexters in your workplace*. New York: American Management Association.

Zengele, T. (2007). *Attitudes of engineering staff and students to academic development classes at Tshwane University of Technology* (Masters Thesis). University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.

Zhu, Y., Yang., H. & Bai, G. (2016). Effects of superior-subordinate intergenerational conflict on job performance of new generation employees. *Social behavior and personality: an international journal, 44*(9), 1499-1514

Zopiatis, A., Krambia-Kapardis, M. & Varnavas, A. (2012). Y-ers, X-ers and Boomers: Investigating the multigenerational (mis)perceptions in the hospitality workplace. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*. DOI: 10.1177/1467358412466668, 1-21

Appendix A: Participant Information Sheet



Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050 • Tel: 011 717 4472 • Fax: 011 717 4473 • E-mail: socialwork.SHCD@wits.ac.za

Understanding generational differences impact on employee relationships with co-workers in individual performance and engagement in the workplace.

Good day

My name is Makgotso Maja and I am a postgraduate student registered for the degree Master of Arts in Occupational Social Work at the University of the Witwatersrand. As part of the course requirements, I am conducting a research titled understanding generational differences impact on employee relationships with co-workers in individual performance and engagement in the workplace. This study hopes to contribute to the social work profession by heightening the importance of diversity amongst employees. The aim of the study is to understand generational differences impact on employee relationships with co-workers in individual performance and engagement in the workplace. I would appreciate it if you participate in my study so that social workers could have a better understanding of your experiences. If you are interested in participating in the study, I will personally interview you for approximately 45-60 minutes at a time and place which is convenient for you. I therefore ask for permission to record the interview however if you feel uncomfortable, then I shall write process notes.

If you decide to participate in the research I assure that your information remains confidential which means your information will not be provided to anyone. I assure that your real name will not be used and no identifying information will be used in the final report. If during the course of the interview you wish to withdraw because you are feeling uncomfortable then, you are more than welcome to stop the researcher and the interview will be annulled. The provision of counseling will be provided by Magaret Sebetha free of charge. She is a qualified social worker

at Sechaba Community Centre. She can be contacted at 011 962 9003 or alternatively on 076 128 5643 or on her email address at sebethalerato@gmail.com.

If you have any questions regarding the study, you are more than welcome to contact me on 074 369 2302 or 079 734 5814, or alternatively send an email to 669856@students.wits.ac.za or Makgotso.Maja@gmail.com. You can also contact my supervisor Ms. Busisiwe Nkala-Dlamini at the University of the Witwatersrand. You can contact her at 011 717 4483 or alternatively send her an email at busisiwe.nkala-dlamini@wits.ac.za.

Thank you for taking the time to consider participating in the study.

Regards

Makgotso Maja

Occupational Social Work Masters Student/ Researcher

Appendix B: Consent Form

Consent for participation in the study

Title: Understanding Generational differences impact on employee relationships with co-workers in individual performance and engagement in the workplace.

I hereby consent to participate in the research project. The purpose and procedures of the study have been explained to me. I understand that participation within the research is voluntary. I understand that my responses will be kept confidential. I also consent to the following:

- That the interview can be recorded; if not then the researcher can write process notes
- That copies of transcripts will be made and destroyed after six years if the article is not published, however after two years if published
- That my real name will not be used for this study and the researcher will make use of a pseudonym
- That I have the right to withdraw my participation in the research anytime I choose

Name of participant:_____

Date:_____

Signature:_____

Name of researcher:_____

Signature of researcher:_____

Appendix C: Interview schedule for participants

Title: Understanding Generational differences impact on employee relationships with co-workers in individual performance and engagement in the workplace.

Demographic Information

- Introductions will be made and the participant will be assigned a pseudonym
- The participant will then move on to providing their
- Age ☐
- Gender M ☐ F ☐
- Race _____
- Number of years you have worked in company/organization _____
- Educational level _____
- Job Title _____

Questions

1. What motivates you as an employee within the workplace?
2. In your own view what would you say work ethics are?
3. What workplace ethics do you find important?
4. Would you say this place is your ideal workplace?
5. In your personal view would you say it's a good thing or bad thing to work with older or younger than you? Tell me more about that.
6. How does interacting with people of a different generational group than yours influence your work performance?
7. What factors would you say affect your performance within the workplace in relation to working with your co-workers?
8. How do you think performance can be enhanced within the workplace for members of your generation group?
9. What workplace factors influence your engagement with other employees within the workplace?

10. Do your co-workers seem to care about you as a person, if so how?

11. What challenges affect your engagement with your co-workers?

12. How do you deal with or manage these challenges?

13. Would you say your strategies are ideal in a working environment, if so how?

Contribution to social work

What workplace interventions do you feel they should consider making the workplace operative?

Is there anything else you would like to share about the research study?

Appendix D: Interview schedule for key informants

Could you kindly share with me your experiences of working with employees from different generational groups?

- Are there difference between different generations and relations established?
- What generational expectations are evident from these generational groups?
- From your experience what is your understanding of the challenges which they face when forming relations and interacting with other employees?
- What are some of the coping mechanisms they use to cope with these challenges?
- Do you think generational differences and relations established affect the employee performance and engagement, if so how?
- What measures have organizations previously enforced to accommodate such generational differences?
- What role do you think occupational social workers can play when working with employees from different generational groups?

Is there anything else which you would like to share concerning this research study?

APPENDIX E: ETHICAL CLEARANCE

APPENDIX F: LETTER OF PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH



01 October 2016

To whom it may concern

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY

My name is Makgotso Maja; I am a social worker currently doing my Masters in Occupational Social Work at the University of the Witwatersrand. As partial fulfillment for my course I am expected to conduct a research study. The proposed topic for my research is based on understanding generational differences impact on employee relationships with co-workers in individual performance and engagement in the workplace.

I am hereby seeking consent to conduct my research at your organization. Upon completion of my study I shall provide you a bond copy of my dissertation. If you require more information, please do not hesitate to contact me on 074 369 2302 or 079 734 5814 or kindly send an email to 669856@students.wits.ac.za or Makgotso.Maja@gmail.com. The research will be conducted under the supervision of Busisiwe Nkala-Dlamini who can be contacted on 011 717 4472 or alternatively on her email busisiwe.nkala-dlamini@wits.ac.za.

Your permission to conduct the research at your organization will be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kind Regards

_____

Makgotso Maja

Researcher

APPENDIX G: LETTER OF APPROVAL FROM THE DEVONSHIRE HOTEL



16th November 2016

Dear Makgotso Maja

On behalf of the General Manager of the Devonshire hotel, this letter serves to inform you that your request for permission to make use of the hotel for your research project has been approved. This is on condition that you conduct your research on the weekends only as staff is busy during the week days.

Should you require further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

All the best!!!!

Kind Regards

Vimbayi Sangweni

Front Office Manager

011 339 5611

fom@devonshirehotel.co.za

APPENDIX H: TURN IT IN PERCENTAGE REPORT