

GENERATIONAL DIVIDE AND ITS' EFFECTS ON BUSINESS CULTURE, EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND TEAMWORK COMPATIBILITY

RESM8419p

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Word Count: 10503

Declaration

I hereby declare that the Research Report submitted for the BCOM Honours degree to The Independent Institute of Education is my own work and has not previously been submitted to another University or Higher Education Institution for degree purposes.

Abstract

The purpose of this research study is to inspect the social phenomena of the generational divide, and identify whether it influences organisational performance in terms of employee engagement, collaboration, and intrinsic motivation towards the business and its collective impact on the culture of an organisation.

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Introduction and Rationale

There have been several studies done on generational differences and the various ways that it impacts organisations, however, there are two very distinct splits in conclusions or results of the studies. The results of these studies either conclude in stating that generational divide does influence organisational performance (Lapoint and Liprie-Spence, 2017) and that it is the task of the organisation to adapt to handle these issues (Lapoint and Liprie-Spence, 2017), or the other stating that there is no evidence that there is clear signs of generational difference within the workspace and its influence on the organisation (Zabel et al., 2016). Two key examples of these studies are “Generational Differences in Definitions of Meaningful Work: A Mixed Methods Study” (Weeks and Schaffert, 2017) and “Employee Engagement: Generational Differences in the Workforce” (Lapoint and Liprie-Spence, 2017), who both conducted studies relating the generational differences in the workspace.

It is however, hypothesise, that the issue with the two significant differences in results of the studies done are that they are conducted within singular companies or industries and at different levels of management and professional positions. This form of research has two significant flaws. Firstly, the organisation under study may be one that has changed its culture and processes in order to accommodate various generations or not, resulting in one of two results: generational difference has an influence, or it doesn't. Secondly, conducting studies from only a certain level upwards limits you to certain age groups or individuals that have been inducted into the company for some time already who may have already forced an adaption to the companies culture regardless of their thoughts, values and opinions stemming from a generational difference.

Therefore, a study needs to be done across different industries, generations, levels of positions within their organisations and time spent within their current organisation, in order to gain a different insight into the phenomena at hand.

Problem Statement

Multi-generational workspaces have become the norm, primarily due to the significant increase in life expectancies globally, which has subsequently resulted in a five generations working side by side, and increasing to six within the next three to four years (Delcampo et al., 2011). These generations include the Baby Boomers (1946-1964), Generation X (1965-1980), Generation K (1977-1987), Generation Y/Millennials (1981-1994), Generation Z (1995-2000) and Generation Alpha (2000-2015).

Each newer generation has intrinsic values which differ from their predecessors, due to a multitude of variables caused by the state of their environment during their fundamental development period (Weeks and Schaffert, 2017). These values may diminish the

effectiveness of company's efforts to encourage employee engagement, collaboration and support of the business's values and vision.

How the generational divide affects each company is dependent on the structure of the organisations culture and operations, to promote the inclusivity of all generations working in one space (Gordon and Steele, 2005). Organisational culture can dictate if the generational divide will either weaken teamwork and communication, or if it will change in a manner that can take advantage of the differences and strengths that each generation has.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this research study is to examine the social phenomena of the generational divide and if it influences organisational performance in terms of employee engagement, collaboration and intrinsic motivation towards the business and its collective impact on organisational culture. If there is a correlation between the differences between generations and the afore mentioned organisational performance elements, it will provide a basis from which organisations can change and adapt their culture accordingly.

There have thus far, not been any extensive studies relating the influence of the generational divides on business culture, and teamwork compatibility. However, this study will use literature resources focusing on generational differences and its influence on employee engagement and workplace ethic as a foundation.

Research Questions

Primary Questions:

How does generational differences impact organisational performance in terms of employee engagement, collaboration and intrinsic motivation towards the business and its collective impact on organisational culture?

Secondary Questions:

- What are the current specific influences of the generational divide on organisational culture?
- Is the influence specific to certain departments, such as finance, operations, human resources etc?
- What generation or generation exerts the most influence on the organisational culture?
- Are these influences limited to specific levels of staff members, in terms of position and experience?
- How can these pitfalls or challenges caused by the generational divide be bridged?

- Is the problem isolated to just the culture, or does other functions or aspects of the organisation need to be adapted or changed?
- Are the challenges due to only human aspects of the organisation or are they influenced or compounded by operational processes, company policies etc.?
- How does one's generational background influence the organisational culture required to function within a collaborative, engaged and motivated workspace?
- Do these influences stem from individual cultural backgrounds?
- Can these influences be linked to the economic ecosystem present during prime growth phases of individuals?

Literature Review

The purpose of this literature review is to examine the various bodies of literature, research and studies conducted relating to the social phenomena of the generational divide and its influences on organisational performance in terms of employee engagement, collaboration and intrinsic motivation towards the business and its collective impact on organisational culture.

Generational divide postulates the differences of opinion and perspectives of various generational cohorts (Subramanian, 2017), however, arguments of generationalism (discussed in more details below) established by Purhonen (2015) and Wohl (1979) has left substantial gaps within research regarding misconceptions established of differences between generations.

Bodies of literature regarding generational differences, has provided vast amounts of information relating to how the generational cohorts effect organisations employee engagement and perceptions of leadership and management.

There have thus far, not been extensive studies relating to the influence of the generational divides on business culture alone. However, this study will use literature resources focusing on generational differences and its influence on values, and those being actual and perceived, and the impact that the theory of generationalism has had on research, and the approach thereof, of the different generational cohorts and the influences that generational divide may result on organisations.

Studies done relating to the social phenomena of generational divide such as country specific or business specific analysis will not be reviewed in detail but will rather be referred to as appropriate.

Definitions and Fundamentals

In order to understand the ways in which the generational divide impacts teamwork, intrinsic motivation and employee engagement and its collective impact on organisational culture, it is essential to define and explain the concepts of generational divide and organisational culture before analysing their underlying interrelated and interdependent components. Although organisational culture itself will not form a significant portion of this literature review, the definition and explanation of this concept is pivotal in understanding the way in which values and the perceived versus actual generational differences impact the organisations culture.

1. Generational Divide

In order to define the generational divide or generational gap (academic literature uses these terms interchangeably – for the sake of this study we will use the term generational divide only) the concept of generations must first be defined and established. A generation is a social construct grouping individual that are born during a similar time period that was subject to and influenced by, historic and social contexts to an extent that these experiences differentiate one generational cohort from another (Lester et al., 2012). It has however, been argued that same generations share more than just common experiences that unify them, but rather share other unifying aspects such as distinct generational habitus and shared values (Purhonen, 2015; Schullery, 2013).

The sociological theory or concept of the generation divide was established during the 1960's as the "Baby Boomers" generation began to showcase significant differences from their predecessors (Subramanian, 2017). The generational divide can be defined as being the difference of opinion and perspective held by one generation against another regarding aspects such as beliefs, politics and values, and is today used to refer to the perceived gap (which will be discussed in more detail below) between younger generations and older generations (Subramanian, 2017). Various bodies of literature also postulate that the theory of the generational divide is due to potential tensions and conflicts between different generational cohorts to a lack of understanding resulting from a disparity in values, cognitions and behaviours, which can negatively impact organisational dynamics (Lester et al., 2012).

2. Organisational Culture

Organisational culture has been studied and analysed for decades, resulting in several definitions from different disciplines of research (Dauber et al., 2011). This has resulted in two key approaches to defining organisational culture; the dimensional approach and interrelated structure approach (Dauber et al., 2011).

The concentration on organisational culture shifted attention from functional and technical aspects of management, which are categorised as the dimensional approach that are more readily quantified and empirically analysed, to the interpersonal and symbolic aspects of management, categorised as the interrelated structures approach that required in-depth, qualitative studies of organisational life (Önday, 2016). This shift occurred as a means to answer the question that if culture is just one more facet of an organisation, then it may be changed as easily as a strategic plan or office layout, however, if culture is something an organisation is, then it may be harder to change and should be considered in all other decision making within the organisation (Driskill and Brenton, 2011).

This change in attention subsequently stimulated a large literature on leadership, in addition to variants of organisational culture considered increasingly important for success in the modern business world, such as change oriented culture, learning culture, innovating culture, team and project-oriented cultures, with emphasises being places on organisational culture ability to facilitates agility; promote alliances, partnerships and networks; encourage knowledge management; fosters corporate responsibility and/or moral integrity; and embraces diversity (Önday, 2016).

Within the scope of the study at hand, the interrelated structures approach will be used. The definition that, therefore, best fits this approach is that organisational culture is the behaviour of humans within an organisation and the meaning that people attach to those behaviours, as well as the organisations visions, values, norms, systems, symbols, language, assumptions, beliefs, and habits (Keya, 2017).

Generationalism

Generationalism denotes to the views in popular discourses regarding generations, which dates back to early 20th-century and the generational theorists of that period, who were the first to formulate and codify the modern concept of social and or cultural generations (Purhonen, 2015). Generationalism suggests and perceives generations as completed and unproblematic entities or groupings that have an existence of their own and contrasts generational cohorts with social class's, presenting them as mutually exclusive forces (Purhonen, 2015). Furthermore, generationalism lends itself to overemphasize the various characteristics displayed by the different generations it claims to describe, which more creates a unrealistic portrait of all those encompassed by their relevant generational groupings (Purhonen, 2015). Wohl (1979), suggested that the concept of generationalism theorised a biological determinism that had no basis in social fact and it indirectly implied that the generational stage of life was a prison from which no escape was possible, and that communication across the separation of these cohorts was improbable.

In addition, generationalism, does not take into account the various life cycles that members of these generational cohorts phase through, and the changes that these cycles have on their value systems and how they subsequently diverge or converge the divide between the generations (Purhonen, 2015; Simhadri, 1991). A life cycle perspective proposes the existence of a universal development sequence through specific stages throughout the human life cycle, with these stages being childhood, adolescence, early adulthood, middle adulthood, and lastly old age (Cogin, 2012). Cogin (2012) aides this in stating that as individuals age, they obtain the ideologies and attributes of being collectivistic, conservative, and self-transcendent, and less individualistic, open to change, and self-enhancing, and that the characteristics of one's life cycle ultimately is defined by the changes in the needs of an individual's over time.

Purhonen (2015), explains that the fundamental flaw in generationalism is that it does not take into consideration that for a given generation, the precondition of its existence is that there needs to be someone who articulates the generational experience to begin with, and only after this can the generational consciousness among wider circles can be formed. The social aspect of these generations, just like all other social groups, are never born but are made, which means that they are continuously changing and adapting to the environment that they are situated in (Purhonen, 2015; Wohl, 1979).

The above-mentioned flaws or unaccounted aspects within generationalism, makes the study of the impact of the generational divide amongst the various generational cohorts that are present and those to join the working environment substantially more complex. Therefore, data capturing will have to include different members of the Millennials, Generation Z, and Generation Alpha cohorts currently progressing through different stages of their life cycle, as they are yet to complete the full development of their generational characteristics. These unaccounted aspects within generationalism means that studies done and being conducted that include generations after Generation Y may be inaccurate in their results and findings.

Values

Values can be defined as being concepts about the desirable end states or behaviour that are not tied to specific situations and are evaluative and play a pivotal role in directing individuals to select between alternative courses of action (van Hoorn, 2019). The primary contributing factors to the development of individual values are personal experiences and socialisation processes, with socialisation processes involving parental, siblings, teachers and media influence, which act as agents of instilling a value system within each individual (van Hoorn, 2019).

Diverse bodies of literature, psychologists and other social scientists have, over-time, developed two widely accepted standard value frameworks, with one concerning the personal values being individual-level constructs of individuals and the other concerning cultural values being the societal-level construct influences (van Hoorn, 2019). Both frameworks play an interrelated role in the effects that generational values have on the organisational culture, employee engagement, collaboration and intrinsic motivation towards the business, and directly influence the research design structure as these value facets need to be taken into account to establish which category of framework affects the aforementioned aspects, and if so to what extent.

Both value frameworks works have been primarily due to the works of Shalom Schwartz, who's literature will be referenced below in discussing these frameworks.

Cultural Values:

Cultural values develop as a result of confronting fundamental issues or problems relating to regulating human activity by societies, with people needing recognize and understand these problems, plan responses to them, as well as motivate one another to cope with them (Schwartz, 2006). It's through these ways in which societies respond to these issues or problems that dimensions can be identified to establish ways which cultures may differ from one another, which can be seen in the below three value dimensions of problems that face all societies (Schwartz, 2006).

1. Nature of the Relation or the Boundaries Between the Person and the Group:

This dimension deals with the extent to which are people Autonomous versus Embedded in their groups (Schwartz, 2006). Schwartz (2006) explains the autonomy culture as being where people are viewed as autonomous, bounded entities, that should nurture, develop and express their own preferences, feelings, ideas, and abilities, whilst finding meaning within their own uniqueness. There are two sub-types of autonomy, namely intellectual autonomy and affective autonomy. Intellectual autonomy encourages pursuing of individuals own ideas and intellectual directions independently, with examples of important values within such a culture being broadmindedness, curiosity, and creativity (Schwartz, 2006). Affective autonomy is the aspect of culture that encourages individuals to pursue affectively positive experience for themselves, which includes values such as pleasure, the attainment of an exciting and varied life (Schwartz, 2006). Embeddedness on the other hand, is cultures that view individuals as entities that are embedded within the collective, resulting in the meaning in life being generated primarily through social relationships, identifying with the group, participating in its shared way of life, and striving to attain its collective and shared goals (Schwartz, 2006). Embedded cultures place emphasis on maintaining the status quo

and restricting the actions that might disrupt solidarity within the collective or traditional order, with values in such cultures being social order, respect for tradition, security, obedience, and wisdom (Schwartz, 2006).

2. Ensuring Behaviour of People are Responsible as to Preserves the Social Fabric:

Within this dimension individuals must actively engage in the productive work necessitated to maintain society rather than rebel or compete destructively or suppress their efforts, with individuals being required to be induced to consider the welfare of others, to co-ordinate with them, and subsequently manage their unavoidable interrelated interdependencies within the societal collective (Schwartz, 2006). This dimension deals with the comparative and use of Egalitarianism versus Hierarchy within various societies. Cultural egalitarianism aim is the encouragement of people to recognize all individuals as being moral equals, who share the same basic interests as human beings (Schwartz, 2006). Within egalitarianist cultures, individuals are socialised to adopt a commitment to co-operate and to feel concern for everyone's overall welfare, and are expected to act for the benefit of others as a matter of choice, with values relating to this culture including equality, social justice, responsibility, help, and honesty. Hierarchical cultures, as defined by Schwarts (2006), relies on the hierarchical systems that define and assign roles to insure responsible, productive behaviour. It defines the unequal distribution of power, roles, and resources as legitimate, where individuals are socialized to accept the hierarchical distribution of roles for granted, complying with the obligations and rules attached to their roles, instilling values such as social power, authority, humility, and wealth within the culture (Schwartz, 2006).

3. Regulating how People Manage Relations to the Natural and Social World:

The final dimension is concerned with the usage within societies of the polar aspects of Harmony versus Mastery. Harmony based cultures place emphasis on attempting to fit into the world as it is, whilst trying to understand and appreciate the environment that the society is situated in rather than to change, direct, or exploit it (Schwartz, 2006). Values stemming from this culture include a world at peace, unity with nature, and protecting the environment (Schwartz, 2006). Schwarts (2006), that mastery is the polar cultural response to this problem, and encourages active self-assertion to master, direct, and change the natural and social environment with the aim ensure that group or personal goals are attained, establishing values within its culture such as ambition, success, risk acceptance, and competence.

Personal Values:

In Schwartz's original literature he sought to identify a comprehensive set of basic values that are relevant across all societies, in which he defined these basic values as being trans-

situational goals, with each varying in importance, in order to serve as a guiding principle in the life of an individual or group within a society (Schwartz et al., 2012b). It was theorized that the basic values are sorted into a system that will aide in explaining individual decision making, attitudes, and behaviour, which was based off the social and psychological conflict or congruity between values that are experienced when making everyday decisions (Schwartz et al., 2012b). Schwart et al. (2012b), refined Schwartz's original work, developing 19 values within the set, that enables for each value to be defined more narrowly, whilst still encompassing the original 10 values set out by Schwartz.

Within the refined framework, the methodology used in the ordering of the value set remained the same, with the order being based on the conflict or compatibility between the values that individuals experience when seeking to express any pair of values within one single action or decision (Schwartz et al., 2012b). Figure 1 (Schwartz et al., 2012a), is the format by which the value set has been organised using a circular motivational continuum and proposes that this structure describes the pattern of conflict and compatibility among values across various societal cultures (Schwartz and Sortheix, 2018). Within this circular continuum, there is a wedge for each value, with opposing wedges in the circle conflict with one another motivationally, for example stimulation versus conformity and benevolence versus hedonism, whereas values in adjacent wedges are considered compatible, for example self-tradition and security (Schwartz and Sortheix, 2018). Two bi-polar, higher order dimensions summarize the relations among the 19 values within the set, for example openness to change versus conservation will be used to describes the conflict that exists between values that emphasize independence of action, thought, and sensations and readiness for change against security, predictability, and resistance to change (Schwartz and Sortheix, 2018).



Figure 1: Circular motivational continuum of 19 values - Schwartz et al., 2012

Below are each of the 19 values definitions that form the base value set as defined by Schwartz et al. (2012b):

19 Base Value Definitions
<i>Self-Direction–Thought</i> : Freedom to be able to cultivate own ideas and abilities
<i>Self-Direction–Action</i> : Freedom to be able to determine own actions
<i>Stimulation</i> : Excitement, novelty, and change
<i>Hedonism</i> : Pleasure and luxurious gratification
<i>Achievement</i> : Success in accordance to societal standards and expectations
<i>Power–Dominance</i> : Power achieved through applying control over people
<i>Power–Resources</i> : Power achieved through control over material and social resources
<i>Face</i> : Security and power by maintaining public image and avoiding humiliation
<i>Security–Personal</i> : Safety in own immediate environment
<i>Security–Societal</i> : Safety and stability within wider society
<i>Tradition</i> : Maintaining, preserving and upholding cultural, family, or religious traditions
<i>Conformity–Rules</i> : Compliance with rules, laws, legislation and formal obligations
<i>Conformity–Interpersonal</i> : Avoidance of upsetting or harming others
<i>Humility</i> : Recognizing own insignificance within the larger picture
<i>Benevolence–Dependability</i> : Being a reliable, honest and trustworthy member of the group
<i>Benevolence–Caring</i> : Devotion to the welfare and protection of group members
<i>Universalism–Concern</i> : Commitment to equality, justice, and protection for all
<i>Universalism–Nature</i> : Preservation of the natural environment and ecosystem
<i>Universalism–Tolerance</i> : Acceptance and understanding of those who are different from oneself

Perceived Versus Actual Generational Differences

It is vital to differentiate between the perceived and actual generational differences within the workspace, as this will various aspects of concern that have been perceived to be impacting the workspace. This will directly impact the research design, as areas that are perceived to be generational differences, but not the fact in actuality, will be eliminated from the data capturing methods as these will display inaccurate perceptions of the impact that generational divide has on employee engagement, organisational culture and intrinsic motivation. It is important to note that current literature and research focuses only on the current three generations that are functioning within the workspace, which are namely the Baby Boomers (1946-1964), Generation X (1965-1980), and Generation Y/Millennials (1981-1994).

Lester et al. (2012), conducted a study across the three above mentioned generations to empirically determine what are the actual and perceived generational differences. This study, however, falls within the scope of flaws that surround the study of generational

differences, which is that a large majority of literature research is conducted using a singular company as their population from which to gain data which creates a skewed result. Nevertheless, the study conducted by Lester et al. (2012), provides key insights into showcasing that what has been perceived as generational differences and what are in actuality are lies as a fault to generationalism.

The study showcased that the three generations examined did not express significant differences in the extent to which they valued technology, which has become a misconception that older generations are resistant to technology, but rather the results suggested that all generations currently in the workforce recognise the value generated by technology when it comes to competing successfully in the business environment (Lester et al., 2012). However, actual differences in respect of technology was related to the use of it in communication, with individuals falling in the Baby Boomers and Generation X cohorts valued these technology driven forms of communication significantly less than that of their Generation Y equivalents (Lester et al., 2012).

Perceptions relating to differences in the value placed on traditional forms of communication (face-to-face) were proven false, as the only difference or disagreements in terms of communication were those forms relating to the use of technology (Lester et al., 2012). This has been theorized to be as a result that where Baby Boomers may be more likely to rely on traditional communication, Generation Y individuals may value face-to-face communication primarily as a means of maintaining an effective exchange of information with older generations, which could be as a result of fear that older generations may not reciprocate or appreciate communication through technological modes (Lester et al., 2012). This may subsequently be as a result of another misconception of resistance to technology by older generations (proven above as being a perceived difference), which showcases the interrelated and indirect influence that the various false perceived differences have on the way that generations interact with one another within the workspace.

Value disagreements regarding formal authority were perceived rather than actual, as all generations appeared to value formal authority equally, however, this may be due to do with the conceptualization of formal authority and what it means to each generation (Lester et al., 2012).

The research also brought to light the fallacy relating to the perceived value difference placed on continuous learning by Generation Y (Lester et al., 2012).

Research Design and Methodology

Research Design

Paradigm

It is imperative to layout the four key elements that create the foundations for all paradigms, as they comprise the basic assumptions, beliefs, norms and values that each paradigm holds (Kivunja and Bawa Kuyini, 2017). The four key elements are briefly discussed below:

- *Epistemology of a paradigm*

The term Epistemology is derived from the Greek words “episteme” and “logos”. “Episteme” can be translated as being “knowledge”, “understanding” or “acquaintance”, whilst “logos” can be translated as “account”, “argument” or “reason” (Steup and Neta, 2020). Throughout its extensive history, different facets of epistemology have attracted attention, however, in recent academic literature, formal epistemology attempts to understand how our degrees of confidence are rationally constrained by our evidence (Steup and Neta, 2020).

Epistemology is fundamentally concerned with the very bases of knowledge, what constitutes its nature, and forms and how it can be acquired, and how it can be best communicated to other human beings (Kivunja and Bawa Kuyini, 2017). It deals with the nature of human knowledge and comprehension that the researcher or knower can possibly derive or acquire in order to extend, broaden and deepen understanding within ones field of research (Kivunja and Bawa Kuyini, 2017).

- *Ontology of a paradigm*

Ontology is a branch of philosophy that is concerned with the assumptions that individuals make in order to believe that a concept, idea or something makes sense or is real, or the essence of the social phenomenon we are investigating (Kivunja and Bawa Kuyini, 2017). Ontology focuses on the study of ‘being’ or ‘existing’ and is concerned with ‘what is’, common examples of this are the nature of existence and structure of reality as such or what it is possible to know about the world (Al-Saadi, 2014). Ontology can, furthermore, be defined as a concept concerned with the existence of, and relationship between, different facets of society such as social actors, cultural norms and social structures, and deals with questions pertaining to these facets that exist within society (Al-Saadi, 2014).

- *Methodology of a paradigm*

Methodology is simply a broad term that refers to the research design, methods, approaches and procedures used to conduct a research or investigation that is well planned to find out something, and articulates the logic and flow of the systematic processes followed by the researcher in conducting a research project, in order to gain

additional or more valuable knowledge about a research problem (Kivunja and Bawa Kuyini, 2017). This includes aspects such as data gathering, participants, instruments and tools utilised, and data analysis.

- *Axiology of a paradigm*

Axiology, derived from the Greek axios meaning “worthy” and logos meaning “science”, “understanding” and “knowledge”, also termed the theory of value, is the philosophical study of goodness, or value, in the widest sense of these terms (Duignan, 2020). Its significance lies its considerable expansion given to the meaning of the term value and unification that it has provided for the study of various of questions, such as economic, moral, aesthetic, and even logical, which has previously been considered in relative isolation (Duignan, 2020).

Axiology deals with the ethical issues that need to be taken into consideration in planning a research proposal or investigation, as it considers the philosophical approach to making decisions of value (Kivunja and Bawa Kuyini, 2017). Axiology encompasses defining, evaluating and understanding concepts of right and wrong behaviour relating to the research, and takes into account what value shall be attributed to the different aspects of research, the participants, the data and the audience to which results of the research will be reported to (Kivunja and Bawa Kuyini, 2017).

This study will be conducted making use of the interpretivist paradigm, as the aim of the research is to understand the social phenomena of the generational divide from the perspectives of employees and employers, in order to determine if generational differences significantly influences organisational performance in terms of employee engagement, collaboration and intrinsic motivation towards the business. The fundamental aim of the interpretivist paradigm is to understand the subjective world of human experience, and makes a concerted effort to gain understanding and interpret what the subject is thinking or what he or she is making of the context (Kivunja and Bawa Kuyini, 2017). Another key aspect of the interpretivist paradigm, and a pivotal point for its use within this study, is that the knowledge acquired in this discipline is socially constructed rather than objectively determined and perceived, which allow for significant insight into the social phenomena constructed by the generational divide (Edirisingha, 2012).

Taking the above four key elements into account, and the use of the interpretivist paradigm, this study will assume a subjectivist epistemology, a relativist ontology, a phenomenology methodology and a balanced axiology, with each of these being explained briefly below.

A subjectivist epistemology implies that the standards of rational belief belong to those of the individual believer or those of the believer's community, and that subjectivism can, thus, come in either an individualistic form or a social form (“Subjectivist Epistemology,” 2020). It

is the belief of subjectivist epistemology that knowledge is at all times filtered through the lenses of language, gender, social class, race, and ethnicity, which plays a critical role in understanding the various perspectives associated to the impact of the generational divide. Although subjectivist epistemology does not deny that an external reality exists, it does knowledge as value laden, and that unaffected and universal knowledge of an external reality is not possible beyond individual reflections and interpretations (Levers, 2013). Therefore, the researcher makes meaning of data obtained through the study through their own thinking and cognitive processing of that data, which is informed by their interactions with the participants (Nguyen, 2019).

Relativist ontology refers to the belief that the situation studied has multiple realities, and that those realities can be studied and meaning made of them, or reconstructed through human interactions between the researcher and the subjects of the research, and among the research participants (Kivunja and Bawa Kuyini, 2017). Reality from a relativist perspective is not distinguishable from the subjective experience of it, and that to state that the two cannot be separated is ambiguous, as it implies that there are two entities to separate (Levers, 2013). Through this way of thinking, reality is seen as human experience and human experience is seen as reality, and that it is beyond two people experiencing an external world differently, but rather that their worlds are different (Levers, 2013). Relativist ontology, bolsters the problem statement of this research, that the environment that each generation grew up in impacted their reality, and altered what their world experience in comparison to that of different generational cohorts.

Phenomenology methodology is a form of qualitative research, focusing on the study of an individual's lived experiences within the world, and will be discussed in more detail below within the explanation of the research plan and research methodology (Neubauer et al., 2019).

A balanced axiology refers to the beliefs that the values of the researcher will be reflected in the outcome of the research in the balanced reports of the research findings (Nguyen, 2019).

Research Approach and Research Design

The research will be conducted using qualitative measures as the research approach, as many of the fundamental issues with generational differences stem from persons personalities, characteristics, values, opinions etc., which are difficult to quantify.

Qualitative research refers to a multimethod in focus, involving an interpretative, naturalistic approach to its subject matter, meaning that studies done within the scope of qualitative research study the object or concept of their research in their natural settings, attempting to

make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Aspers and Corte, 2019). Qualitative research incorporates the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials, such as case studies, personal experiences, introspective, life stories, interviews, and observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts, which are used to describe routine and problematic instances and meanings within an individuals' life (Aspers and Corte, 2019).

Individuals create and manage meaning through symbols, languages, beliefs, visions, ideologies and myths, and it's through the use of qualitative research that we can obtain insight into individuals realities that encompass these aspects, as it allows for the use of 'how' and 'why' questions to be asked of the participants to generate the capture of rich and thick narrative and understanding of individual experiences (Sloan, 2017). Through the use of an inductive style and focus on individual meaning, qualitative research assists researchers in bringing forward a human perspective to a complex issue (Sloan, 2017).

The research design will assume a deductive and explanatory approach, empirical assessment, utilising the phenomenology research design and interdisciplinary design.

This study will be led by a deductive approach, as the research is based off current theories in academic literature regarding generational differences, actual and perceived, and its impact on organisational culture, where the developed hypotheses from these theories will be tested according to collected and analysed data (DeCarlo, 2019).

Explanatory approach focuses on the cause-effect relationships, with the concern in the analysis being how one variable affects, or is responsible for changes in, another variable (Darabi, 2007). The explanatory approach will be used to understand and explain the relationships between the variables in the study, which in this case will be generational differences and actual impact on employee engagement, collaboration and intrinsic motivation (Darabi, 2007). Explanatory studies goes further than just description, but rather attempts to explain the reasons for the phenomenon that the descriptive study only observed (Darabi, 2007).

Empirical research will be used within this study, as it is based on observed and measured phenomena and ensure that knowledge is derived from actual experiences and data captured rather than from theory or belief ("What is 'Empirical Research'?", 2020).

Interdisciplinary research is any study or group of studies undertaken from two or more distinct disciplines, with the research based upon a conceptual model that links or integrates theoretical frameworks from these disciplines (Aboelela et al., 2007). Interdisciplinary research uses study design and methodology which is not limited to any one specific field,

but requires the use of perspectives and skills of the involved disciplines throughout multiple phases of the research process (Aboelela et al., 2007). This study focuses on the discipline of modern anthropology, which is the study of human nature as it manifests itself in culture and civilisation (Krishnan, 2009). Anthropology is inherently an interdisciplinary field as it is both grounded in the physical anthropology (the study of man's origin and evolution and present variation) and the social anthropology (study of man's social behaviour and its development) disciplines with rather unclear boundaries (Krishnan, 2009; Montagu, 2005).

Research Plan / Research Methodology

Research Methodology

Phenomenology methodology will be used as the methodology for this study, as it refers reflective study of pre-reflective or lived experience (Given, 2008). The fundamental characteristic that defines the phenomenological tradition is that it is the study of the lifeworld as we immediately experience it, pre-reflectively, instead of the conceptualised, theorised, categorised, or reflected version of these experiences (Given, 2008). The focus of phenomenology methodology on the study of pre-reflective experiences, is the primary supporting factor for its choice within this study (Ciaunica, 2015). The concept of pre-reflective self-consciousness is characterised both in terms of subjective "feel" – the idea that a individuals experiences has certain phenomenological quality or "what it is like for the subject" to have them; and "mine-ness" or "for-me-ness" – the idea that all experiences are implicitly given as one's own experiences (Ciaunica, 2015). According to phenomenological tradition our experiences are not given to us impartially, but rather that they could in a sense be anyone's experiences (Ciaunica, 2015). Whenever a individual consciously perceives something or feels an emotion, these perceptions and feelings are given to as their own, with this immediate and first-personal given-ness of experiential phenomena being accounted for in terms of a pre-reflective self-consciousness (Ciaunica, 2015), which is the direct aim of this study.

Unit of Analysis and Observation, Population, Sample and Sampling Method

Within this study, the unit of analysis will be the individual or participant, whilst the unit of observation will be the generational cohort that the individual or participant belongs to. This will allow for ease of differentiation between what is being analysed and what is being observed, as this studies primary observation is on the actual and perceived generational differences between generational cohorts, but analysis will be done on an individualistic basis.

The population of this study is not limited to any particular social or physical aspects, however, the following criterion must be met by individuals in order to be included into the study:

- Must be currently employed
- Must have been employed for the past twelve months consecutively
- Must have obtained National Senior Certificate

The purpose of this criterion, is to ensure that the participants have the necessary experiences to have influenced their realities regarding the perceived and actual differences of the generational cohorts within the work environment.

The sampling size used for the study will be 5 individuals, with the sampling methods being quota sampling and snowball sampling.

Quota sampling is defined as a method of non-probability sampling, where the samples are chosen based on the probability proportionate to the distribution of a variable in the population (Rukmana, 2014). This study will be making use of sub-groups to allow for efficient and effective selection of samples to aide in gathering data that will allow further in-depth understanding of the phenomena at hand.

Quota Sampling: Sub-groups
Males occupying a senior management position
Females occupying a senior management position
Males occupying any form of low to medium level management position
Females occupying any form of low to medium level management position

These sub-groups have been developed to better understand if there are any correlations between the position held within an organisation and its impact on individuals reality of perceived or actual generational differences within the workspace. These sub-groups have also been split by gender to further identify any correlation between the gender of the individual and its impact on individuals reality of perceived or actual generational differences within the workspace.

Snowball sampling, also referred to as chain referral sampling, is the sampling method whereby participants that have already been contacted, are used as a means to penetrate their social networks in order to refer the researcher to other possible participants (Creswell et al., 2013). This method has been selected due to the limitations of the researcher in gaining access to a wide pool of participants

Method of Data Collection

The method that will be used for data collection will be in the form of semi-structured interviews, which will have predefined questions whilst allowing for the researcher to adapt the interview to the participant through probing questions and clarifications of answers (Creswell et al., 2013).

The predefined questions within the semi-structured interview will lay the foundation for data gathering and will be ordered according to an interview schedule. These questions will cover the base data that needs to be captured in order to answer the research questions, with the researcher using probing questions to build on top of the base data required.

Probing questions that will be used during these interviews will cover either one or more of the following probing strategies, to ensure that the optimal amount of data is gained from each participant.

- Detailed Orientated Probing:

Questions falling within this category are used to obtain specific details relating to the “who”, “where” and “how” of the answers given to participants. All probing questions – and furthermore all predefined questions – will not make use of “why” based questions, as these can in many instances be experienced as threatening or invasive, which will negatively influence the data captured (Creswell et al., 2013).

- Elaboration Probing:

Probing questions regarding elaboration are enable the researcher to gain deeper understanding into one or more answers provided by the participant (Creswell et al., 2013).

- Clarification Probing:

This is typically questions asked in order to ensure that the researcher fully understands the answer provided by the participant, and can be done by paraphrasing the answer given by the participant into a question (Creswell et al., 2013).

All predefined and probing questions will be asked within the scope provided in the table below:

Scope of Questioning
Questions asked that may result in “Yes” or “No” must be avoided at all times
Questions must be structured in a manner that allows for participants to provide answers of less than five transcript paragraphs.
Questions that may be considered misleading will be avoided
Questions that lead participants in providing answers to fit the hypothesis of the study, instead of answers true to the individuals reality will be avoided
Predefined questions will be limited to a maximum of 10, allowing for probing questions to gain deeper insight into each answer

The semi-structured interview will be recorded, with the provided consent of the participant, for ease of transcription. During the interview the researcher will make notes and comments on a provided sheet that focuses on the participants non-verbal communication and other deductions made throughout the interview. A key aspect of a successful interview, is the researchers ability to read into the non-verbal communications given by the participant and adjust probing questions accordingly to ensure that data captured is as saturated as possible (Creswell et al., 2013).

Methods for Ensuring Trustworthiness and Credibility

Verification of Raw Data

Copies of transcripts, including audio clips of the recordings, have been sent through all participants for verification of data captured during the interview, in order to reduce any potential influence of the researcher on participants during the semi-structured interviews.

Documentation of Decisions Taken

Decisions, thoughts and understanding have been documented within a OneNote document in order to record all procedures and actions conducted by the researcher during the course of the study.

Coding Trustworthiness

Coding of data was conducted by the researcher and a independent coder with no interest in the study in order to ensure that high inter- and intra-coder reliability is attained, with inter-coder reliability referring to the consistency among codes and data point allocations. The independent coder also peer reviewed transcripts to identify any potential errors and conflicts made by the researcher.

Controlling Bias

Bias within qualitative research poses a significant concern for validity of the study, especially when taking into consideration that relationships may be developed through interviews and data capturing which often results in skewed biased data, as well as the limitations experienced with conducting the study. Through the use of the above mentioned methods, as well as ensuring that participants chosen for the study are separated in terms of relationship standing from the researcher, bias within the study will be controlled.

Ethical Considerations and Limitations

Ethical Considerations

There are a number of ethical considerations that need to be taken into account. The relationship and intimacy that is established in qualitative studies between the researchers and participants can potentially raise different ethical concerns, and qualitative researchers face dilemmas such as respect for privacy, establishment of honest and open interactions,

and avoiding misrepresentations (Sanjari et al., 2014). Therefore, the interview will take place in a professional environment with participants being distant in terms of relationship from the researcher as to prevent the above mentioned concerns.

Ethical concerns that relate to participant personal details such as anonymity, confidentiality and informed consent should be taken into account while carrying out qualitative research (Creswell et al., 2013). Therefore the “Informed Consent Form”, see Annexure 1, will detail the anonymity of participants, confidentiality of their person and the secure data storage place of their details, period of storage and sharing restraints of data.

Limitations

The main limitations of the study are time limitation and access to participants, and subsequently coupled together results in the inability to accurately generalise results.

Taking these limitations into account, the structure of the research design has been adapted to allow for a meaningful study to still take place. Thematic and discourse analysis allows for meaning still to be gained from limited participants, as both methods are inherently designed and focused on small group studies. Sampling methods such as the snowball method chosen within the research design allows for the researcher to use current participants to social networks to access more potential participants for the study. Additionally, the sub-groups specified within the quota sampling method allows for meaningful data needed to answer the research questions at hand to be captured without having to have access to large groups of participants.

Participants

As per the limitations mentioned above, access to participants and time constraints created barriers in terms of both the number and variety of participants partaking in the study. However, the number of participants, as well as their placements and requirements stayed within the guidelines of the research design.

The study involved five full-time employed participants, with a 60 per-cent male and 40 per-cent female ratio. Two of the three male participants held positions senior management positions within their organisations, with the remaining participant holding a medium level management position. Of the two female participants, one held a senior management positions whilst the other held a medium level management position within their respective organisations. Of the five participants, two fell within the Millennial generation (26-39 years of age), one within the Generation X cohorts (40-54 years of ages), and two within the Baby Boomers generation (56-74 years of age). All five of the participants, resided within the greater Pretoria and Johannesburg area and had the same racial denomination.

All five of the participants partook in the entire semi-structured interview, with only two of the participants not being able to provide answers for one question respectively.

Analysis Method

This study will make use of thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is the process of identifying patterns or themes within qualitative data, through codifying data (Mortensen, 2020). A code acts as a brief description of what is being said in the interview, and not an interpretation of it, and assists in organising data captured into meaningful groups, with theme generation only taking place once codes are allocated to all data (Mortensen, 2020). Where codes identify interesting information within the data, themes are broader and involve active interpretation of the codes and the data, and are developed by collating the codes into broader themes (Maguire and Delahunt, 2017; Mortensen, 2020). In order to ensure structure within allocating codified data into themes and subthemes, a detailed map will be created with each theme displaying its relevant subthemes and codes within them. Codes that do not fall into a specific theme or that cannot be considered a theme of its own across the data, will not be discarded but will rather be mapped out as outliers, as this will provide further understanding into what could potentially become perceived realities of generational differences.

Procedures Used During Data Capturing

All interviews were conducted on the dates and times agreed upon with the participants. Two of the interviews were conducted using Cisco and WhatsApp live video calling applications, with the remainder being conducted in-person. All interviews were recorded and shared with the participants. Each recording was initially transcribed through the Otter.ai application, and proof read to correct any errors in transcription. Each participants transcription, was shared via their preferred method (email or in person), before being used for data analysis, for correction of errors and data validation.

Procedures Used During Data Analysis

Data analysis and data codification was conducted through the use of the Quirkos platform, as per the thematic analysis process for the identification of patterns or themes within qualitative data (Mortensen, 2020). Four levels of codification was used, each of which will be discussed in detail below.

In totality, all five semi-structured interview resulted in 57 codes being established across all four levels, with 260 data points distributed between these codes as applicable.

First Level Codes

It is important to note that although these groups were created in order to create structure in respect of where in the semi-structured interview data stems, there are data points and

codes that overlap. This is due to the fact that either the same data point was mentioned in different sections of the study, or that a data point provided by the participant encompasses answers applicable to multiple areas of the study. The four groups or top-level codes are shown in the table below.

Four Primary Groups (1st Level Codes)	
1.	UPR – Understanding the Premise of the Research
2.	GD – Generational Differences
3.	GDvGD – Generational Differences vs Generational Divide
4.	OA – Organisational Aspects

Second Level or Parent Category Codes

Second level or parent category codes identify the broader overarching themes within the data, grouping information relating to key concepts and involve active interpretation of the codes and the data (Maguire and Delahunt, 2017; Mortensen, 2020).

Third Level or 1st Level Child Category Codes

Third level codification included comparing data in accordance to the themes, and establishing sub-categories or 1st level child categories of themes, which aided in refining similarities and differences within participants answers.

Fourth Level or 2nd Level Child Category Codes

The last level of coding further refined certain sub-categories by establishing 2nd level child categories. The codifications provide an additional level or analysis whereby comparatives within sub-categories can be identified.

Coding Structure

The table below illustrates the relations and structure of the codes used within the data analysis of the study, from second level or parent category codes (themes).

Coding Structure	
1.	CLLB – Collaboration
1.1.	BTG – Bridging the Gap
1.1.1.	CMM – Communication
1.1.2.	US – Understanding
1.1.3.	RP – Respect
1.1.4.	CM – Change Management
1.1.5.	TS – Team Structure
2.	DG – Different Generations
2.1.	TP – Time Period
2.2.	AG – Age
2.3.	BB – Baby Boomers
2.4.	MLN – Millennials
2.5.	GENX – Generation X
3.	EXP – Experience
4.	IE – Impact Effectiveness

5. RM – Relationship Management
6. IT – Information Technology
7. WP – Workplace 7.1. CW – Company Wide 7.2. SL – Silos 7.3. HER – Hierarchy
8. DBG – Differences Between Generations 8.1. BH/P – Behaviour or Personality 8.2. IDG – Influence During Growth 8.3. MS/TP – Mindset or Thought Patterns 8.4. AD – Actual Differences 8.5. PD – Perceived Differences
9. CHL – Challenges 9.1. HA – Human Aspect 9.1.1. IC – Individual Culture 9.1.2. S/OF – Societal or Other Factors 9.2. CA – Company Aspect
10. GR – Generationalism
11. OGI – Organisational Generational Impact
12. GDV – Generational Divide 12.1. EX – Exists
13. CS – Conservative
14. OC – Organisational Culture 14.1. UM – Underlying Makeup 14.2. R/O – Response or Operations 14.3. V&M – Vision and Mission 14.4. VAL – Values 14.4.1. OB – Operational Based 14.4.2. CD – Company Dependent 14.4.3. VB – Value Based 14.5. BOT – Built Over Time 14.6. CSI – Companies Self-Identity
15. IC – Impact on Culture 15.1. MGM – Management 15.2. LS – Leadership 15.3. SD – Social Dynamics 15.4. 40-50 – 40-50 Age Group 15.5. 20-30 – 20-30 Age Group 15.6. INN – Innovation 15.7. INU – Industry
16. CG – Change

Findings and Interpretation

Four of the five participants indicated the need for open communication and understanding between different departments and team groups within companies, as lack of communication and understanding of one another's traits and characteristics creates conflict and friction within the organisation. This has also been linked as being an impact on organisational culture, as it proves to hinder inclusion within the organisation. One participant emphasised that a cause of the generational divide is backbiting or gossiping

amongst and against co-workers. All participants noted that a influence that the generational divide has on the culture of a organisation, is its impairment of teamwork and employee engagement, as different age cohorts may have predetermined assumptions on the way that others work, with these assumptions conflicting with their own methods and preferences for working procedures. In addition, all participants made clear distinctions in the fact that many of the differences are based off of personality traits associated with communication methods, which include the use of technology for communication, face-to-face discussions, sales methods, team collaboration and pace of communication.

This coincides with the postulations provided within the various bodies of literature, that suggest that the primary reasons for generational divides lack of understanding of different values, cognitions and behaviours, that ultimately negatively impact organisational dynamics (Lester et al., 2012). The conflict of values fall in line with both value frameworks, being individual-level constructs and societal-level constructs, that aide in the misconceptions and misunderstandings that promote the generational dived (van Hoorn, 2019). All participants of the study denote to these value frameworks clearly throughout their semi-structured interview, stating that the values of each of the generational cohorts are a mixture of societal influences as well as individual development.

The above-mentioned value frameworks also presents themselves in identifying if generational differences are impacted by each individuals cultural background. When participants where positioned with providing their opinion on this, only three of the five participants were in full agreement that individuals cultural backgrounds impacted the differences present within the respective generations. However, all participants stated that the societal expectations, economic ecosystem, political status and natural environment that were prevalent during the growth of individuals play a critical role in moulding the general opinions, viewpoints, mannerisms and characteristics of generational cohorts. This is supported by societal-level value constructs (Schwartz and Sortheix, 2018; van Hoorn, 2019)

In reference to which departments are influenced by the generational divide, four of the participants stated, in multiple instances throughout the study, that the influence is experienced company wide and not specific to one department. One participant emphasised that companies do not work in a silo setting within the current work environment, but that departments work dependently and in collaboration with one another, and therefore, that if one department is influenced then all departments are subsequently and directly influenced. One participant who holds a high level senior management position within a company primarily focused within the commerce industry, stressed that the origin of the influence in 90 per-cent of instances stems from the technology department. He extrapolated on this by

stating that outside of the technology department, many individuals, in particular those that fall in the older generations, are change resistant and conflict has a potential of taking place.

All of the participants agreed that the establishment and origin of a organisations culture stems from senior management within a company. 80 per-cent of participants believe that the middle management and upwards exert most of the influence experienced in terms of generational divide, as they play a critical role in setting and managing the tone for culture of the company. The remaining 20 per-cent believe that the influence is experienced throughout the hierarchical structure of the company, as younger generations tend to filter in from lower levels with older generations taking up higher level positions, and ultimately exerting the influence of the generational divide both upwards and downwards within the company structure.

The above view of the hierarchical levels that exert generational divide influences, is in alignment with the two generational groups that reside over middle to top management, and according to literature that have the largest gaps in terms of generational divides. The Baby Boomers and Millennials are the two generational cohorts that not only dominate the management levels from middle to senior, but are also the two generations who have the most difficulty working in collaboration with one another (Maxfield, 2015). This is further supported within this study, with three of the five participants identifying the Baby Boomer age cohort as currently exerting the most influence on organisational culture, with the remaining two participants identifying the Millennials. It is important, however, to note that the largest portion of studies conducted on generational differences and generational divide within the workspace have been conducted over the past 10 years, and subsequently results in statistics that are not inclusive of all generations and their current actual and potential differences.

Bodies of literature predominantly indicate and explain that the challenges experienced by generational differences, and the divide that stems from them, are as a result of the human aspects within the organisation, rather than it being an institutionalised structure that promotes these divides (Lester et al., 2012; Purhonen, 2015; Schullery, 2013). Although all participants of the study identified that the challenges are fundamentally caused by human aspects, four of the participants identified factors that influences or compounds these challenges that are supported by organisational aspects. The organisational aspects identified are organisational strategies that are not designed to obtain buy-in from all individuals across generational cohorts, and new staff induction and change management which are both aspects governed and supported by policies and processes. Many of the recommendations provided within literature are related to amending, changing or establishing certain organisational procedures in order to help mitigate and avoid

generational divide compounding activities (Maxfield, 2015; Subramanian, 2017). Therefore, although many of the generational divide influences stem from human aspects, there are organisational aspects that are needed to be taken into account that bolster these human aspects.

Leadership and management practices has been identified, by four of the participants, as being major impacting factors of generational divide within the organisation. Three of these participants elaborated on this by stating that the structure of the organisation itself, as well as management and leadership position within these structures, either promotes or mitigates the generation divide as authoritarian base structures, typically, do not promote open communication and understanding across all levels of staff. This is supported by Schwartz's (2006) second dimension of cultural values, egalitarianism based cultures are far more effective in promoting co-operation and humility, and are expected to act for the benefit of others as a matter of choice, with values relating to this culture including equality, social justice, responsibility, help, and honesty, whereas hierarchical cultures promote the opposite.

Conclusion, Recommendations and Future Research

Conclusion and Recommendations

The challenge facing organisations is that each newer generation has intrinsic values which differ significantly from their predecessors, as a result of a cacophony of variables such as values, opinions and the state of the environment during their growth periods of the individuals within these generations.

Thus far, there have not been any concrete studies conducted on generational differences, the establishment and the influence of generational divide on business culture, employee engagement and teamwork compatibility. However, as seen within the literature review of this study, there have been research studies conducted that deal with various aspects of the problem at hand. These studies have shone a light on the fundamental misconceptions that have been prevalent over the past decades, and have identified key human and organisational aspects that compound and promote the division between the various generations.

The findings of the study at hand have been equally insightful, by gaining insights from those that operate, manage and lead within various industries large and small, as well as provide the answers to the research questions posed by this study. The findings have shown that the fundamental aspects responsible for the generational divide are differences in values, communication methods (including the pace and medium of communication) and lack of understanding of the generations, and most importantly the understanding of the individuals

background. These three aspects coupled together create the platform organisational culture dissonance, and ultimately impacts employee engagements and the intrinsic motivation of employees.

The study, however, does provide recommendations for bridging the gap between the generational divides that have grown over the past years. Through the creation of cross-sectional and -generational teams, leadership and management promotes the collaboration and communication between employees that reside within different generations and sections. Workshops and training sessions focused on creating understanding of the backgrounds of not only generational cohorts but individuals, will eliminate many of the preconceived ideas that are in actuality perceived differences between generations rather than factual. Through the establishment and implementation of a culture that prospers on and promotes inclusivity and diversity in all facets, leveraging on the skills and strengths of all groups rather than create divisions between them.

Future Research

Although the questions proposed by this study were answered, in-depth studies are still required that allow access to larger quantities of participants across a wider range of industries, ethnicities, age groups and nationalities, as a larger scaled and scoped study may provide insights that this study, and similarly studies have been unable to provide. In particular, a focus point that may be of importance is the theory of generationalism, as the bodies of literature regarding this topic are small in comparison to the studies conducted on aspects that stem from it. This study has also identified a number of errors and omissions that lie within the theory of generationalism, such as nationality, ethnicity and culture being almost abandoned when establishing the generational characteristics and traits.

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Annexure 1: Consent Form

Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent Form for: _____

Name of Principle Investigator: Zuan Cambell-Wilson

Name of Study: Generational Divide And Its' Effects On Business Culture, Employee Engagement And Teamwork Compatibility

This Informed Consent Form has two parts:

- Information Sheet (to share information about the study with you)
- Certificate of Consent (for signatures if you choose to participate)

You will be given a copy of the full Informed Consent Form

Part I: Information Sheet

Introduction

I am Zuan Cambell-Wilson, and conducting research for my honors qualification. I am doing research on the Generational Divide And Its' Effects On Business Culture, Employee Engagement And Teamwork Compatibility. I am going to give you information and invite you to be part of this research. You do not have to decide today whether or not you will participate in the research. Before you decide, you can talk to anyone you feel comfortable with about the research.

This consent form may contain words that you do not understand. Please ask me to stop as we go through the information and I will take time to explain. If you have questions later, you can ask them of me or of another researcher.

Purpose of the research

The purpose of this research study is to examine the social phenomena of the generational divide and if it influences organisational performance in terms of employee engagement, collaboration and intrinsic motivation towards the business and its collective impact on organisational culture. If there is a correlation between the differences between generations and

the afore mentioned organisational performance elements, it will provide a basis from which organisations can change and adapt their culture accordingly.

Type of Research Intervention

This research will involve your participation in a one-on-one interview with myself that will take about one and a half hours.

Participant Selection

You are being invited to take part in this research because we feel that your experience, generational cohort and position within your organisation can contribute much to our understanding and knowledge.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. It is your choice whether to participate or not. You may also change your mind later and stop participating even if you agreed earlier.

Procedures

If you accept to partake, you will be asked to participate in a one-on-one interview, which will contain a series questions to gain your input and perspective. This interview will be guided by myself. The questions will encompass your experience of generational differences, cultural impacts and working in a environment consisting of different generations.

We will not ask you to share personal beliefs, practices or stories and you do not have to share any knowledge that you are not comfortable sharing.

The entire discussion will be tape-recorded, but no-one will be identified by name on the tape. The tape will be kept in secure storage utilizing the Microsoft environment. The information recorded is confidential, and no one else except myself will have access to the tapes. The tapes will be destroyed by the last day of 2020, with a confirmation email of deletion being sent through to you.

Risks

The study deals with no topics of sensitivity. However, you do not have to answer any question or take part in the interview if you feel the question(s) are too personal or if talking about them makes you uncomfortable.

Benefits

There will be no direct benefit to you, but your participation is likely to help us find out more about how to better understand the ways in which organisations can cater for generational

differences, and what impacts on operations and culture are caused due to actual or perceived differences.

Reimbursements

You will not be provided any incentive to take part in the research. However, partaking in this research will not influence you financially as the interview will be done in a professional environment of your choice so as to not cause any inconvenience to yourself.

Confidentiality

Information about you will not be shared to anyone outside of the research team. The information that will be collected from this research project will be kept private. Any information about you will have a number on it instead of your name. Only the researchers will know what your number is.

Sharing the Results

Nothing that you tell us today will be shared with anybody outside the research team, and nothing will be attributed to you by name. The knowledge that we get from this research will be shared with you before it is made available to the public. Each participant will receive a summary of the results.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw

You do not have to take part in this research if you do not wish to do so, and choosing not to do so will result in no impact unto yourself. You may stop participating in the interview at any time that you wish. I will give you an opportunity at the end of the interview/discussion to review your remarks, and you can ask to modify or remove portions of those, if you do not agree with notes made or if I did not understand you correctly.

Who to Contact

If you have any questions, you can ask them now or later. If you wish to ask questions later, you may contact myself on:

- Email:
- Cell Number:

Part II: Certificate of Consent

Participant

I have read the foregoing information, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have been asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study

Print Name of Participant: _____

Signature of Participant: _____

Date: _____

Day/month/year

If illiterate ¹

I have witnessed the accurate reading of the consent form to the potential participant, and the individual has had the opportunity to ask questions. I confirm that the individual has given consent freely.

Print name of witness _____

Signature of witness: _____

Date: _____

Day/Month/Year

Thumb print of participant



Researcher

Statement by the researcher/person taking consent

I have accurately read out the information sheet to the potential participant, and to the best of my ability made sure that the participant understands the content of the information sheet.

I confirm that the participant was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions asked by the participant have been answered correctly and to the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving consent, and the consent has been given freely and voluntarily.

A copy of this ICF has been provided to the participant: _____

Print Name of Researcher/person taking the consent: _____

Signature of Researcher /person taking the consent: _____

Date: Day/Month/Year

Annexure 2:

Research Purpose/ Objective	Primary Research Question	Research Rationale	Seminal Authors/ Sources	Literature Review – Conceptual Framework	Paradigm	Approach	Data Collection Methods	Ethics	Key Findings	Recommendations
Generational divide and its influences organisational performance and its collective impact on organisational culture.	How does generational differences impact organisational performance in terms of employee engagement, collaboration and intrinsic motivation towards the business and its collective impact on organisational culture?	With the influx generations and their inherent differences, organisations need to ensure that there are cultural changes made to allow for generations to operate effectively as team within the workspace.	- Robert Delcampo - Lauren Haggerty - Jane Haney - Jane Knippel - Virginia Gordon - Margaret Steele	Theme 1: Generationalism Theme 2: Values Theme 3: Actual Versus Perceived Differences Theme 4: Generational Divide	Paradigm: Interpretivism Epistemology: Subjectivist Ontology: Relativist Axiology: Balanced	Qualitative	Semi Structured Open Ended Interview	None	Generational divide stems from differences in values, communication methods and understanding of different generations and individuals, and ultimately impacts company culture and subsequently influence business operations.	- Creation of cross-sectional and -generational teams to promote collaboration and communication. - Establishment and implementation of a culture that prospers on and promotes inclusivity and diversity in all facets, working on strengths of its groups that creation of divisions amongst them. - Workshops and training seminars to promote the understanding of other generations, individuals and groups.
Research Problem	Secondary Questions	Key Concepts	Key Theories			Population	Data Analysis Method	Limitations	Key Contribution	
How the generational divide affects each company is dependent on the structure of the organisations culture and operations, to promote the inclusivity of all generations working in one space.	What are the current specific influences of the generational divide on organisational culture? How can these pitfalls or challenges caused by the generational divide be bridged? How does one's generational background influence the organisational culture required to function within a collaborative, engaged and motivated workspace?	- Generational Differences and its impact on communication. - Generational Differences and its impact on collaboration. - The focal point/s of generational difference conflict within the workspace	- Generational Cohort Theory - Organisational Culture Theory			Equal number of male and females spanning across all generations and various industries, as well as across all levels of management. Sampling - Snowball Sampling - Quota Sampling - Size: 5 participants	- Thematic Analysis - Discourse Analysis	- The available of participants spanning across industries and management levels. - Time Constraints - Difficulty to generalise findings	A baseline from where more in-depth studies can be held on a larger scale in order to answer the problem question. Identification of errors and omissions within theory of generationalism, that may be the origin point of many of the divides and issues being faced currently between generations.	

Annexure 3: Ethical Clearance Letter



10 July 2020

Student name: Zuan Cambell-Wilson

Student number: 19003849

Campus: IIE Varsity College Pretoria

Re: Approval of BCOM Honours Proposal and Ethics Clearance

HONOURS/PGDIP ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER

Your research proposal and the ethical implications of your proposed research topic were reviewed by your supervisor and the campus research panel, a subcommittee of The Independent Institute of Education's Research and Postgraduate Studies Committee.

Your research proposal posed no significant ethical concerns and your supporting documents and instruments are in order to proceed. We hereby provide you with permission to proceed with your research.

In the event of you deciding to change your research methodology in any way, kindly consult your supervisor to ensure all ethical considerations are adhered to and pose no risk to any participant or party involved. A revised ethical clearance letter will be issued.

We wish you all the best with your research!

GENERAL CONDITIONS TO BE FULFILLED IN RELATION TO RESEARCH

Permission is granted to proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met and may be withdrawn should any of these conditions be flouted.

Please note: The panel has not considered the merits, accuracy or ethical soundness of the research. The only merits examined are the use of The IIE as a sample.

Permission is granted subject to the following conditions:

1. The researcher(s) will need to obtain informed consent in writing from all of the participants in his/ her sample if the study is not anonymous.
2. The researcher(s) may only use the data collected for research purposes and in no other way.
3. Photographs of human subjects may only be taken if relevant to the research, informed consent was obtained, and even with informed consent, the photographs may not be published on any online platforms.

4. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
5. No names or identifying information of participants may be used within the research and the research must be voluntary.
6. Please make it clear that the information will not be used punitively in any way and participants may in no way be counselled/advised based on this.

Annexure 4: Semi-Structured Interview Schedule

Interview Schedule:	
Questions	Notes
1. What is your understanding of the premise of the research being conducted? Probing Questions:	
2. How would you best define generational differences? Probing Questions:	
3. Do you believe that there is a difference between generational differences and generational divide? Probing Questions:	
4. How would you best describe or define organisational culture? Probing Questions:	
5. What do you believe impacts organisational culture the most? Probing Questions:	

6. What do you believe are the current specific influences of the generational divide on organisational culture? Probing Questions:	
7. Is the influence specific to certain departments, such as finance, operations, human resources etc? And if isolated to one department why do you think that is? Probing Questions:	
8. In your opinion what generation or age cohort exerts the most influence on the organisational culture? Probing Questions:	
9. Are these influences limited to specific levels of staff members, in terms of position and experience? Probing Questions:	
10. Do you think that certain generations or age cohorts are depicted or shown in a worse light because of pre-created society expectations? Probing Questions:	

11. How can the challenges caused by the generational divide be bridged? Probing Questions:	
12. Is the problem isolated to just the culture, or does other functions or aspects of the organisation need to be adapted or changed? Probing Questions:	
13. What do you believe are the main causes of these challenges? Could they be caused due to only human aspects of the organisation or are they influenced or compounded by operational processes, company policies etc.? Probing Questions:	
14. How does one's generational background influence the organisational culture required to function within a collaborative, engaged and motivated workspace? Probing Questions:	
15. Do these influences stem from individual cultural backgrounds or are they influenced by other factors? Probing Questions:	

16. Could these influences be linked to the economic and other ecosystems present during prime growth phases of individuals? Probing Questions:	
17. How big do you think the gap between what actual differences and perceived generational differences is? Probing Questions:	
18. In your experience how accurate or fair is it to treat individuals according to their generational group or age cohort? Probing Questions:	
19. Do you believe that the characteristics and differences of generational groups can be defined during the early years of a generation or only in the later years of the generations existence? Probing Questions:	