AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF GENERATIONAL COHORTS AT WORK

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Abstract

It has been suggested in the media and popular literature that there are significant differences between the generational cohorts (Veterans, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y) and that organisations, therefore, need to manage people from each cohort differently. However, the evidence is largely anecdotal. In contrast, empirical studies investigating generational cohorts have provided no consistent picture of a generational cohort's values and characteristics. This thesis investigates whether the popular characteristics of generational cohorts are valid. A total of 164 participants completed a 69-item questionnaire developed from constructs elicited from 64 repertory grid interviews in which participants identified constructs and rated their importance in their ideal job. More similarities than differences between the cohorts were found, providing limited support for the assertion in the popular literature that there are differences between the generational cohorts. Limited support was found for the depiction of each of the cohorts in the popular literature and empirical studies. In addition, strong support was found for heterogeneity within cohorts, in particular with respect to gender. The use of linear discriminant analysis identified that only nine of the 69 questions provided a reasonable level of discrimination between the generational cohorts, further supporting the finding that there are more similarities than differences between the cohorts. By removing participants from the cusp years (i.e., either side of the cut-off date for cohorts) the predictive accuracy of correctly assigning participants to the correct cohort increased, supporting the assertion that cohorts are most distinct in the middle and less distinct at the edges. This study contributes to the literature through the development of a sound psychometric model for researching generational cohorts and by providing valuable insight into what the different generational cohorts most value in the workplace. The results challenge the depiction of generational cohorts depicted in the popular literature and identified that while there are some differences between the cohorts, there are more similarities than differences. This raises the suggestion that there may be greater heterogeneity within generational cohorts than between them. People are complex and cannot be summed up by a small set of statements or stereotype. In the end, there can be no substitute for managers engaging with employees individually to understand their particular values.

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Chapter 1   Introduction

The catch-cry in many workplaces is that younger generation lacks a good work ethic (Gelston, 2008), or that these younger workers don't have any values and older workers are far more loyal and hard-working (De Meuse & Mlodzik, 2010). According to Kowske *et al.* (2010; p1) *the popular press continues to bemoan the great generational divide at work.* With new generations entering the workforce, the question is are these new workers really that different, and, if there are differences, are they due to life-stage or career-stage or some other factor?

Increasing attention in both the popular literature and empirical studies is being paid to generational cohorts. This can be explained by the fact that for the first time in history we have four different generations present in the workplace (Mlodzik & De Meuse, 2009). The shift to less hierarchical organisational structures and increasing numbers of people working into older age has resulted in members of the different generational cohorts finding themselves working side by side (Hess & Jepsen, 2009; Kupperschmidt, 2000a; Lester, Standifer, & Windsor, 2012; McCrindle, 2009; Spence, 2009; Stauffer, 2003; Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000). Hutchings and McGuire (2006) found the workforces in organisations they studied were characterised by growing levels of heterogeneity in terms of both observable and non-observable differences. In today's workplace, organisations face a complex dilemma where they are working with fewer people and requiring more social interaction, while the similarity among workforce participants is decreasing (Douglas, Ferris, Buckley, & Gundlach, 2003). At the same time employee attitudes, values and behaviours have been changing (Sayers, 2006). Widespread change in the composition and shape of organisational workforces and the growing body of popular literature touting vast differences between generational cohorts has placed increasing emphasis on the need to understand and manage expectations of different generational groups (Hutchings & McGuire, 2006).

Since the turn of the century there have been a growing number of business books looking at the different generational cohorts and how to manage them in the workplace. Titles include *Managing Generation X: How to bring out the best in young talent* (Tulgan, 2000a); *Generations at work: Managing the clash of Veterans, Boomers, Xers*

and Nexters in your workplace (Zemke et al., 2000); *Motivating the 'What's in it for me' workforce: Manage across the generational divide and increase profits* (Morston, 2007) and *Bridging the generation gap: How to get Radio Babies, Boomers, Gen Xers and Gen Yers to work together and achieve more* (Gravett & Throckmorton, 2007); *Not everyone gets a trophy: How to manage Generation Y* (Tulgan, 2009); *Generations Inc: From Boomers to Linksters – managing the friction between generations at work* (Johnson & Johnson, 2010). Whilst this is not an exhaustive list, it is evidence of a growing number of books that seek to provide organizations and managers with guidance and/or solutions on how to manage the different generational cohorts in the workplace today.

If these business books and the popular literature are to be believed, and generational cohorts indeed have distinctive and varying intrinsic and extrinsic expectations in what they want (or "value") from the workplace, this is a challenge for managers in managing and leading this multigenerational workforce (Lester et al., 2012). Managers are led to believe that the solution to effectively manage these generational cohorts' is to create flexible policies and procedures that accommodate all cohorts values and expectations (Brick, 2011), and that understanding the generational cohorts and accommodating their differences will lead to increased employee productivity and economic growth (Kupperschmidt, 2000a; Plummer, 2003).

When the underlying basis for the claims in the popular literature is explored the picture becomes less clear. Is there a basis for generational cohort diversity? Do generational cohorts actually exist and, if so, do they have differing values, beliefs and attitudes? Or are we simply seeing individuals at different life stages and/or career stages? If these popular depictions of generational differences do not exist, managers may erroneously be consciously or unconsciously adopting attitudes, behaviours, or decisions based on sweeping generalisations and stereotypes that are not based on reality (Mlodzik & De Meuse, 2009). When looking to the empirical literature to answer these questions the picture is not much clearer. Westerman and Yamamura (2006) suggest that examining generational differences is a critical and underdeveloped area of research. This thesis investigates the legitimacy of generational cohort theory and generational cohorts as a form of diversity and reviews both the popular and empirical literature to identify

whether there are differences between the generational cohorts and what values and characteristics are associated with each cohort.

Generational Diversity

Traditional approaches to the study of diversity have focussed on observable differences (Dubriri, 2002). Employees in today's workforce are faced with a variety of interpersonal differences every day i.e., increased diversity (Konrad, 2006). Any definition of diversity should, therefore, include all differences and characteristics that make one individual different from another (Wentling & Palma-Rivas, 1998). Any investigation into diversity in the workplace should encompass the set of individual, group and cultural differences that people bring to an organisation and that affect their behaviour (Marsden, 1997; Wentling & Palma-Rivas, 1998). The study of diversity has begun to expand from an exclusive emphasis on demographic diversity (observable differences) to include personal characteristics and experiences (Stringer, 1995), values and attitudes (Hiller & Day, 2003; Losyk, 1996; Newell, 2002), work style (Robinson & Dechant, 1997), and other socially meaningful categorisations (Chemers, Costanzo, & Oskamp, 1995; Ferdman, 1995; Lynch, 2002; Plummer, 2003).

While there appears to be a general acceptance of ethnic, racial and gender diversity in the workplace today (which is also subject to legislative action), there has tended to be less acceptance and examination of generational cohort diversity, i.e., the diversity of values, attitudes and characteristics as a result of shared experiences during a person's formative years (Niemiec, 2000). Given the definition of diversity has expanded from purely observable differences to include non-observable differences, it is reasonable to expect that generational cohorts are a valid form of diversity to be investigated (Marsden, 1997). Flynn (1996) suggests that "generational differences" are no different from racial or gender differences and should therefore, be treated as a legitimate diversity issue. Arsenault (2004) suggests that generational cohorts create their own traditions, and culture by a shared collective field of emotions, attitudes, preferences and dispositions. This view validates the importance of generational differences as a legitimate diversity issue.

Generational cohorts can now be seen as another form of diversity that impacts the workplace which needs to be considered along with other dimensions of diversity to better understand employees (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002). This notion of generational cohorts as a way of understanding differences between age groups is widespread in society today (Pilcher, 1994). The term 'generation' usually refers to familial succession; the time period it takes for children to be ready to take the place of their parents (Spitzer, 1973; Strauss & Howe, 1991). However, according to the Hungarian sociologist Karl Mannheim (1952), in his theoretical essay on generations, any given generation will contain several distinct 'generational units' or societal subcultures whose members develop a shared identity and share similar life experiences. These 'generational units' are cohorts: groups of people bound not by biological linkages but by their shared historical experiences (Glenn, 1977; Mannheim, 1952; Meredith & Schewe, 1994; Rindfleisch, 1994; Walker Smith & Clurman, 1997). According to Beck (2001) cohorts are made up of individuals born in the same time period who are influenced by a particular set of historical and cultural conditions. According to developmental theories it is these conditions that tend to distinguish one generation from the next, so that each generational group has a unique pattern of behaviour based on their shared experiences (Beck, 2001; Kupperschmidt, 2000a; Smola & Sutton, 2002). Generational cohorts are therefore, a group of people who, based on their age, share a common location in history and the experiences and mind-sets that accompany it (Erickson, 2008). These unique experiences make them distinct from other groups of people who share different historical experiences (Edmunds & Turner, 2002) and forms the premise of generational cohort theory.

Generational cohort theory

Generational cohort theory is a cultural theory attributing cohort differences in behaviour to values and attitudes (Rotolo & Wilson, 2004). Generational cohort theory proposes that a generation is a social construction in which individuals born during a similar time period, experience and are influenced by historic and social contexts in ways such that these experiences differentiate one generational cohort from another (Jurkiewicz & Brown, 1998; Sessa, Kabacoff, Deal, & Brown, 2007). Generational cohort theory states that generational cohorts are formed through individuals experiencing shared historical events experienced at critical developmental stages

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throughout their childhoods (Egri & Ralston, 2004; Kupperschmidt, 2000a). *People are thus fixed in qualitatively different eras* (Scott, 2000, p356). Generational theory maintains that as cohorts of individuals are born into a particular political or social moment, they will develop unique values, belief systems and peer personalities (McManus, 1997; Strauss & Howe, 1999) resulting in patterns strong enough to support a measure of predictability (Howe & Strauss, 2007).

A generational cohort's values are formed through socialisation (Kahle, 1996; Rokeach, 1973), at both a micro and macro level and are conceptualised as relatively enduring beliefs that guide their behaviours (Munson & McIntyre, 1979; Rokeach, 1973). At the micro-level values are formed as a result of modelling, reinforcement, and other types of individual level social interactions (Moschis & Moore, 1979). At the macro-level, the shared history occurring globally during a person's formative years (roughly between 17 and 21 years of age) link individuals to cohorts (Glenn, 1977; Mannheim, 1972; Meredith & Schewe, 1994; Ryder, 1965; Walker Smith & Clurman, 1997). Parry and Urwin (2010; p3) state that ......*people who are in adolescence or young adulthood during particularly significant national or international events will form a shared memory of those events which will effect their future attitudes, preferences and behaviour ('generational imprinting')*. Therefore macro-level shared history including cultural events (music, fashion, movies) result in unique values, attitudes, mind-sets, behaviours, preferences, and ambitions that create similarities across generational cohort members (McMullin, Comeau, & Jovic, 2007; Meredith & Schewe, 1994).

Individuals, therefore, who come of age experiencing similar historical events, have similarities in their value systems (Inglehart, 1997; Noble & Schewe, 2003; Ryder, 1965; Strauss & Howe, 1991; Zemke, 2001), even after accounting for socialisation at the micro-level (Noble & Schewe, 2003; Weeks & Kahle, 1990). The common attitudes, values, and experiences shared by a cohort tend to bind them together, leading to and reinforcing group cohesion (Zemke et al., 2000).

Of particular significance to the generational cohort theory approach is that individuals seek to make sense of the shifts in the socio-cultural environment by integrating it into their existing cognitive schema (Scott, 2000). While macro-level events affect everyone, regardless of their age, events that occur during an individuals formative years shape

their cognitive schema (Scott, 2000). This is supported in the study by Duncan and Argonick (1995) who found that social events coinciding with early adulthood were more salient than events occurring during their other life stages. Young adults are therefore, especially open to the effects of social and historical events during their formative years. These values, attitudes and preferences are life-long effects and are not believed to change as a function of age (Arsenault, 2004; Meredith & Schewe, 1994; Noble & Schewe, 2003; Walker Smith & Clurman, 1997; Zemke, 2001). Hence, as generational cohorts pass through the various stages in life, the way they respond to those life stages is determined by their generational personalities (Meredith & Schewe, 1994; Walker Smith & Clurman, 1997; Wallace, 1999). Thus events occurring during an adolescent's identity formation should retain their importance to personality over time (Duncan & Agronick, 1995). All later experiences receive their meaning from their original set formulated during their formative years (Mannheim, 1952).

This leads to the question of what are the macro-level events that impress onto a generation during their formative years? Sessa *et al.* (2007) discusses six characteristics that help determine the scope of a generation. These characteristics include traumatic or formative events, dramatic shifts in demography that influence the distribution of resources in society, an interval that connects a generation to success or failure, the creation of a 'sacred space' that sustains a collective memory, the connection to mentors or heroes that speak for the generation and the work of people who know and support each other. External macro-level events therefore include political and economic developments (Strauss & Howe, 1991; Thau & Heflin, 1997), technological innovations (Noble & Schewe, 2003; Walker Smith & Clurman, 1997), war (Cavanaugh & Blanchard-Fields, 2002; Marias, 1970; Noble & Schewe, 2003; Rogers, 1982; Ryder, 1965), demographic trends, work experiences and entertainment (Weston, 2001).

Sayers (2006) states that impacts such as globalization, technology, changing demographics (including an aging workforce and looming labour shortage), change the work environment. Sayers (2006) concludes that the macro-level events that impact individuals are societal, environmental and technological (S.E.T) changes. When a generational filter is overlaid S.E.T changes (Figure 1.1) it can be seen that S.E.T changes bring about shifts in attitudes and also influence generations, their preferences and preferred working styles.

Changing values are related to generational cohort differences and the effects of historical periods rather than aging or life cycle effects (Dowd, 1979-80; Rentz & Reynolds, 1991; Spitzer, 1973). Macro-level events (including S.E.T changes) occurring during a generational cohort's formative years result in a cohort's generational identity (Inglehart, 1997; Strauss & Howe, 1991). These macro-level events are not merely a summation of a set of individual histories, but rather are the result of a distinctive composition and character reflecting the circumstances of their unique origination and history, resulting in what has been described as 'generational personalities' (Raines & Hunt, 2000).

Figure 1.1 The S.E.T model
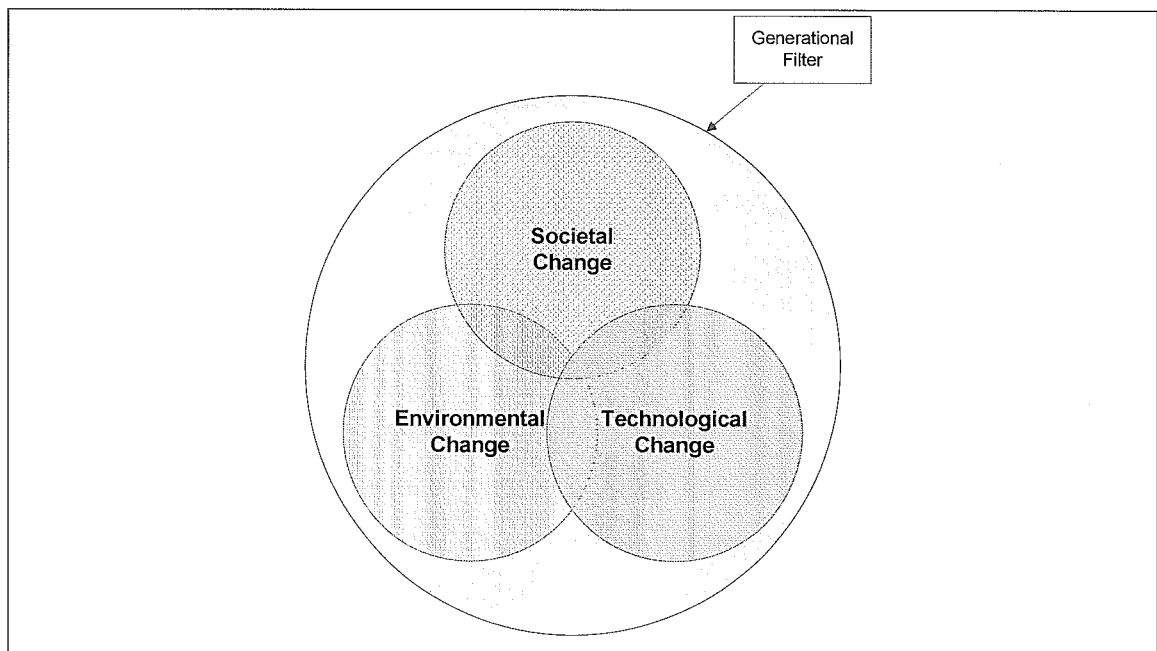
From Sayers (2006; p35)

The distinct generational personalities or cohort effects are a type of generational diversity resulting in differing expectations and different attitudes and working styles. This impact is depicted in Figure 1.2. Once organisations and managers can assess the impact of the cohort effect and generational diversity, they will be able to identify the resulting and differing expectations of employees (Sayers, 2006).

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Figure 1.2 The S.E.T flow-on effect on generational diversity
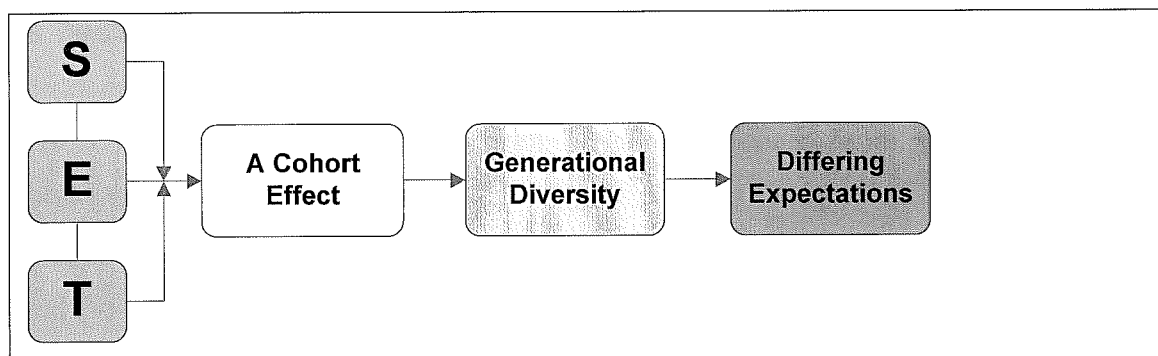
From: Sayers (2006; p203)

Limitations of generational cohort theory

Generational cohort theory is not without its limitations. Bengston, Furlong and Laufer (1983) identified four issues with conceptualising generational cohort theory:

    a) how long a generation is (i.e., what are the boundaries for each cohort);

    b) specifying the criteria (or dependant variables) that define a generation;

    c) identifying important variations within cohorts (generational units) and;

    d) assessing whether in fact a generation exists as a dimension of social organisation.

These four conceptualisation problems still hold true today. As recently as 2011, Brick (2011) identified that one of the main problems with generational cohort theory continued to be its conceptualisation. Issues include the lack of a consistent name for each generational cohort and the fact that each cohort has divergent start and stop dates depending on the author (Brick, 2011; Markert, 2004; Wolburg & Pokrywczynski, 2001). Whilst generational cohort theory assumes that cohort differences can be generalized, it is not a complete or absolute differentiation (Markert, 2004).

The theory also assumes that all members of a generation are impressed by the same social and historical events. However, it cannot be assumed that all members of any given generation will experience the same key socio-economic events in the same way, independent of social class, gender, ethnicity or national culture (Alwin & McCammon, 2003; Giancola, 2006). Generational cohort theory does not contain an empirical model for any guidelines as to how the investigation of generational phenomena is to proceed,

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aside from stressing that recognition of social and cultural factors in the production of social generations should be paramount in terms of their investigation (Pilcher, 1994).

Generational cohort theory contradicts the more widely accepted belief that people change, mature and develop their values and attitudes and preferences as a function of age (Sessa et al., 2007; Costa and McCrae, 1999). The theory assumes core characteristics and values of a generation are set for life as a result of a generational cohort experiencing the same events in the same time. Treuren and Anderson (2008; p52) point out that ...... *the research of several decades does not strongly support generational theories where the attitudes of cohorts, once set by circumstances early in life, do not vary over time. Instead, life-stage and career-stage explanations have been found to be more effective in explaining behaviour of cohorts.*

Current State of the Literature

While it is not clear yet whether or not differences in values, attitudes and behaviours correlate with changing age or generational membership or a combination of both (Smola & Sutton, 2002), generational cohort theory has continued to grow and be refined (Brick, 2011). Generational cohort theory will form the main theoretical underpinning of this thesis. This thesis takes the premise that although the priorities of different generational cohorts change along with their life-stage, people maintain their fundamental generational values, formed by shared historical experience as they move through life.

The literature discusses a disconnect occurring when interacting with people from different generational cohorts which may be based primarily on unarticulated assumptions and unconscious criteria (Zemke et al., 2000). Raines (2003) believes that by articulating these assumptions and viewing them through what she describes as a generational lens (knowledge and understanding about each of the generational cohorts), this will enable managers as well as employees to understand the styles and preferences of others; ultimately leading to more positive interactions.

There is a large body of anecdotal accounts and popular literature that provides comment on generational cohort differences and how these impact in the workplace (Kowske et al., 2010). This literature exhorts differences between generational cohorts

at work (Kowske et al., 2010) which suggests that HR policies and practices need to take cognisance of these generational differences (Murray, Toulson & Legg, 2011). However, there is dearth of empirical studies to support (or refute) this anecdotal and popular literature (Giancola, 2006; Macky et al., 2008; Kowske et al., 2010). According to Kim, Knight and Crutsinger (2009; p548) *generational differences in both popular and practitioner management media include mixed results and often contain stereotypical conclusions.* They go on to say *the growing body of anecdotal information concerning generational disparities calls for further investigation and empirical validation.* Twenge *et al.* (2010) identify that despite the emergence of a mini industry built around the assumption of generational differences, empirical evidence for generational differences in work values is scant. They go on to point out that much of the existing literature employs …..*non-empirical sources such as anecdotal accounts or extrapolations based on different generations' life experience* (Twenge et al., 2010; p1118), or it relies on qualitative interviews such as those undertaken by Lancaster and Stillman (2002), Tulgan (2009), and Zemke *et al* (2000). Cogin (2012; p2269) states that *a lack of attention to multi-generational research has resulted in decisions being made by HRM practitioners based on claims in the popular press whose underlying assumptions have been largely permitted without scrutiny by the academic community.* Despite recent practitioner interest and debate, systematic research into intergenerational differences and then effects in the workplace has been limited (Benson & Brown, 2011). Much of what has been written about generational characteristics is at best confused with other concepts such as age, and relevant cross-sectional studies using scales developed for other purposes. At worst, what has been written has been anecdotal and stereotypical, which if applied blindly in a people management situation, could be counter productive and dangerous (Murray, Toulson, & Legg, 2011).

If the popular literature is to be believed, failure to effectively understand and manage cohort diversity will have a significant impact on organisations' viability, competitiveness and profitability (Burns & McNaughton, 2001). Currently the media and popular literature are recognising the need to understand the differences across generations in the workplace, but a limited number of publications exist in the academic literature to date, especially from a New Zealand perspective. While there is a growing body of popular literature on the different characteristics of the generational cohorts,

there is little empirical research investigating generational cohorts within the New Zealand workforce.

Structure of the thesis

This thesis sets out to determine what each generational cohort values in their ideal job and how this relates to the popular literature and empirical studies. In addition, the thesis will investigate whether or not there are generational cohort differences in what each cohort values in their ideal job and whether or not there are gender differences. The thesis will also investigate what impact removing participants born around the cohort cut-off dates ('cusp') from further analysis has on the results.

Chapter 1 of this thesis provides a brief overview of the topic and why it is of interest. The chapter then goes on to explore generational cohort diversity as a legitimate form of diversity worthy of study. The concept of generational cohort theory is introduced and the limitations of generational cohort theory are discussed.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature. A review of both the popular literature and the empirical literature is undertaken. The lack of consistency in both the naming of the generational cohorts as well as the differing cut-off dates used to define the generational cohorts is discussed as well as whether generational cohorts are linear or categorical. Characteristics of the four generational cohorts (Veterans, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y) as described in both the popular literature and from empirical studies are identified. A critical review of the empirical literature is presented in relation to the research questions. A review of gender differences and the issues of disentangling the impact of age, period, career-stage and generational cohort is given. Finally, this chapter identifies the limitations in the literature and the questions this thesis sought to answer.

Chapter 3 describes the repertory grid technique, its reliability and validity as well as advantages of this technique. The repertory grid pilot study and the final method used for the repertory grid technique interviews are also outlined. Results from the repertory grid study are presented and the limitations of the study are outlined. A description of

how the results were used to develop the questionnaire used in the main study is then provided.

Chapter 4 provides an overview of the questionnaire pilot study and the final method used for data collection. Results from the questionnaire are presented in relation to the research questions along with an overall summary of the findings.

Chapter 5 discusses the findings in relation to the research questions outlined at the end of Chapter 2. The implications the findings have for HRM are discussed. This chapter also discusses the contribution this study makes to the body of knowledge. Limitations of the study are discussed. Suggestions for future research are then put forward.

Chapter 6 provides a summary of results and proposes direction for future research. The chapter concludes with the final conclusions that are drawn from this thesis.

Chapter 2   Literature Review

As outlined in Chapter 1 there is a lack of consistency in both the naming of the generational cohorts in today's workplace as well as different start and stop dates defining each generational cohort. This chapter will discuss both these issues. This chapter reviews the popular literature and provides a summary of the depiction of each generational cohort. A review of empirical studies is also presented. The findings of empirical studies looking at generational cohorts in a workplace setting is compared and contrasted and a summary of the generational cohorts as depicted in the empirical literature is provided. Limitations of the empirical literature are identified and the gaps this study attempts to address is provided. This chapter concludes with the questions this current research seeks to address.

Generational cohort labels and their identification

There is a lack of consistency between researchers as to the labels each generational cohort is given (Markert, 2004; Wolburg & Pokrywczynski, 2001), and even the number of generational cohorts in today's workplace (Brick, 2011). The popular literature and empirical studies in western economies such as the USA, Canada, UK, Australia and New Zealand, for the most part describe four generational cohorts in the workplace today (Parry & Urwin, 2011). The labels attached to the oldest cohort in the current workforce have included "Veterans", "Matures", "Traditional Generation", "Silent Generation", "Swingers", "Radio Babies" or "WWIIers". The next oldest and the largest cohort in the workplace today are labelled "Baby Boomers" or "Boomers". The labels attached to the generation following the baby boomer generation include "Generation X", "Gen X", "Generation Next", "Shadow Generation", "the Slacker Generation", "Baby Busters", "Echo Boomers" and "Thirteeners" (since they are the thirteenth generation born in the U.S since its founding). The youngest cohort in the workplace today have been assigned various labels including "Generation Y", "Nexters", "N Gen", "Millennials", "GenMe", "Internet Gen", "Linksters" and "Generation Why?". The most inconsistency in labelling exists with the oldest and youngest cohorts in the workplace.

The number of cohort categories used by authors varies. Several authors used only two categories. Ferres *et al.* (2003) grouped participants into Generation X and older

employees with the older employees' category consisting of a mix of Matures and Baby Boomers. Bransford (2011) also used two categories, Millennials (those born after 1980) and non-Millennials (respondents 35 years of age and older).

A number of authors have used in excess of four categories. These categories generally break the commonly reported categories into subcategories. For example Barbuto and Miller (2008) and Barbuto, Bryant and Pennisi (2010) used five categories; Post War, Boomer I, Boomer II, Generation X and Generation Y and Smola and Sutton (2002) used WWIIers, swingers, Baby Boomers, Gen-Xers and Millennials. Sessa *et al.* (2007) used six categories, Mature, early Boomer, late Boomer, early Generation X, late Generation X and Millennial. Kowske et al (2010) used 12 categories, GI; early, mid and late Silent; early, mid and late Boomers; early, mid and late Generation X and early and mid Millennials. It is of note however, that those studies that used in excess of four categories simply used subcategories of the four main cohorts.

Both the popular literature and empirical studies use categories to define generational cohorts. The categories used in this research were the most commonly used categories identified in the literature. For the purpose of this thesis four generational cohort categories will be used. The labels attached to these cohorts will be Veterans, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y.

What are the defining years of each generational cohort?

Regardless of the labels used for the generational cohorts, the exact years those labels represent are often inconsistent (Sessa et al., 2007). According to Lancaster and Stillman (2002) there is no absolute birthdate that makes someone part of a particular generational cohort. There is little agreement on the dates assigned to the various cohorts and thus no universally accepted definition of the birth years defining each generation (Arsenault, 2004; Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2007; Levenson, 2010; Markert, 2004; Orrick, 2008; Pendergast, 2010).

The lengths of generational cohorts vary greatly depending on the researcher. The majority of studies identify Veterans as being between 17 years (Jurkiewicz & Brown, 1998; McNeese-Smith & Crook, 2003) and 24 years (Santos & Cox, 2000), Baby Boomers between 15 years (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Treuren, 2008; Treuren &

Anderson, 2010) and 19 years (Lyons, Duxbury, & Higgins, 2007; Reiss, 2010; Wong, Gardiner, Lang, & Coulon, 2008), Generation X being between 10 years (Burke, 1994) and 20 years (Appelbaum, Serena, & Shapiro, 2005; Jurkiewicz & Brown, 1998; McNeese-Smith & Crook, 2003) and Generation Y being between 11 years (Reiss, 2010) and 19 years (Lamm & Meeks, 2009).

A problem exists in defining who exactly comprises each generational cohort (Markert, 2004). When does one cohort finish and another begin? Macky, Gardner and Forsyth (2008) identify that the difficulty underlying the generational theoretical premise is determining the exact temporal point at which to segregate the various generations. Veterans have been identified as starting anywhere from 1909 (Santos & Cox, 2000) and 1925 (Egri & Ralston, 2004; McNeese-Smith & Crook, 2003; Spence, 2009) and concluding between 1942 (Jurkiewicz & Brown, 1998; McNeese-Smith & Crook, 2003) and 1945 (Egri & Ralston, 2004; Lyons et al., 2007).

Baby Boomers have been identified as commencing anywhere between 1943 (Appelbaum et al., 2005; Gursoy, Maier, & Chi, 2008; Lamm & Meeks, 2009; McNeese-Smith & Crook, 2003) and 1946 (Davis, Pawlowski, & Houston, 2006; Egri & Ralston, 2004; Jurkiewicz, 2000; Smola & Sutton, 2002; Treuren & Anderson, 2010) and concluding between 1960 (Appelbaum et al., 2005; Govitvatana, 2001; Gursoy et al., 2008; Jurkiewicz & Brown, 1998; McNeese-Smith & Crook, 2003; Rhule, 2004) and 1964 (Egri & Ralston, 2004; Lyons et al., 2007; Meriac, Woehr, & Banister, 2010; Morgan & Ribbens, 2006; Reiss, 2010; Santos & Cox, 2000; Smola & Sutton, 2002; Twenge et al., 2010; Wong et al., 2008).

Generation X have been identified as commencing anywhere between 1961 (Appelbaum et al., 2005; Govitvatana, 2001; Gursoy et al., 2008; Jurkiewicz & Brown, 1998; Lamm & Meeks, 2009; McNeese-Smith & Crook, 2003; Rhule, 2004) and 1965 (Burke, 1994; Egri & Ralston, 2004; Lyons et al., 2007; Morgan & Ribbens, 2006; Santos & Cox, 2000; Smola & Sutton, 2002). Although Faber (2001) puts the start dates as late as 1966 and Eskilson and Wiley (1999) as late as 1970. Generation X has been identified as concluding between 1975 (Burke, 1994; Mattis, Gerkovich, Gonzalez, & Johnsen, 2004) and 1981 (Appelbaum et al., 2005; Davis et al., 2006; Eskilson & Wiley, 1999; Jurkiewicz, 2000; McNeese-Smith & Crook, 2003; Santos & Cox, 2000;

Twenge et al., 2010; Wong et al., 2008). However, Rhule (2004) places the end date for Generation X as late as 1989. Generation Y has been identified as commencing between 1977 (Treuren, 2008; Treuren & Anderson, 2010) and 1982 (Twenge et al., 2010; Wong et al., 2008) and concluding between 1991 (Spence, 2009) and 2000 (Lamm & Meeks, 2009; Wong et al., 2008).

Despite the same name assigned to a generational cohort there is a problem when comparing generational cohort studies as the disparity in dates assigned to the various cohorts (Markert, 2004) and even, the number of cohort groups, differs according to researcher. Comparison between studies is problematic when the cohort groups referred to are not the same.

For the purpose of this thesis the defining years of each generational cohort are Veterans, 1925 to 1945 (De Meuse & Mlodzik, 2010; Egri & Ralston, 2004; Twenge et al., 2010); Baby Boomers, 1946 to 1964 (De Meuse & Mlodzik, 2010; Egri & Ralston, 2004; Twenge et al., 2010); Generation X, 1965 to 1981 (Twenge et al., 2010); Generation Y, 1982 to 1999 (Twenge et al., 2010).

Are generational cohorts linear or categorical?

A further consideration for researchers is whether generational cohorts are indeed categorical i.e., can be defined by cut-off dates rather than by linear trends. Twenge *et al.* (2010) suggest that there are not sudden shifts in generations but linear trends that began with Baby Boomers or even earlier. Cohort effects are therefore, believed to be linear rather than categorical and change steadily over time rather than sudden shifts of birth cut-offs (Sessa et al., 2007; Twenge & Campbell, 2008; Twenge et al., 2010). Support for linear trends across generations has been found in a number of studies (Smola & Sutton, 2002; Twenge et al., 2010). The linear nature of the trends suggests that the usual view of generations as categorical, separate entities (e.g., Veteran, Baby Boomer, Generation X and Generation Y) may need to be reconsidered. Instead, generations can be viewed as part of general social change which occurs gradually over a number of years (Twenge, 2010; Twenge et al., 2010). However, Twenge (2010) suggests that generational labels are useful shorthand that reduce ambiguity and shouldn't be discarded.

Cusp Years

Given the argument for generational trends outlined above, determining the cut-off points of generational cohorts can be problematic. The greater the pace of change the larger the impact on generational shift (Rosow, 1978; Sayers, 2006) and the wider the value differences (Teh, 2002). With no absolute birth date making someone part of a particular generational cohort it is believed that there is a time of transition between phases usually somewhere between three and six years (Fortenza & Prieto, 1994; Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, & McKee, 1978).

People born near the cut-off point between cohorts (i.e., born within a few years of the end of one generation or the beginning of another) have been referred to as "cuspers" (Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2007; Egri & Ralston, 2004; Orrick, 2008). Such individuals have been described as having more in common with the generational cohort preceding or succeeding them than they do with the majority of their generational cohort (Teh, 2002). Market (2004; p22) states that cuspers *may not share the full range of values, attitudes and lifestyles as those individuals born in the middle or core of the generation.* Generational cohorts therefore, are clearest at their centres, but blurred and fuzzy at the edges (Codrington, 1999; Roscow, 1978) further supporting the premise asserted by Twenge and Campbell (2008) and Twenge *et al.* (2010) that generational cohorts change steadily over time rather than in a sudden shift at birth cut-off dates.

Kupperschmidt (2000a) advocates the use of a 'cusp' years generational grouping where those born at the cusp of the generation are allocated to a "cusp" generational cohort. Crumpacker and Crumpacker (2007) suggest that 'cuspers' should be placed into a separate "bridge generation". Such a generation categorization would recognise those who identify equally with members of two generations (Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2007). The 'cusp' was acknowledged in the study by Egri and Ralston (2004) who followed the methodology for allocation to the 'cusp' employed by Kupperschmidt (2000a). Cogin (2012) also omitted participants born on the 'cusp' of a generation from further analysis. For the purpose of this thesis the data will be analysed both with and without participants born at the 'cusp' of each cohort.

Popular literature depiction of the generational cohorts

When reviewing the literature investigating generational cohorts, a number of authors have distinguished between the popular/practitioner literature and empirical studies (Cogin, 2012; De Meuse & Mlodzik, 2010; Lester et al., 2012; Treuren & Anderson, 2010). Cogin (2012) uses the distinction of academic literature and popular press and Lester *et al.* (2012) uses the distinction of popular culture vs. academic literature. Treuren and Anderson (2010) use the distinction of practitioner and popular literature vs. academic literature and De Meuse and Mlodzik (1997) use the distinction of popular press and media vs. empirical studies (i.e., peer-reviewed literature).

As discussed in the introduction there is an increasing number of magazine and newspaper articles and books being published outside of academia discussing generational cohort differences and how to understand and manage these differences in the workplace. This thesis reviews both the empirical and non-empirical generational cohort literature distinction and uses the 'popular literature' (i.e., non-peer-reviewed studies, practitioner articles and books) vs. 'empirical studies' (i.e., peer-reviewed studies and unpublished theses).

In order to determine the characteristics of each of the generational cohorts (Veterans, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y) as depicted in the popular non-academic literature, a review of this literature was undertaken. Non-refereed articles, surveys, consultant's reports, books and opinion pieces were included in the review. Peer-reviewed articles and theses were only included in the review of the academic literature. Using the most often reported typology, the commonly reported characteristics of each of these cohorts from the popular literature are listed in Table 2.1.

It should be noted that the following descriptions of each of the generational cohorts are generalisations of the cohorts as a whole and that members of each generational cohort are not homogenous (Burke, 1994; Ryder, 1965). However, the distribution of heterogeneity tends to be fixed throughout a generational cohort's life in a shape that is different from those of preceding and succeeding generational cohorts (Ryder, 1965). Jurkiewicz (2000) also found individual differences do exist within each cohort. Hence

any description of a generational cohort will not necessarily fit every member exactly and will not explain everything about an individual (Lyon, Legg, & Toulson, 2006; Raines & Hunt, 2000).

Veterans

Veterans are reported to be the oldest generation in the workforce today. In 2013 Veterans are aged 68 – 88 years. Veterans grew up and spent their formative years in the aftermath of tough economic times (i.e., the 'great depression'), which for most, meant scarcity and learning to go without (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002). Society at that time stressed morality, obligation, social norms, tradition and loyalty (Leo, 2003). Hard work was seen as one's duty and inherently valuable (Kupperschmidt, 2000a).

Veterans founded organisations that were hierarchical with a clear chain of command and structured career paths (Erickson, 2008). Lines of authority were formalised and the rules were unambiguous (Conger, 1997; Weston, 2001). Popular literature describes Veterans as being respectful of authority and assuming that fairness was provided by consistently applying the rules to everyone (Erickson, 2008, 2010). The popular literature also depicts Veterans as expecting to get feedback only when corrective action was required i.e., no news was seen as good news. Veterans are described as accepting the traditional executive decision-making command model of management and believed in its effectiveness (Conger, 1997; King, 2001) with their management style still modelled on this military chain of command (Lancaster and Stillman, 2002).

Veterans are described as being conformers who value logic and make decisions based on what did or did not work in the past (Zemke, 2001). Popular literature describes them as deriving satisfaction from doing their jobs well and having built their work ethic on commitment, responsibility, and conformity as their ticket to success (King, 2001). The popular literature also claims Veterans value the traditional paternalistic employment relationship that provided safe working conditions and lifetime employment or at least job security (Kupperschmidt, 2000a) and are loyal to organisations in return (Hatfield, 2002). They are portrayed as expecting to pay their dues in return for gaining respect, power, status and corporate seniority (Hatfield, 2002). Monetary compensation is seen by this cohort as a measure of achievement and affirmation (Erickson, 2010). However,

Veterans in the workforce now face the challenge of co-workers with diverse values, lifestyles, and demands, burgeoning technology and non-traditional managers (Kupperschmidt, 2000a).

Baby Boomers

The next oldest and generally the largest generational cohort in the workforce today are Baby Boomers. They were first labelled as such in 1970 by Landon Jones in his book Great Expectations (Zimmerman, 1995). In 2013 Baby Boomers are 49 - 67 years old.

Unlike Veterans, the Baby Boomer generation grew up during the period of unprecedented prosperity and affluence that followed WWII (Strauss & Howe, 1991). This was an era of general economic wealth and expansion (Raines, 1997). The availability of jobs, the boom in production in consumer goods and the promise of a good education for all meant that Baby Boomers grew up a fortunate generation (Owram, 1996). Baby Boomer parents wanted to give their children all the opportunities they themselves had missed out on (Jones, 1980; Zemke, 2001).

Baby Boomers became the first truly global generation, experiencing events through the new medium of television (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002). This enabled Baby Boomers to experience a global history reinforcing their identification with their peer group (Owram, 1996).

In the workplace the popular literature characterises Baby Boomers as competitive (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002) and as workaholics (Hall & Richter, 1990). The popular literature depicts them as seeing their work becoming their personal lives and the key to their personal identities (Hall & Richter, 1990; Raines, 1997). They are described as being driven, willing to go the extra mile and mostly living by the motto 'live to work' (Sweoberg, 2001). The popular literature portrays Baby Boomers as believing in 'paying their dues' (serving their time before expecting to advance up the corporate ladder) (Families and Work Institute, 2002; Govitvatana, 2001) and on the job Baby Boomers are depicted as believing value and success is tied to the number of hours worked and consequently arrive early and leave late (Families and Work Institute, 2002; Hatfield, 2002). They are also portrayed as expecting promotions, titles and corner offices in return (Kupperschmidt, 2000a). It is claimed that they are comfortable with

traditional, bureaucratic, hierarchical organisations (Orrick, 2008) and liking merit-based pay systems where money works as the primary reward and motivation (Erickson, 2010). As a result they are depicted as using both money and position to measure the degree to which they are 'successful' (Erickson, 2008).

The popular literature depicts Baby Boomers as being loyal to their employers; however, the mass restructuring in the 1980s showed that the hard work and loyalty their parents believed in did not result in a good job for life and a secure future (Kupperschmidt, 2000a; Raines, 1997). This in-turn is thought to have led to their belief that it was not hard work but rather good luck and innovation that were the keys to success.

Baby Boomers are described as expecting work to provide meaning that matters (Walker Smith & Clurman, 2007) and as soul searchers striving for happiness and self-realisation (Walker Smith & Clurman, 2007). The Baby Boomer generation is depicted in the popular literature as the first to use work as self-fulfilment (Families and Work Institute, 2002). Baby Boomers formed or joined self-help movements in droves implementing every 'fad' management programme on the market hoping it would be the quick fix they were looking for (Kupperschmidt, 2000a).

Baby Boomers are portrayed as having excellent interpersonal and communication skills (Kupperschmidt, 2000a; Orrick, 2008) which mean they excel at consensus building, mentoring, and effecting change (Kupperschmidt, 2000a). In addition, they are also described as being both relationship- and results-focussed (Weston, 2001). Hence, the popular literature describes them as using their keen appreciation for democracy and teamwork to form task forces to accomplish projects and goals (Hatfield, 2002), but not at the expense of relationships.

In terms of leadership style, the popular literature claims Baby Boomers were brought up to respect authority and they therefore, expect their managers to give leadership and guidance that leads them towards organisational goals (Raths, 1999). Traditional organisational policies have seen this cohort receiving feedback from their manager once a year. The popular literature depicts them as being comfortable with this level of

feedback. They are also depicted as resistant to change and less technologically savvy than subsequent generational cohorts (Rosen, 2001).

Generation X

The label of Generation X was coined by the Canadian novelist Douglas Coupland (1991) in his book *Generation X: Tales from an accelerated culture*. However, the ubiquitous usage of the name can be attributed to media moguls who popularised the phrase in the mid-1990s (Smith, 2000). In 2013 Generation X are 32 – 48 years old.

Growing up in an era marked by changes in gender roles and family structures, Generation X are likely to be the children of two working-parent households and often grew up as what is termed 'latch-key' kids (Burke, 1994; Families and Work Institute, 2002; Mackay, 1997; Smith, 2000). Being predominantly latch-key kids meant that Generation X had to work things out for themselves resulting in a very independent generation (Gabriel, 1999; Orrick, 2008). Consequently, the popular literature depicts Generation X bring a realistic and practical approach to problem solving in the workplace (Raines, 1997).

Generation X are described as wanting quality of life (Burke, 1994; Coupland, 1991; Willard, 2000). They are portrayed as expecting balance and placing boundaries on the infringement of work on their personal lives (Conger, 1997; Kupperschmidt, 2000a; Orme, 2004). The popular literature depicts them as 'working to live' rather than 'living to work' (Sweoberg, 2001). Generation X came of age in an era of declining social trust and as a cohort tend to be mistrustful of media and government (Families and Work Institute, 2002) Entering the workplace in the wake of the major global downsizing of the 1980's meant that Generation X were more likely than previous generational cohorts to be unemployed or under-employed (Tulgan, 2000b). Many members of Generation X have what Coupland (1991) calls 'McJobs'; jobs, that are characterised as mundane, marginally challenging work that provides a pay check and little else (Coupland, 1991; Tulgan, 2000a). In fact this is the first generation predicted to earn less in real terms than their parents (Muchnick, 1996). The popular literature suggests that this has led to what is described as Generation X's disillusionment, cynicism and open apathy towards those in authority (Coupland, 1991).

Generation X learnt early on that loyalty was not reciprocated by organisations (Raines, 1997). They quickly realised that the 'cradle to grave' job security of previous generations was a thing of the past (Reese, 1999). The lack of loyalty from employers to employees impacted Generation X's attitude towards loyalty. This cohort is depicted as not valuing 'paying dues' (Morgan & Ribbens, 2006), rather, they are depicted as being 'free agents' (Erickson, 2008, 2010) providing 'just in time loyalty' (doing a good job in return for employers meeting their job demands) (Tulgan, 2000b). The popular literature also depicts Generation X as seeking F.A.S.T feedback (frequent, accurate, specific & timely).

Generation X are described as seeking alignment with organisations that value their competencies, reward productivity rather than longevity, and create a sense of community (Kupperschmidt, 2000b). They are portrayed as taking responsibility for their own careers (Erickson, 2010), viewing organisations as stepping stones for skill advancement, growth, experience and career broadening opportunities and will move readily from organisation to organisation to obtain this (Orme, 2004).

During Generation X's birth years, a number of new communication media emerged such as satellite television, video cassette recorders (VCR's), fax machines and in 1992 the world wide web (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002; Loughlin & Barling, 2001; Smith, 2000). As a result Generation X became exposed to 24-hour media, cable TV, tabloid journalism and almost constant access to global information (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002). Generation X became a truly globalized generation.

Being raised in the midst of an information revolution shaped the way Generation X learn, think, and communicate (Sunoo, 1995; Tulgan, 2000a). Generation X are described as constantly seeking information, asking questions, and pursuing multiple lines of enquiry simultaneously (Raines & Hunt, 2000). They are depicted as being comfortable with technology and expecting technologically up-to-date work environments (Kupperschmidt, 2000a). Generation X are described as systems-thinkers that have mastered the art of generating and analysing the barrage of facts and figures required in today's workplace (Sunoo, 1995; Tulgan, 2000a). Being good multi-taskers Generation X like variety and bore easily if they don't get the variety they are seeking (Erickson, 2010; Orrick, 2008).

Tulgan (Tulgan, 2000a) found that Generation X expects changes and being used to change they are comfortable with it and perceive that change is an opportunity for growth and to improve (Orrick, 2008). Generation X are also described as being tolerant of alternative lifestyles and cultural diversity (Erickson, 2010).

The popular literature claims that members of Generation X are pragmatic, hardworking, ambitious, selfish, and determined to succeed financially (Herbig, Koehler, & Day, 1993). They are also described as not being intimidated by authority (Raines & Hunt, 2000), instead, expecting competent, credible managers that coach and mentor rather than command and micromanage (Kupperschmidt, 2000a). They are also depicted as seeking autonomy and independence in the workplace (Zemke, 2001). The popular literature depicts Generation X as being typically more self-reliant and possessing an entrepreneurial spirit when faced with Baby Boomer bosses, whom they find oppressive, and that they would rather abandon the corporate world striking out on their own (Scott, 1999). As a result the older generations often interpret Generation X as being pushy, arrogant, demanding and oblivious to the etiquette of business (Codrington, 1999; Raines & Hunt, 2000).

Traditional management approaches in the workplace are claimed not to suit Generation X (Muchnick, 1996). Generation X are depicted in the popular literature as resisting the idea of conformity and not flourishing in hierarchical environments where they have no access to management and no chance to participate in decision making (Bradford & Raines, 1992). They are portrayed as having little patience for policies, procedures and rules that don't make sense to them (Johnson & Johnson, 2010). They are also depicted as expecting to have a career (Morgan & Ribbens, 2006). Being determined individualists, Generation X are depicted as wanting a chance to do meaningful work that adds value to current operations and to be trusted to get the job done with the freedom and flexibility to do so (Erickson, 2010; Gross & Scott, 1990; Jennings, 2000; Ramo, 1997; Tulgan, 1995, 2000a). In addition, the popular literature depicts Generation X as expecting to have fun in the workplace (Tulgan, 1995). Once the job is no longer fun this cohort moves on (Johnson & Johnson, 2010).

Generation Y

Generation Y is the youngest generation in the workforce today, with a number of its members yet to enter. In 2013 Generation Y are 14 – 31 years old. According to Tulgan (2009) Generation Y grew up over-supervised and micro-managed. Although their parents are often being referred to as helicopter parents (hovering overhead, paying close attention to their children's experiences and problems) (Johnson & Johnson, 2010; Sujanski & Ferri-Reed, 2009), Generation Y are said to be closer to their parents than other generations. Generation Y's parents often intercede on their child's behalf in order to assure they grow up safely and are treated well (Morgan & Ribbens, 2006). They are depicted in the popular literature as being used to structured environments with tight busy schedules organized by their parents and expecting employers to provide a similar amount of structure in the workplace (Orrick, 2008; Zemke, 2001). Generation Y has been catered to from the time they were born, told they were special (Cogin, 2012) and rewarded more for their input or effort rather than output or accomplishments (Hill, 2002; Tulgan, 2009). They are depicted as expecting to be rewarded in the workplace for effort, whereas most organisations reward for performance (Hill, 2002).

Generation Y are more highly educated and technologically savvy than previous generational cohorts (Hatfield, 2002; Pendergast, 2010; Richardson, 2010; Swift, 2001; Wallace, 1999). They are the first generation to grow up completely surrounded by information (Morgan & Ribbens, 2006). Being used to 24-hour access to information they are depicted as prefering their information to arrive in 'interactive forms' and having much higher information overload threshold than other generational cohorts. As a result Generation Y like variety, are good at multi-tasking (Pendergast, 2010) and are prone to get bored easily (Sheahan, 2005). With knowledge becoming obsolete very quickly the strategic disadvantages of being young and inexperienced is diminished (Tulgan, 2009). Consequently Generation Y are depicted as having confidence in their abilities (Pendergast, 2010), a sense of entitlement and believe that their continued education is an investment in a ticket to guaranteed success (Rassmussen, 2009).

Generation Y are portrayed as expecting a healthy balance between their personal and professional lives (Boyett, Boyett, Hensen, & Spirgi-Herbert, 2001; Espinoza, Ukleja, & Rusch, 2010; Pendergast, 2010; Richardson, 2010). Generation Y expect to do challenging and meaningful work (Aldisert, 2002). The popular literature depicts them

as either seeing work as a means of supporting their 'real life' or as an opportunity to make a difference where work is not an occupation but an 'occupassion' (Sheahan, 2005). They are also depicted as expecting personal and professional fulfilment from their work Generation Y avoid work that doesn't provide learning, growth and the ability to be innovative (Rhule, 2004; Zemke, 2001). Generation Y are described as wanting to move up the corporate ladder quickly (Espinoza et al., 2010). Generation Y are portrayed as having abandoned the materialism of a big salary preferring perks such as tuition reimbursement and flexible work hours where overall job satisfaction is more important than a large pay check (Morgan & Ribbens, 2006). Many Generation Y members do not see the trade-off of time and stress for whatever incremental money and/or prestige is promised by the next job on the career ladder as a deal worth taking (Erickson, 2008).

The popular literature in turn also describes Generation Y as self-confident, optimistic (Erickson, 2008; Fenn, 2010; Hankin, 2005) and expecting to know how their contribution fits into the big picture (Sujansky & Ferri-Reed, 2009). It is claimed that they expect to contribute and collaborate with decision makers from the beginning (Zemke, 2001) and to be appreciated and respected for what they contribute (Sujansky & Ferri-Reed, 2009). They are also depicted as wanting direct communication, honest, continuous feedback, more frequent performance reviews and a fluid, open work community that values shared knowledge (Fenn, 2010).

Generation Y are described as being frustrated with many of the traditional operating policies in large organisations (Erickson, 2008). They are described as seeking more informal workplaces (Espinoza et al., 2010) and having high expectations of pay and conditions (Richardson, 2010). They are depicted as expecting promotions will be based on merit rather than longevity and that they will be promoted when they are ready not when the organization believes they are tenured enough (Sujansky & Ferri-Reed, 2009). They are also portrayed as being accustomed to operating in a much more horizontal and networked world than the hierarchical organizational structures that are still present in many organisations (Erickson, 2008).

The popular literature depicts Generation Y as expecting the workplace to cater to their needs and their sense of time. They are described as believing they shouldn't have to

conform to office processes as long as they complete the work (Espinoza et al., 2010). Generation Y do not favour the traditional work week where you have to put in 'face-time' for the sake of being present seeking flexi-time instead (Erickson, 2008; Sujanski & Ferri-Reed, 2009; Sujansky & Ferri-Reed, 2009). It is not that Generation Y won't respect deadlines but that they want them to be made clear and to have some role in negotiating them (Sujansky & Ferri-Reed, 2009) and a say in the hours they put in to produce them.

Generation Y are depicted as being comfortable with authority but expect that authority to be competent and have integrity (Lovern, 2001). They are described as not automatically giving loyalty and compliance to managers particularly if they think the boss lacks competence (Sujansky & Ferri-Reed, 2009). Generation Y are portrayed as not blindly heeding organisational chart authority but rather respecting transactional authority, that is, the authority of those that control resources, rewards and work conditions (Tulgan, 2009).

Generation Y are portrayed as refusing to blindly conform to traditional standards without questioning 'why' it is done a certain way (Hatfield, 2002; Sheahan, 2005), leading to the popular literature referring to them as 'Generation Why?' (Tulgan, 2000a) They are, as a whole, more willing to express their own ideas, bring new thinking to issues or problems and critique the way things have always been done if they think they have a better way (Erickson, 2008). Their comfort with communication via technology results in their communication style being interpreted as curt, disrespectful and usurping authority (Espinoza et al., 2010).

The popular literature depicts this generational cohort as expecting fairness and fair play in the workplace. They despise work politics (Loughlin & Barling, 2001) and believe social responsibility is a business imperative (Martin, 2004). Diversity is portrayed as being important to Generation Y (Espinoza et al., 2010). Generation Y are often described as choosing the organisation they work for based on the organisation's commitment to embracing diversity and how socially, culturally and environmentally aware it is (Sheahan, 2005).

The popular literature depicts Generation Y as team players. Working in teams is second nature to Generation Y (Fenn, 2010) who place emphasis on working, belonging and participating in teams (Orrick, 2008; Salkowitz, 2008), and expect their success to come as a result of team effort, rather than individual achievements..

Generation Y are also depicted as not expecting a job for life but instead thriving on the fluidity of the workforce (Tulgan, 2000a). Generation Y are described as enjoying frequent change unlike Veterans and Boomers who see change as a necessary evil (Tulgan, 1995). They are also depicted as being loyal to their careers and friends rather than the organizations they work for (Sheahan, 2005). The popular literature depicts them as expecting to change jobs frequently and if they become bored they are gone (Richardson, 2010; Sujanski & Ferri-Reed, 2009).

Summary of the popular literature's depiction of the generational cohorts

The preceding depiction of each of the generational cohorts is based on the characteristics most commonly ascribed to them in the popular literature. These characteristics are summarized in Table 2.1.

The depiction of each of the generational cohorts in the preceding section is based on depictions in the popular press and practitioner literature and lacks empirical rigour. Although the popular literature contains many thoughtful opinion pieces, surveys, books, management reports it also contains oft-repeated stereotypes and observations.

As highlighted by Twenge *et al.* (2010) much of the non-empirical literature is based on anecdotal accounts, extrapolations based on different generations' life experiences or qualitative interviews. Despite the popularity of this topic, there has been relatively little academic work either to confirm or refute the popular generational stereotypes (Lyons et al., 2007).

A number of writers have pointed out that the popular literature lacks empirical evidence that identifies the generational cohorts' values and expectations (Karp, Fuller, & Sirias, 2002; Macky et al., 2008). As early as 1997, academics Mantolis and Levin recognised that the popular literature depictions need to be considered as reader's base their behaviours on such stereotypes. This thesis seeks to establish whether the

depictions of the generational cohorts in both the popular literature and empirical studies are accurate and whether generational differences actually do exist.

Table 2.1 Overview of generational cohort characteristics as described in the popular literature

	Veteran	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y
Work Ethic	Hard work pays off Dues paying Commitment Conformity	Dues paying Competitive Ambitious	Entrepreneurial Don't want to pay dues Expect meaningful work Want to participate in decision making	Don't want to pay dues Expect meaningful work Want to participate in decision making Confident
Work/Life balance	Work long hours	Work to live not life to work - See visibility in the office as key to their success	Expect work life balance	Demand work life balance
Loyalty	Job for life (organisations loyal to employees and employees loyal to organisations)	Loyal to organisations	Just in time loyalty	Loyal to careers rather than organisations Expect to change jobs frequently
Feedback	Only when corrective action is required	Once a year	F.A.S.T (frequent, accurate, specific & timely)	Continuous feedback
Career advancement	Structure career paths	Structured career paths	Expect rapid skill and career advancement	Expect rapid skill and career advancement Promotions based on merit rather than longevity
Individualism vs. Teamwork	Results / outcome focussed	Relationship and results focused Seek consensus building	Individualistic	Seek teamwork
Authority / Management	Top down military style Respect authority Conformity	Expect managers to give leadership Respect authority	Cynical towards management Respect has to be eared Seek to participate in decision making	Expect competent managers Respect has to be earned Expect fairness
Reward	Seek power and status Status measured by position Seek high pay as a measure for achievement and affirmation	Seek power and status Status measured by position and perks	Reward productivity not longevity	Reward for effort rather than performance
Altruism	Civic sense of duty	Characterised by weak sense of community	Individualistic – low sense of community	Altruistic Civic minded

Adapted from Murray, Toulson and Legg (2011; p479)

The popular literature for the most part focuses on the differences in goals, expectations and work values between the generational cohorts whilst at the same time playing up the homogeneity within the cohorts (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Mlodzik & De Meuse,

2009). However, the assumptions in the popular literature have been subjected to relatively little empirical evaluation (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008) that confirm or refute the popular stereotypes of the generational cohorts (Lyons et al., 2007; Murray, Toulson et al., 2011). The task of pinning down the generational characteristics of each cohort is made more difficult by the lack of consistency in both the labels attached to the cohorts and the birth years used to define them. According to Murray, Toulson, *et al.* (2011; p480) *The diversity of opinion about what defining ages constitute particular generational membership, characteristics and work-related values make developing appropriate depictions more difficult.*

Empirical generational cohort studies

A review of empirical studies from peer-reviewed scholarly journals was undertaken. Articles included in this review were published in peer-reviewed journals, masters and doctoral theses and investigated generational cohorts in a workplace setting or investigated behaviours/values that might have an impact in the workplace. A chronological list of the empirical studies included in this review is provided in Appendix 1.

The review of the empirical studies identified a number of different areas of investigation (work values, motivation, leadership, employment preferences, work commitments, career, work attitudes, work ethic, feedback, workplace fun and working styles). The following summarises whether generational cohort differences were identified in the empirical studies in relation these areas investigated.

Work Values

The review of the literature uncovered a number of studies that investigated generational differences in work values. Many studies found generational differences in work values (Cogin, 2012; D'Amato & Herzfeldt, 2008; Egri & Ralston, 2004; Faber, 2001; Lyons et al., 2007; Murphy, Gibson, & Greenwood, 2010; Smola & Sutton, 2002; Yu & Miller, 2005). The following studies identified little or no generational differences in work values (Atkinson, 2011; Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Hansen & Leuty, 2012; Jurkiewicz, 2000; Jurkiewicz & Brown, 1998; Lester et al., 2012; McNeese-Smith & Crook, 2003; Real, Mitnick, & Maloney, 2010; Twenge et al., 2010).

In a study of 76 students and employees at a corporate university Faber (2001) investigated differences between Generation X and those the researcher termed the 'older cohort' on six values that were believed to be characteristic of Generation X. Clear differences were identified on three of the six values ("tolerance for difference", 'individual vs. group identification' and 'loyalty to organisation and institutions'). In addition, two values ('attitudes towards authority and hierarchy' and 'individual and societal financial prospects for the future') were identified. The study found that Generation X respondents did not exhibit popular expectations for Generation X, rather they were more optimistic about the future, had higher group identification and less tolerance than Baby Boomers.

In another study looking at work values Smola and Sutton (2002) investigated whether the work values of today's workers are different from those of 1979 and whether work values remain constant, or change, as workers grow older. A total of 3053 respondents from an earlier study by Cherrington, Condie and England (1979) were compared with responses from 335 respondents in their study. Results showed that Generation X work values were significantly different from those of Baby Boomers. Support was also found for the premise that values are influenced more by life events and the socialization of the times and less influenced by age and maturity.

Egri and Ralston (2004) investigated the value orientations of 774 Chinese and 784 the United States managers and professionals based on socio-cultural events. The study investigated four Chinese generational cohorts (Republican, 1911-1949; Consolidation, 1950-1965; Cultural Revolution, 1966-1976; and Social Reform, 1978-present) and three American generational cohorts (Veterans, Baby Boomers and Generation X). Significant generational cohort differences were found for all value orientations in China. Significant differences for all value orientations were found for United States cohorts where the younger the generation the more open to change and the more self enhancing but less conservative they are. The only value orientation in the United States sample where no significant difference was identified was in the importance of "self-transcendence".

When comparing generational cohorts in China and the United States, the Social Reform cohort and Generation X cohort were similar in respect to "high openness to change" and "low conservation". Baby Boomers were similar to the Cultural Revolution cohort with respect to openness to change. The Republican and Veteran generations were similar in respect to all four values. The findings therefore, suggest that recent generational cohorts in the two countries share less rather than more similarity in personal values than the earlier generational cohorts. In addition, this study suggests that the generation gap and potential for intergenerational values conflict appears to be as great in China as in the United States.

Yu and Miller (2005) investigated work values, attitudes and expectations of Boomers and Generation X in Taiwan. 437 responses from the Taiwan education and manufacturing sectors were obtained. Significant differences between Generation X and Boomers for work characteristics and preferred leadership style in the Taiwan manufacturing sector were found. However, no significant differences between the two groups were found in the Taiwan higher education sector.

Lyons et al. (2007) also investigated generational differences in human values. The findings of their study of 1,194 Canadian knowledge workers and undergraduate business students identified a number of generational differences between Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y on "openness to change", "conservative" and "self enhancement". The authors concluded that "generation" is a useful variable in examining differences in social values

In a study of 1,666 managers from Eastern and Western Europe D'Amato and Herzfeldt (2008) investigated the relationships of learning, organisational commitment and talent retention across managerial generations. Findings revealed differences between generations on a number of work values (status, freedom, person-organisation fit and extrinsic). D'Amato and Herzfeldt (2008) argue that at least amongst managers there may be value in generational specific HR practices that take into account different aims and intentions among different groups. Greenwood, Gibson and Murphy (2008) also investigated generational differences in values. In their major study of 5,057 working adults who completed the Rokeach Value Survey (RVS) between 2003 and 2008, they investigated differences in value systems between Baby Boomers, Generation X and

Generation Y. Statistically significant differences between the generational cohorts were identified on both terminal and instrumental values. The findings of the study provided support for the opinion expressed in the popular literature, that members of each generation display different attitudes and behaviours in the workplace.

In a large study of 4,446 managers and non-managers Murphy *et al.* (2010) examined value differences between managers and non-managers in general, and by generation. Statistically significant differences between Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y were found on 14 of the 16 instrumental values for managers and 18 of the 18 instrumental values for non-managers confirming that generations have different values that influence attitudes and thereby lead to different behaviours. Managers across all three generations were found to share three of the five top terminal values and also instrumental values of importance while non-managers only shared two of the top five.

In a study of 407 employees from a large multinational company Cogin (2012) examined the work values of Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y using the Protestant Work Ethic scale. Participants were obtained from the one organisation located in five different countries; Australia, USA, China, Germany and Singapore. Even with the effects of culture and life-stage being controlled for, generational differences were identified. According to Cogin (2012) the results of the study established the legitimacy of intergenerational differences as an important social categorization variable.

However, a number of academic studies have identified little or no differences between the generational cohorts (Atkinson, 2011; Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Hansen & Leuty, 2012; Jurkiewicz, 2000; Jurkiewicz & Brown, 1998; Lester et al., 2012; McNeese-Smith & Crook, 2003; Real et al., 2010; Twenge et al., 2010). In a study of 278 public employees in the United States, Jurkiewicz and Brown (1998) found little difference between the cohorts' ratings of work-related factors, suggesting more similarities than differences between the cohorts. No significant differences were found between Boomers and matures on any of the 15 work-related factors. Generation Xers ranked *chance to learn new things* significantly higher than Boomers and Matures and Boomers ranked *freedom from supervision* higher than Generation X. Those differences

that were identified were ascribed by the authors to life and career stages as opposed to cohort specific sociological influences.

In a further study looking at the work values of public employees Jurkiewicz (2000) investigated the rankings of 15 work-related factors in terms of what 241 Generation X and Baby Boomers wanted from their jobs. Of the 15 factors ranked by respondents, only three factors were found to show significant differences between Generation X and Baby Boomers indicating more similarities than differences between the cohorts. The study also found a lack of similarity between what participants reported wanting from their jobs and what the commonly held assumptions in the literature suggested they wanted.

In a study of 412 registered nurses in not for profit hospitals in the United States, McNeese-Smith and Crook (2003) investigated the extent to which values are associated with the independent variable of age group and job stage. Relationships among values and demographic variables of education, generation, ethnicity, gender and role were also investigated. Comparisons of values were made between the Silent Generation, Boomers and Generation X nurses finding significant differences for only values of *variety* and *economic returns*; the younger the generation the higher these values. The authors suggest that those differences that do exist may be more a result of age than generational cohort. A further study by Cennamo and Gardner (2008) investigated the differences between Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in work values, job satisfaction, affective organisational commitment and intentions to leave. The study of 504 Auckland employees found few differences in work values between generations. The authors noted that due to the cross-sectional design of the study it was not possible to determine whether the differences were linked to career-stage, life-stage or genuine generational differences.

In one of the few generational cohort studies using a sample of blue-collar workers Real, Mitnick and Maloney (2010) examined the workplace beliefs and values of three generations (Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials). Few meaningful differences were identified suggesting that Millennial workers were more similar than different from other generations in their work-related values and beliefs. The authors

suggested that those differences identified were too slight to be of practical significance and were more likely the result of experience, position or age than generation.

Twenge *et al.* (2010) investigated the attitudes of three generations of high school seniors to determine whether there were generational differences in work values (extrinsic, intrinsic, altruistic, social, leisure, security and influence). Using data obtained from the 'monitoring the future' data set, a time-lag method was employed. Data from 16,507 high school seniors at three different times was used; 1976 (Boomers), 1991 (Generation X) and 2006 (GenMe) was obtained. The study identified small to moderate generational differences in work values between Baby Boomers, Generation X and GenMe. It should be noted that the results reported averages and do not hold true for all members of a generational cohort. Effect sizes in this study were characterised as small to moderate; in other words, generational differences were found to exist but the differences identified were not overwhelming. The authors concluded that ....*although generation plays a role in work values, it does not appear to be the most important antecedent of work values. On the other hand, when considered at the aggregate level of an entire generation, even modest effects likely have very real practical importance* (Twenge et al., 2010; p1138). Therefore, while small differences were found, the authors believe even small differences can have a major impact on work values.

Generational differences on a number of work-related factors were also investigated by Atkinson (2011). In a study of 164 employees from a large American engineering company Atkinson (2011) examined if Generation Xers and Baby Boomers exhibited significant differences in rating job satisfaction, work-life balance, learning goal orientation and organisational commitment. No mean differences were found between Generation Xers and Baby Boomers on work-life balance importance, work centrality, learning goal orientation, organisational commitment or extrinsic job satisfaction. Some differences were found however – Baby Boomers were more satisfied with their work overall and with intrinsic aspects of work. Intrinsic job satisfaction and satisfaction with promotional opportunities were found to be more important in predicting organisational commitment for Generation Xers than Baby Boomers.

Hansen and Leuty (2012) investigated work values across three generations (Silent Generation, Baby Boomer and Generation X). The findings of their study of 1689 participants who completed the Minnesota Importance questionnaire suggested there are few differences in work values among the three generations and where differences were observed the effect sizes were small. It was of note however, that gender differences were identified. Despite the small effect sizes the results suggested that generation influences work values more than age.

A further study undertaken by Lester *et al.* (2012) investigated whether there were generational differences on fifteen work-related concepts and whether there were more perceived differences than actual differences. The study of 263 employees found significant differences in only eight of the possible 45 'I value' items. In contrast, 27 of out of a possible 45 perceived valued differences were identified. Hence perceived differences were found to outnumber actual differences between the cohorts in work contexts. The results highlight the mistaken beliefs each generation holds about the other. Many of the misconceptions align to stereotypical profiles that have been perpetuated in our culture. The authors question why generations hold such inaccurate images of each other when in fact the similarities in what they value greatly outnumber actual value differences. Lester *et al.* (2012) suggest the explanation for this may lie in the actual differences themselves. The value differences identified, such as communication, value placed on continuous learning, and whether one perceives the work environment as a fun place all play a significant role in how they perceive their co-workers and affect how they interact with one another, which in turn is likely to affect the perceptions they hold of each other. Consequently this may lead them to reach a mistaken conclusion that reinforces generational stereotypes.

Motivation

Seven of the 53 studies reviewed examined generational differences in work motivation. Little or no differences in work motivation were found in the majority of the studies reviewed (Appelbaum et al., 2005; Barbuto & Miller, 2008; Brick, 2011; Govitvatana, 2001; Montana & Petit, 2008; Wong et al., 2008). The study by Morgan and Ribbens (2006) was the only study reviewed that found generational differences in work motivation. In a study of 57 human resource managers Govitvatana (2001) sought to determine the characteristics associated with both Baby Boomers and Generation X and

whether there were differences in motivations between the two cohorts. Differences in the motivators of each cohort were identified between the two cohorts on only eight out of the 33 characteristics. In addition, the characteristics identified with each cohort were consistent with the popular literature's depiction of them.

Appelbaum, Serena and Shapiro (2005) investigated the factors that were stereotypically seen as motivating Baby Boomers and Generation X. A total of 112 managers and unionised staff (belonging to the Canadian Auto Workers Union) from two railway companies answered 29 questions examining stereotypes in the workplace. The study found that Baby Boomers and Generation X possess more similarities than differences with four of the top five rated motivational factors in common; *high salary*, *stable*, *secure future*, *chance to learn new things* and *chance to use your special skills*.

The study by Morgan and Ribbens (2006) was the only study reviewed that found generational differences in work motivation. In their study of 920 students and 692 employees from a mid-western university in America, Morgan and Ribbens (2006) sought to extend the existing research on generational differences by examining them as a diversity issue in the workplace. The study investigated how different generations view themselves and their ideal manager on a number of traits as well as their perception of a current and/or ideal work situation. Statistically significant differences existed between the genders in regards to *ideal manager* with differences between the sexes existing in nine of the 10 traits of ideal managers. Fewer differences were identified between genders with statistically significant differences found in only seven of the 15 self-report traits. The findings of the study indicated that generational differences do exist and that the Millennial generation's motivation and preferred managerial style is different to previous generations' (Matures, Baby Boomers and Generation X). The findings of the study corroborate previous research showing differences in generational groups as a diversity issue. The authors concluded that managers need to acknowledge that generations develop personas, attitudes, and beliefs similar to any other aspect of the diversity mix. It should be noted that the generalizability of the findings of this study with respect to Matures is limited by small samples size of this cohort.

In a study of 382 not-for-profit employees, Barbuto and Miller (2008) investigated generational differences in work motivation using the motivations sources inventory – intrinsic process, instrumental, internal and external self-concept and goal internalisation. Significant differences were only found in two areas – goal internalisation motivation was significantly higher for Baby Boomer 1 than for Generation X and instrumental motivation was significantly higher for Generation X than for Baby Boomer 1.

In a study of 200 recent graduates and executive MBA students, Montana and Petit (2008) examined what motivates Generation X and Generation Y and compared the result to data obtained in the 1970s from 6,000 managers (pre-Boomers) and in the 1980s from 500 company and government employees (Boomers). The results indicated more similarities than differences with all cohorts rating *respect for me as a person* and *good pay* as their top motivators. Generation X and Y had five of their top six motivators in common. Both Baby Boomers and pre-Boomers had five out of six top motivators in common with Generation X and four out of six top motivators in common with Generation Y.

In a study of 3,535 employees of moderate to large Australian organisations Wong, Gardiner, Lang and Coulon (2008) examined whether personality and motivational driver differences existed across the three generational cohorts, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y. The study found few meaningful differences in personality and motivation drivers in the workplace between the generations. The results indicated that the greatest differences between the generations were between Baby Boomers and Generation Y. The differences that were found were moderate and the authors believed could be attributed to age rather than generational cohort. Although minor differences were identified, in practical terms they were negligible, and not in line with generational cohort stereotypes. The authors conclude that the differences identified were likely to be age/career stage rather than generation.

In a study of 970 scientists and engineers in the oil and gas industry, Brick (2011) investigated whether or not there were significant differences in motivators among the four generational cohorts and whether or not there were generational differences in preferences of ideal company values among the four generational cohorts. Significant

differences were only found in eight of the 20 work motivators and significant agreement between the generational cohorts was identified when looking at their top five ideal company values. The only statistically significant difference that was identified was that Boomers viewed "freedom to grow and experiment" as a higher value factor than Generation Y.

Leadership

A number of studies examined generational differences with respect to leadership. Little or no generational differences with respect to leadership were identified in any of the studies reviewed. Sessa *et al.* (2007) undertook two studies. In the first study of 447 managers and professionals they investigated whether there were generational differences in terms of attributes perceived to be the most important for leaders. Significant differences in terms of attributes perceived to be most important for leaders were identified in six of the top 12 rankings (credible, listens well, farsighted, focused, dedicated and optimistic). The findings of the study indicate that generational cohorts do appear to differ in their profiles of what they perceive as important in leaders.

Having found generational differences in what each cohort perceive as important in leaders Sessa *et al.* (2007) went on to investigate whether managers in different cohorts behave differently. The major study of 20,640 business professionals identified that while managers and professionals in different generational cohorts differ to some extent in their leadership behaviors and in attributes they consider important in leaders (as perceived by self and others), these differences are not as large as they have been made out to be in the popular literature. A number of attributes were similar across generations. All cohorts valued *honesty in their leaders, knowledge about the organisation's core activities,* and *listening* and they all valued *helping others to achieve more than they believed they were capable of.* Differences were also found – matures valued delegation more than others, Millennials valued *focus* and *dedication* and *optimism* more than others and *honesty, big picture orientation* and *cultural sensitivity* less than other generations. Matures, early-Boomers, late-GenX and Millennials were more concerned with *listening* than late-Boomers and early-GenX.

In a study of 178 respondents to an online survey Spence (2009) investigated how the four cohorts in the workplace today (Silent, Baby Boomer, Generation X and

Generation Y) differ in their choices of desirable leadership traits and their preferences in leader communication style. The results identified considerable agreement with the importance of leadership traits in this study which were based on Kouzes and Posner's (2002) twenty leadership traits. All four cohorts included dependable, broadminded and honest in the top five traits. Differences however, were identified in the number of these traits each cohort identified they expected leaders to embody, Silent Generation (13); Baby Boomers (6), Generation X (8) and Generation Y (3). All cohorts showed preference for the democratic style of leadership (defined as a style in which the leader actively engages with followers, encouraging their inputs and participation while providing support and facilitating interaction) and least preference for authoritarian style of leadership (defined as a style in which the leader maintains control over followers, providing policies and procedures to communicate, while maintaining a distance between leader and follower). The study also identified a preference for a symmetrical form of communication that emphasised equality and allowed for building relationships.

Bransford (2011) examined what effects the characteristics of the Millennial generation had on preferences for leadership style by investigating which qualities in leaders were more highly valued within this generational cohort. A total of 252 participants completed the online questionnaire, which consisted of a number of leadership profiles, Levin's (1973) Locus of control measure and Paulhus' (1991) Balanced Inventory of Social Desirable Responding (version 6) scale. The leadership styles identified in the study included pragmatic[1], servant[2], ideological[3] and charismatic[4]. No significant differences in participant's preferences towards servant or pragmatic leaders were identified. All participants regardless of generational cohort had higher preferences for servant leaders. No significant differences were found for preference for charismatic or pragmatic leaders was identified. Millennials had significantly higher preferences towards ideological leaders than non-Millennials.

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[1] A leader who does not enforce goals but rather focuses on the current issues of productivity and adjusts for any threats or violations
[2] A leader who stresses the importance of personal integrity and focuses on serving others as a means of furthering the organisation, fostering satisfaction and motivation and increasing commitment to the organisation
[3] A leader does not focus on future goals but rather emphasises goals that have been proven effective based on the leaders past personal experiences
[4] A leader described as having a certain "air" about them and who promotes both individual and group goals and emphasises positive, future-oriented goals and motivates people to long-term goals

Employment Conditions and Preferences

Treuren (2008) and Treuren and Anderson (2010) investigated generational employment preferences. In a study of 583 Australian university students Treuren (2008) investigated whether Generation Y demonstrated significantly different employment preferences to the Generation X and Baby Boomer age cohorts. In addition, the study investigated whether Generation Y participants would rate Generation Y employment attributes more highly than non Generation Y participants. The findings showed that Generation Y students do not have substantially different expectations about future employment conditions compared to Baby Boomers and Generation X students. In some respects, Generation X and Baby Boomer aged cohorts may be assumed to be more interested in the employment conditions usually attributed to Generation Y than those within Generation Y. Analysis of the results showed there is no clear or outstanding distinction between Generation Y, Generation Y and Baby Boomers in terms of their expectations of employment conditions.

Treuren and Anderson (2010) went on to investigate the employment preferences of Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y. In a study of 583 university students they sought to identify whether there was evidence for the existence of Generation Y as a group with distinct and different attitudes to employment compared to Baby Boomers and Generation X. Significant differences were found in only two of the nine employment conditions (*flexible work arrangements* and *work-life balance*). No clear or outstanding distinction between Generation Y, Generation X and Baby Boomers in terms of their expectations of employment conditions was identified. Generation Y was not found to rate Generation Y employment attributes more highly than non-Generation Y students. In fact, unexpectedly, Baby Boomers rated the attributes attributed to Generation Y more highly than Generation Y themselves.

Work Commitment

A number of studies investigated generational differences in work commitment. Generational differences were identified in studies by Ferres, Travaglione and Firns (2003), Perryer and Jordan (2008), Benson and Brown (2011) and Lub, Bijvank, Bal, Blomme and Schalk (2012) while little or no generational differences in work commitment were found in the studies by Davis *et al.* (2006) and Hess and Jepsen (2009). Ferres, Travaglione and Firns (2003) investigated differences in levels of trust,

commitment, procedural justice and turnover intention between Generation X employees and older age group employees in their study of 234 Australian employees obtained from one organisation. As predicted Generation X employees displayed lower continuance commitment, exhibited stronger turnover intentions and had lower scores for perceptions of procedural justice than older employees. No significant differences were found between Generation X and the older group for levels of affective commitment or trust. No support was found for the hypothesis that prominent differences in correlational patterns would be found across groups. Response patterns were not found to differ according to age as the largest cluster of older employees reported fairly comparable work attitudes to Generation X. Within groups the results indicate heterogeneous responding i.e., the subgroups exhibited varying patterns of organisational attitudes.

In an Australian study of 216 Federal Government employees Perryer and Jordan (2008) examined the influence of generational differences on levels of organisational commitment. The results showed that after controlling for length of service, education level, gender and work pressure, generation identity was a significant predictor of organisational commitment. Generation X were found to be significantly less committed to the organisation than Baby Boomers. Benson and Brown (2011) investigated the differences between Baby Boomers and Generation X in job satisfaction and organisational commitment and willingness to quit in a sample of 2,267 public sector employees. Significant differences were found even after controlling for a number of independent variables which included age and gender providing strong evidence of a generational effect. Baby Boomers had a significantly higher level of job satisfaction and significantly lower willingness to quit than their Generation X counterparts. The findings from both Perryer and Jordan (2008) and Benson and Brown (2011) are consistent with the depiction in the popular literature of Baby Boomers being more committed to organisations than Generation X.

In a study of 358 employees in a large Dutch hotel chain, Lub et al. (2012) examined generational differences in the psychological contract of work outcomes such as commitment and turnover intention. The study found generational differences in the psychological contract that employees hold with their organisation. In line with current literature on generations, the results indicate that different generations hold different

expectations and value different aspects in their job (e.g. Chen & Choi, 2008; Dries, Pepermans, & Kerpel, 2008; Smola & Sutton, 2002).

Age-cohort differences in the work commitments of Baby Boomers and Generation X was investigated by Davis et al. (2006) in their study of 382 information technology professionals. Work commitment was investigated in relation to work involvement, job involvement, work-group attachment, organisational commitment and professional commitment. Only three differences were identified – Generation X had higher level of job involvement than boomer, Generation X felt greater normative commitment to the organization than Boomers and Boomers had a higher commitment to the profession than Generation X. The lack of significant differences identified between the cohorts indicates that generation is not a good single predictor of work values. The results suggest the different generational cohorts of IT professionals are more similar than different in regards to how they value work and their commitments to organizations and their profession.

Generational differences in perceived psychological contracts were investigated by Hess and Jepsen (2009). In a study of 345 employees from a number of U.S organizations Hess and Jepsen (2009) identified that employee's relational obligations[5] were significantly higher for Baby Boomers than for Generation X. No significant interactions were found between relational fulfilment and generational groups. However, a stronger negative relationship was found between transactional fulfilment[6] and intention to leave for Generation X than Generation Y. Contrary to expectations Baby Boomers level of transactional obligations was higher than for Generation X. The authors suggest, however, that the differences identified may have been a result of life-stage rather than generation. It was also of note that no significant differences were found for Generation Y. Lower balanced fulfilment[7] was found to be associated with higher intentions to leave for both Baby Boomers and Generation Y than for Generation X. Contrary to the popular perception of large variations among generational groups and career stages the sizes of differences were quite small and some hypothesized differences were not found to be statistically significant. The authors conclude that the

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[5] An open-ended relationship where trust, security and loyalty are the focus and the exchange involves socio-economic as well as economic returns
[6] A short-term relationship where the focus is limited to an economic focus
[7] Provide a balance between relational obligations and transactional obligations where elements of both exist in the relationship

findings indicated greater similarities than differences between the different career stages and generational cohorts.

Career

Two studies investigated generational differences with respect to career. Neither study identified generational differences. Generational differences in respect to different beliefs about the meaning of career and career success was investigated by Dries, Pepermans and Kerpel (2008). In their study of 750 participants in Belgium they identified a decrease of bounded career types[8] with generation and simultaneous increase of staying and homeless career types[9]. No significant differences were found between the generational cohorts. No significant difference was identified with respect to how the different generational cohorts evaluate career success. However, overall satisfaction appeared to be the overriding criterion used when respondents were asked to evaluate other people's career success. In addition, the study found that the desire to work for an organization that can offer long-term security and stability is strongest in both the Silent Generation and Generation Y.

Similarly, in a study of 509 participants from a range of New Zealand organizations, McGuigan (2010) explored the relationships between age, generational identity and career state, and the impact that these factors had on perceptions of employability and job insecurity. The study found age, career-stage, and generation to be interrelated. Age was found to differ linearly across career-stage (as a categorical measure). The study found low perceptions of employability were related to increased perceptions of job insecurity. In particular Baby Boomers were found to have lower perceptions of employability which influenced their perceptions of job insecurity. Generation X & Generation Y were found to have higher perceptions of job insecurity through higher levels of overall career concern. Findings from the study showed that across generations overall career concern increased, with Generation Y having higher levels of career concern than Generation X, who had higher levels of career concern than Baby Boomers.

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[8] Stable careers where high importance attached to organisational security and employee expects to stay
[9] Multiple employer career where high importance attached to organisational security but employee expects to leave

It should be noted however, that the results were more indicative of a dichotomy between Baby Boomers and Generation X/Y individuals. The findings indicated that the differences between Baby Boomers and Generation X and Generation Y are not as distinct as the popular literature suggested. Whilst the study did not suggest that the concept of generations was obsolete, it suggested that careful consideration needs to be made regarding the utility of the popular literature when defining generations.

Work Attitudes

In a qualitative study of 91 hospitality employees Gursoy *et al.* (2008) sought to identify generational differences and similarities in work attitudes. In-depth focus group discussions revealed differences between the generational cohorts with respect to work/life, loyalty, attitudes towards authority and perspectives on work. Each generation's perception (Baby Boomer, Generation X and Millennial) of other cohorts was also examined. Findings indicated that Generation Xers respected Baby Boomers, but that Baby Boomers did not have high opinions of Generation X and Generation Y. The results however, are limited in their generalizability by the small sample size, and participants being employed by a single hotel chain.

In a major study of 115,044 US employees obtained from 18 years of repeated administrations of the Kenexa WorkTrends employee opinion survey, Kowske, Rasch and Wiley (2010) investigated work attitudes across generations. This was the only study reviewed that empirically examined differences in work attitudes across five generations while controlling for age and period effects. The work attitudes examined included overall company and job satisfaction, turnover intentions and satisfaction with pay and benefits, recognition, career development and advancement and job security. The study demonstrated that small generational differences exist after controlling for age and period effects. However, the authors conclude that the generations are more similar than different given that there is a small amount of variance attributable to generation relative to individual level variables.

Sajjadi, Sun and Castillo (2012) investigated generational differences in work attitudes in multigenerational workplaces in Sweden. Data was collected through a number of semi-structured interviews. In contrast to the Kowske *et al.* (2010) results, the study found that apart from one area (individual vs. team orientation) the different generations

tended to demonstrate apparent differences in respect to work attitude. The authors cautioned however, that it could not be ruled out that differences were attributed to other factors such as life or career-stage.

Work Ethic

Only one study reviewed investigated generational differences in work ethic. In a study of 1,860 business students, Meriac *et al.* (2010) examined difference across three generational cohorts on the dimensions of work ethic as measured by the Multidimensional Work Ethic Profile (MWEP). Data was drawn from a large data set collected between 1996 and 2008. Significant main effect for generational cohorts on all the MWEP dimensions except *leisure* was found suggesting that respondents differed in work ethic. Baby Boomers were significantly higher than Generation X and Millennials on all dimensions except *leisure*. Millennials were significantly higher than Generation X on three dimensions (*morality/ethics, hard work* and *delay gratification*) and not significantly different on four dimensions (*leisure, self-reliance, centrality of work* and *wasted time*). Baby Boomers were found to manifest the highest level of work ethic and Generation X was found to manifest the lowest level of work ethic. The authors had expected to find a linear decline in the scores on work ethic. However, the findings did not support a linear trend in work ethic as a function of age or career-stage. Since the age of the Baby Boomer participants (mean = 44.5) was higher than Generation X (mean = 22.62) and Generation Y (mean = 21.7) the authors could not rule out that the mean differences between Baby Boomers and the other two cohorts could be due to differences in age or career-stage.

Feedback

The study by Reiss (2010) sought to clarify the question (generation vs. maturation) raised by Smola and Sutton (2002) and the idea put forward by Lyons et al. (2007) that generations are distinct groups. Reiss (2010; p13) states that *it is clear from the Lyons et al. (2007) study that there are differences among the shared values commonly held among members of different generations. The question still remains as to what these value differences mean, what causes them and how they can predict behaviours in the workplace.* Using an experimental design, Reiss (2010) examined the reactions of Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y after receiving negative feedback. In the study of 385 university employees and students there were no observed differences

when comparing members of the same generation 10 years apart to members of the next generation (older or younger).

The study found only tentative support for generational differences based on birth years. No difference between the generational cohorts was found in motivational levels and self-efficacy. When looking at how the different generations interpret negative feedback the study failed to find any significant differences between Generation X and Generation Y or between Baby Boomers and Generation X. The only significant difference identified was between Baby Boomers and Generation Y where Baby Boomers rated their perception of the negative feedback more negatively than Generation Y.

Workplace Fun

Lamm and Meeks (2009) investigated how generational differences moderate the relationship between workplace fun and individual workplace outcomes. This study of 701 respondents found that Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials respond differently to workplace fun. Cohort membership was also found to moderate the relationship between workplace fun and some individual workplace outcomes. Millennials demonstrated stronger positive associations between workplace fun and individual outcomes than Generation Xers. This was supported for job satisfaction, task performance as well as organisational citizenship behaviour. Contrary to what the authors hypothesized, Generation X was not found to show stronger positive associations between workplace fun and individual outcomes than Baby Boomers.

Working Styles

Sayers (2006) investigated generational differences in Australian workers. This qualitative study focused on how the different generations (Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y) view and deal with changing trends in the workplace. The study found that all three cohorts ascribed to differing preferred working styles and held differing expectations of their organisation. The difference in working styles supported the depictions in the popular literature that depict declining loyalty and respect for authority.

Summary

The majority of the studies in this literature review were investigating generational differences and sought to determine whether differences existed with respect to work values, leadership, motivation and work commitment. Over half of the studies looking at generational differences in work values found little or no differences. It is of note however, that of the seven studies that were undertaken since 2010, five found little or no generational differences (Atkinson, 2011; Hansen & Leuty, 2012; Lester et al., 2012; Real et al., 2010; Twenge et al., 2010). In addition, four out of the six studies looking at work commitment found generational cohort differences. All the studies reviewed investigating generational differences with respect to leadership found little or no differences and all but one study investigating motivation found little or no generational differences.

Generational differences were also identified with respect to working styles (Sayers, 2006), narcissism (Twenge, Konrath, Foster, Cambell, & Bushman, 2008), work ethic (Meriac et al., 2010), workplace fun (Lamm & Meeks, 2009) and work attitudes (Kowske et al., 2010). However, little or no generational differences were identified with respect to employment preferences (Treuren, 2008; Treuren & Anderson, 2010) and feedback (Reiss, 2010).

Generational cohort characteristics identified in empirical studies

From the review of the empirical literature it became evident that whilst a number of the studies reviewed supported the depiction of the generational cohorts in the popular literature (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Gursoy et al., 2008; Maxwell, Ogden, & Broadbridge, 2010; Meriac et al., 2010; Sessa et al., 2007; Smola & Sutton, 2002; Spence, 2009) more studies found little or no support for these depictions (Atkinson, 2011; Brick, 2011; Davis et al., 2006; Greenwood et al., 2008; Hansen & Leuty, 2012; Jurkiewicz & Brown, 1998; Mattis et al., 2004; Real et al., 2010). Other studies found support for some of the depictions in the popular literature and not others (Faber, 2001; Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010; Sajjadi et al., 2012; Twenge et al., 2010). Using the headings identified in Table 2.1 the empirical studies were reviewed to determine the characteristics associated with each cohort in the empirical literature.

Work Ethic

The popular literature portrays differences between the generational cohorts with regards to work ethic. Veterans and Baby Boomers are depicted as having a work ethic built on paying ones dues and being ambitious. Generation X and Generation Y are portrayed as having what is described as no or little work ethic, lacking ambition and not prepared to 'pay their dues' and seeking variety. The depiction of Generation X and Generation Y not willing to 'pay their dues' is supported by a number of studies. Cennamo and Gardner (2008) found that Baby Boomers are said to focus on traditional work models that involve dedication and 'hard work'. Meriac *et al.* (2010) found that Baby Boomers had a higher work ethic than both Generation X and Millennials. However, they noted that this was not in a linear trend downwards as surprisingly Generation Y was found to have a higher work ethic than Generation X. Real *et al.* (2010) on the other hand found that Millennials scored higher than both Baby Boomers and Generation X on 'hard work'. Cogin (2012) however, found that the value placed on 'hard work' by each generation declined in a downward linear trend with Traditionalists placing the highest value and Generation Y placing the least value on 'hard work'.

In relation to ambition consistent with the popular literature, Morgan and Ribbens (2006) found Millennials tended to view themselves as less ambitious than Baby Boomers and Matures and Greenwood *et al.* (2008) found Baby Boomers rated higher on ambition than Generation X. However, contrary to the depiction in the popular literature Greenwood *et al.* (2008), Jurkiewicz and Brown (1998) and Spence (2009) found Generation Y placed higher value on being ambitious than the older generations. Wong *et al.* (2008) found Generation Y and Generation X were more ambitious and career-centred and had a tendency to enjoy working with demanding roles and targets to a greater degree than Baby Boomers although the effect sizes were moderate. This may however, be a reflection of life-stage rather than generational cohort effect. Career progression is likely to be less of a priority and less of a motivator for Baby Boomers who are near the end of their career than for Generation X and Generation Y who are at the beginning of their career (Wong et al., 2008).

The popular literature depicts Generation X and Generation Y as seeking meaningful work where they are able to participate in decision making and see how their role fits into the big picture. Burke (1994) also identified that Generation X ranked *challenging tasks and projects* as one of the top five things they value in a job. McNeese-Smith and Crook (2003) found the younger the generation the higher the score on *variety* i.e., Generation X placed significantly more value on variety than the Silent Generation. Appelbaum *et al.* (2005) rated both *variety in work assignments* and *chance to learn new things* in their top five motivators and Terjesen, Vinnicombe and Freeman (2007) identified that Generation Y rated *variety in daily work* one of the top five most important organisational attributes. Generation Y is also depicted as seeking variety. Montana and Petit (2008) found Generation X and Generation Y rated the *chance to do interesting work* as a principle motivator. However, they also found that pre-Boomers and Baby Boomers rated *chance to do interesting work* as a principle motivator. Kim, Knight and Crutsinger (2009) found Generation Y are likely to adapt job characteristics to make work meaningful. And Maxwell, Ogden and Broadbridge (2010) found Generation Y place importance on the fact that they enjoy challenging work and Lub *et al.* (2012) found Generation X and Generation Y perceive challenge as more important than Baby Boomers. Barbuto and Miller (2008) found Baby Boomer I identified goal internalisation motivation to be higher than Generation X thus seeking situations where a cause or moral connection to work was conveyed to the individual.

Jurkiewicz (2000) found no differences between Baby Boomers and Generation X's rating of the desirability of variety of work assignments. Similarly, Wong *et al.* (2008) found no difference between Baby Boomers and Generation X and Generation Y in variety seeking.

Loyalty

The popular literature portrays Veterans and Baby Boomers as loyal employees with Veterans in particular seeking a job for life. On the other hand, the popular literature portrays Generation X have as having just-in-time loyalty and Generation Y as having more loyalty to their career than to organisations. Findings from both Faber (2001) and Smola and Sutton (2002) suggest that Baby Boomers are more loyal than Generation X. Govivatana (2001), Davis *et al.* (2006), D'Amato and Herzfeldt (2008), and Perryer and Jordan (2008) provided support for Baby Boomers being more committed than

Generation X (i.e., more willing to remain with their current employer). Gursoy *et al.* (2008) found that Boomers are more loyal than Generation X and Millennials and Greenwood *et al.* (2008) found that Boomers place higher value on loyalty than Generation X and Generation Y.

Consistent with this portrayal, Spence (2009) found that the Silent Generation placed more importance on loyalty than other cohorts and that the importance generations placed on loyalty reduced in a linear trend. Murphy *et al.* (2010) found Baby Boomers rated being 'loyal' to the organisation as important and Generation X non-managers rated 'loyal' as unimportant, however, Generation X managers also rated 'loyal' as important.

Sayers (2006) found Baby Boomers are loyal to organizations, Generation X are loyal to themselves and more likely to feel a sense of loyalty to a manager than the organization and Generation Y are more loyal to their social network of friends than the workplace. Ng, Schweitzer and Lyons (2010) also found that over half the Millennial respondents did not want or were not sure if they wanted to find an organization in which they could stay long term. Instead, they found Millennials considered people an important attribute in their job choice, supporting the popular literature's assertion that they may be more loyal to their colleagues and supervisors than to the organisation. Benson and Brown (2011) found that Generation X had a higher willingness to quit than Baby Boomers even when controlling for a number of variables such as gender and age. Support was also found by Lub *et al.* (2012) that Generation Y had significantly lower commitment and higher turnover intention than Baby Boomers and Generation X.

A number of studies however, found little or no support for the popular literature's assertion that Generation X and Generation Y are less loyal than Veterans and Baby Boomers. Contrary to what the popular literature suggests Mattis *et al.* (2004) found that Generation X are highly committed and loyal to their current employers placing high importance on job security. Those that said they considered leaving did so for reasons such as greater advancement opportunities, increased pay and increased intellectual stimulation. In addition, Dries *et al.* (2008) identified that GenMe seems to be saying that they like their jobs and would like to stay in them, but that this attitude may breakdown when better opportunities arise suggesting a just-in-time type of

loyalty. Atkinson (2011) found no difference between Generation X and Baby Boomers on organisational commitment and whilst Kowske *et al.* (2010) found statistically significant differences between the cohorts on turnover intention stated these were practically negligible.

Work/Life Balance

With respect to work centrality and work/life balance the popular literature portrays Veterans and Baby Boomers as seeing work as more central to their lives (*live to work*) than Generation X and Generation Y (*work to live*) who are portrayed as expecting or demanding work-life balance. In support of this assertion Smola and Sutton (2002) found Baby Boomers reported feeling more strongly than Generation Xers that *work should be one of the most important parts of a person's life*. However it should be noted that the study also found Generation X felt more strongly than Baby Boomers that *working hard makes one a better person*. Gursoy *et al.* (2008) found Baby Boomers *live to work* and that Generation X wanted work-life balance. Meriac *et al.* (2010) and Twenge *et al.* (2010) found that Baby Boomers saw work as more central to their lives than Generation X and Generation Y. Lub *et al.* (2012) found that work/life was more important to Generation X than to Baby Boomers and Generation Y. On the other hand Real *et al.* (2010) found that Millennials saw work as more central to their lives than Baby Boomers and Generation X and Atkinson (2011) found no difference between Baby Boomers and Generation X on work centrality.

Greenwood *et al.* (2008) identified that Generation X sought work-life balance. The study identified that Generation X placed importance on having an "enjoyable and leisurely life" (free time from work obligation). The findings from Mattis *et al.* (2004) also support the popular literature's assertion that Generation X value work-life balance. In their study Generation X was found to rate *personal and family commitments* more highly than *work commitments*. They were found to seek flexible work arrangements such as flexible arrival and departure times, ability to change work schedules, telecommuting/working from home, and the ability to work part time. Whilst these options were important to Generation X, gender differences were found with more women seeking these options more than men. Burke (1994) found Generation X also ranked *flexible scheduling* and a job that *accommodates family responsibilities* as two of their top values.

In the study by Real *et al.* (2010) Millennials were found to value *leisure* more than Baby Boomers. No differences between Millennials and Generation X were identified. Sajjadi *et al.* (2012) found Generation Y placed more significance on free time and seeking more reasonable work-life balance than preceding generations. The preceding generations reported having a good private life but still tended to prioritise work over private life. The study also found that all generations sought flexibility in order to achieve work-life balance. In a more recent study Cogin (2012) also found that Generation Y valued leisure time with the findings of the study identifying *leisure* as the most important work value for this cohort.

Cennemo and Gardner (2008) identified that Generation Y place high importance on work-life balance and Ng *et al.* (2010) found that consistent with the popular literature Millennials seek a satisfying life outside work. Twenge *et al.* (2010) found leisure time was valued most highly by GenMe followed by Generation X and was valued the least by Baby Boomers. Twenge *et al.* (2010) also found that GenMe were less likely to want to work overtime and more likely to say they would stop working if they had enough money and Maxwell *et al.* (2010) identified that Generation Y hospitality workers didn't want to work long hours – they wanted to work hard but they also wanted to have good work-life balance and work to live rather than live to work. Respondents also identified that time off was more important than financial rewards.

However, not all studies supported the popular literatures depiction of the generational cohorts with respect to work centrality and work-life balance. Faber (2001) found no difference in attitudes to work and leisure time between Generation X and the older generational cohorts and Davis *et al.* (2006) found that Generation X IT professionals consider the job a central aspect of their self-concept to a greater extent than Baby Boomers. The authors postulate that this may be due to life-stage rather than generational cohort. Treuren (2008) and Treuren and Anderson (2010) found that Generation Y ranked *flexible work arrangements* and *work-life balance* lower than Generation X and Baby Boomers. Atkinson (2011) found no difference between Generation X and Baby Boomers on work-life balance importance. These results are surprising as the popular literature consistently depicts Generation X as less focussed on work and more on leisure.

Feedback

With respect to feedback in the workplace the popular literature depicts Veterans as expecting feedback only when corrective action is required (*no news, is good news*), while Baby Boomers are portrayed as expecting feedback once per year. Generation X and Generation Y are portrayed as seeking more frequent feedback (F.A.S.T or continuous respectively). Few empirical studies addressed generational differences in respect to attitudes to feedback. In the study by Burke (1994) Generation X rated *frequent feedback about performance* as one of thier top five values. Reiss (2010) examined generational differences to receiving negative feedback or criticism. While not looking at the frequency of feedback but rather how feedback is perceived, the study found Baby Boomers rated feedback as more negative than Generation X or Generation Y. Sajjadi *et al.* (2012) found none of the generations chose the annual feedback as a means for work improvement. They identified that Generation Y has a greater need for a 'thank you' and 'well done' sort of feedback. Generation Y was found to seek feedback as soon as possible after an event and found to want more feedback on their work whereas the preceding generations were found not to want as much assurance and confirmation. They also found that Generation Y was more willing to receive feedback in an informal way rather than on a fixed rolling schedule.

Career Advancement

With respect to career advancement the popular literature portrays Veterans and Baby Boomers as seeking structured career paths that are based on paying ones dues whereas Generation X and Generation Y are portrayed as expecting rapid skill and career advancement and seeking promotions based on merit rather than longevity. Smola and Sutton (2002) found Generation X reported a stronger desire to be promoted more quickly than Baby Boomers and Ng *et al.* (2010) found Generation Y identified opportunity for advancement as a top priority and had elevated expectations for rapid promotions and pay increases. Ng *et al.* (2010) found Generation Y respondents expected promotion in the first 18 months of their first job. They rated opportunity for advancement as the most desirable work-related attribute confirming the popular literatures stereotype that they are impatient to succeed. However, it could not be ruled out that this was not due to career-stage.

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In a study of Scottish hospitality workers Maxwell *et al.* (2010) found that a top priority for Generation Y was their determination to succeed and achieve upward promotion in their careers. Meriac *et al.* (2010) found that Millennials felt more satisfied with their opportunity to get a better job and develop their career than all previous generations. More recently, Sajjadi *et al.* (2012) found Generation Y has strong self-confidence and inclination for rapid career advancement suggesting that this may explain why Generation Y changes jobs frequently.

Montana and Petit (2008) found that all four cohorts, pre-Boomers, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y rated opportunity for self-development and improvement as one of their principle motivators. In addition, Montana and Petit (2008) found Generation X and Generation Y rated "chance for promotion" as a principle motivator.

Brick (2011) found Traditionalists rated chance for promotion less of a motivator when compared to Generation X and Generation Y. Baby Boomers rated it less of a motivator when compared to Generation X and Generation Y. Brick (2011) found Generation Y rated *opportunity to enhance skills* as a higher motivator when compared to traditionalists and Baby Boomers. Generation X also rated it as a higher motivator than Baby Boomers. Smola and Sutton (2002) found Generation Xers reported a stronger desire to be promoted more quickly than Baby Boomers. Lub *et al.* (2012) found Generation X and Generation Y perceive personal development and intra-organisational mobility as significantly more important than Baby Boomers do.

Maxwell *et al.* (2010) identified Generation Y expect opportunities for development, job security, clear advancement and promotion path. In addition, De Hauw and De Vos (2010) found that Millennials have high expectations of personal career development and that this remained high even in times of recession. Terjesen *et al.* (2007) identified that two of the five most important organisational attributes for Generation Y are that the organisation invests heavily in the training and development of their employees and that there are clear opportunities for long term career progression. Lester *et al.* (2012) found a significant difference in valuation for *continuous learning* with Generation Y's value rating higher than Generation X's ratings. D'Amato and Herzfeldt (2008) found Generation X had higher learning goal orientation than Baby Boomers.

Jurkiewicz and Brown (1998) found compared to Generation X, Matures felt their special abilities were under-utilized and their opportunities for advancement were minimal and Jurkiewicz (2000) found no differences between Generation X and Baby Boomers with respect to opportunities for advancement. Treuren and Anderson (2010) found no significant differences on *ongoing training and development*. Atkinson (2011) contrary to predictions found Generation Xers did not report significantly higher ratings of learning goal orientation than Baby Boomers.

Individualism vs. teamwork

With respect to individualism versus teamwork the popular literature depicts Generation Y as thriving on teamwork and Generation X as preferring autonomy and working alone. The popular literature also depicts Baby Boomers as focusing on workplace relationships and seeking consensus whereas Veterans are depicted as outcome/results focused. In support of the popular literatures depiction of Generation Y, Gursoy *et al.* (2008) found Millennials like teamwork and collective action showing a strong will to get things done with a great team spirit. Montana and Petit (2008) found that they rated *getting on with others on the job* as important and Real *et al.* (2010) found that Millennials scored higher on the social aspects of work than Baby Boomers and Generation X.

However, the majority of the studies reviewed that addressed this characteristic found little or no support for the popular literature's depiction. Twenge *et al.* (2010) found Generation Y value work that allows for social interaction significantly less than both Baby Boomers and Generation X. No significant differences were identified between Baby Boomers and Generation X with respect to the values they place on work that allows for social interaction.

Lyons *et al.* (2007), Real *et al.* (2010) and Hansen and Leuty (2012) found that the later generations place greater importance on 'co-workers' than earlier generations suggesting younger generations (Generation X and Generation Y) place more value on social connections at work than do Baby Boomers and Veterans. Sajjadi *et al.* (2012) did not identify any differences between Generation Y and the other cohorts in terms of teamwork spirit and collaboration in the workplace.

Jurkiewicz and Brown (1998) and Jurkiewicz (2000) did not identify any differences between Generation X and Baby Boomers on the motivational factors *working as part of a team* or *working with friendly and congenial associates*. In addition, Greenwood *et al.* (2008), contrary to the depiction in the literature, found that Generation X are willing to work as part of a team to pursue team and organisational goals. Treuren and Anderson (2010) found no significant differences between Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y on *social work culture*.

The popular literature portrays Generation X as *loners*. However, little support for this was found from the empirical studies reviewed. Faber (2001) found that Generation X scored higher on group identification and lower on individual identification than the older cohorts indicating they are more likely to identify themselves as members of a group rather than individuals. Greenwood *et al.* (2008) found Baby Boomers placed higher value on "independence" than Generation X and Millennials placed higher value on independence than both Generation X and Baby Boomers.

In a study of 23,413 undergraduate university students Ng *et al.* (2010) investigated career expectations and priorities and contrary to the depiction in the popular literature, found Millennials placed the greatest importance on individualistic aspects of the job. Meriac *et al.* (2010) found Baby Boomers rated *self-reliance* more highly than both Generation X and Generation Y. However, Generation Y also rated higher than Generation X.

Authority and Management
When looking at generational cohort differences with respect to attitudes towards authority and management the popular literature portrays Veterans and Baby Boomers as respecting people in positions of authority and being used to a top-down military style of management. Generation X in contrast, is portrayed as being cynical towards management and seeking autonomy in the workplace. Generation Y is portrayed as expecting competent and fair managers and along with Generation X believing that respect has to be earned. Consistent with the depiction in the popular literature Yu and Miller (2005) in their study of the Taiwan manufacturing industry found that Baby

Boomers preferred to be managed under a task-oriented leadership style and Generation X preferred to be managed under a relationship-oriented leadership style.

Sayers (Sayers, 2006) found Baby Boomers felt that respect was expected and assigned to people in authority and positions of distinction, Generation X felt it was important to respect those around them, although that respect could be lost quickly depending on the behaviours of managers and work colleagues. Generation Y felt respect needed to be earned and that authority figures and people who hold positions of power or authority did not necessarily deserve respect unless it was earned through actions. Consistent with the popular literature, Sessa et al. (2007) found Generation X did not accord people respect or authority because of their position. Instead they expect people to earn respect by demonstrating they can get the work done themselves.

Gursoy et al. (2008) found that Baby Boomers respect authority and hierarchy while Generation X tend to rebel against it. Bransford (2011) found Millennials had higher preference for servant leaders than for ideological and pragmatic leaders. However, the relationship was not found to be significant when compared to non-Millennials. Bransford's (2011) study found all cohorts have higher preference for servant leaders and no significant differences between them.

Jurkeiwicz (2000) found that Generation X ranked *freedom from supervision* more highly than Baby Boomers and Cennamo and Gardner (2008) found that younger workers sought out work opportunities that supplied freedom and autonomy and may be prepared to leave an organisation if those needs were not met. With respect to Generation Y, Greenwood et al. (2008) found when compared to other generations, Generation Y is more motivated by having independence and free choice. Greenwood et al. (2008) found that Generation Y is more self-reliant and self-sufficient (independent value) than the other generations. Lester et al. (2012) found Generation X craved independence and Hansen and Leuty (2012) found Generation X did not value autonomy more than the Silent Generation and Baby Boomers. Lub et al. (2012) found autonomy and job security was more important for Generation X than Generation Y.

Contrary to the depiction in the popular literature Govitvitana (2001) found that Baby Boomers were more self reliant than Generation X. Jurkiewicz and Brown (1998)

found Baby Boomers wanted freedom from supervision and Appelbaum *et al.* (2005) found that both Generation X and Baby Boomers ranked *freedom from supervision* as one of their least important motivators. Montana and Petit (2008) found Baby Boomers and pre-Baby Boomers ranked *large amount of freedom on the job* as one of their principle motivators and Cogin (2012) found no differences between the generations on *independence*.

With respect to fairness and consistent with the popular literature, Greenwood *et al.* (2008) found Generation Y placed higher value importance for equality than Generation X and Baby Boomers. Murphy *et al.* (2010) found *equality* was rated as important by Generation X and Generation Y managers and Generation X non-managers but unimportant for Baby Boomers and Generation Y managers. Maxwell *et al.* (2010) found that Generation Y want *fairness and equality* that is, they want to work with employers who are fair to all their employees.

Reward

With respect to rewards, the popular literature depicts Veterans and Baby Boomers as seeking power and status as a reward for working hard and paying ones dues. Generation X however is depicted as expecting reward for productivity and Generation Y as expecting reward for effort. Little or no support was found in this literature review for this depiction in the popular literature. Jurkeiewicz (2000) found no difference between Generation X and Baby Boomers on *high prestige and social status* or *high salary* and Appelbaum *et al.* (2005) found both Baby Boomers and Generation X ranked *high prestige and social status* as the least motivating of 15 motivational factors. Treuren and Anderson (2010) found no significant difference between the ranking of high salary and Lub *et al.* (2012) found no generational differences with regards to the value placed on salary.

Contrary to their expectations McNeese-Smith and Crook (2003) found that the younger the generation the higher the score for economic returns. Generation X placed significantly more value on economic returns than the Silent Generation. Cennamo and Gardner (2008) found Baby Boomers showed lower levels of status values than Generation X and Generation Y. The authors highlighted that it was possible that higher status may have already been met and this work value was no longer salient for older

cohorts whereas younger respondents are still striving for status and autonomy at work. Montana and Petit (2008) found all cohorts (pre-Boomers, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y) rated good pay as one of their principle motivators and Maxwell *et al.* (2010) also found that good pay was a top priority for Generation Y. Twenge *et al.* (2010) found Generation X and GenMe valued extrinsic rewards more than Baby Boomers. Generation X was found to desire extrinsic reward more than GenMe and Real *et al.* (2010) found that Millennials scored higher than Baby Boomers on intrinsic job features with no differences being identified between Millennials and Generation X.

Barbuto and Miller (2008) found that Generation X are likely to be seeking greater tangible benefits in the workplace than Baby Boomer I suggesting that they are seeking financial gain (e.g., bonuses, increased salary and time off) and commitment to self rather than the organisation. Gursoy *et al.* (2008) identified that Generation X want immediate recognition through titles, praise, promotion and pay while Baby Boomers are willing to wait their turn. Cennamo and Gardener (2008) also found Baby Boomers showed lower levels of status values than Generation X and Generation Y. Murphy *et al.* (2010) found Baby Boomers and Generation X place higher importance on being capable than on ambition (which is often expressed as status and rank). The study also found that Generation Y non-managers ranked ambitious as their most important instrumental value. Brick (2011) found Generation X rated good pay significantly higher as a motivator than Baby Boomers and Traditionalists. In the recent study by Sajjadi *et al.* (2012) older cohorts were found to seek higher salary while Generation Y is prepared to trade high salary in exchange for a comfortable work environment.

Altruism

With respect to altruism, the popular literature depiction of the generational cohorts portrays Veterans as having a civic sense of duty and that Generation Y is the most similar of the cohorts with a sense of altruism and community. Baby Boomers on the other hand are portrayed in the popular literature as being characterised by a weak sense of community and Generation X as being individualistic. McNeese-Smith and Crook (2003) found Generation X scored higher on altruism than the Silent Generation and Baby Boomers. Contrary to the popular literatures depiction of Generation Y, Ng *et al.* (2010) found Generation Y had low commitment to social responsibility and opportunities to have social impact.

A number of studies found no differences on altruism. Jurkeiwicz and Brown (1998) and Jurkeiwicz (2000) found no differences between Generation X and Baby Boomers on a chance to benefit society. Lyons *et al.* (2007) found no generational differences in altruistic values. Cennamo and Gardner (2008) found no significant difference between Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y on altruism and Hansen and Leuty (2012) found no differences between the Silent Generation, Baby Boomers and Generation X on altruism. Twenge *et al.* (2010) found no difference between GenMe, Generation X and Baby Boomers on the value placed on a job that allows for altruistic behaviour.

Summary

In summary, the review of the empirical research shows both a number of consistencies and inconsistencies with the popular literature's depiction of the generational cohorts (Table 2.2). In particular the empirical research appears to be supporting the popular literatures depiction that Generation X and Generation Y are less loyal than Baby Boomers and that work is more central to Baby Boomers lives than to the lives of Generation X and Generation Y who seek work-life balance. Consistent with the popular literature's portrayal, Baby Boomers were identified as having a higher work ethic than Generation X and Generation Y who were identified as being career-centred and seeking variety in their work. In addition, consistent with the popular literatures depiction Generation X and Generation Y were found to seek rapid skill/career advancement and to value variety in their work.

Contrary to the depiction in the popular literature Veterans and Baby Boomers appear to be less motivated by status and pay than Generation X and Generation Y and Generation X and Generation Y appear to be more ambitious than Baby Boomers. Contrary to the popular literature's depiction the empirical studies identified that Generation X was motivated by work that allows social interaction than Generation Y and Generation X was identified as seeking teamwork. It also appeared that there was no difference on altruism between the cohorts.

Table 2.2 Overview of generational cohort characteristics as described in the empirical literature

	Veteran	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y
Work Ethic	Place less value on variety than other generations	High work ethic Seek moral connection to work Hard work & prepared to delay gratification	Ambitious Career centred Seek variety	Ambitious Career centred Value variety
Work/Life balance		Work is central to their lives	Seek work-life balance Seek flexible work arrangements	Seek work-life balance Less willing to work overtime
Loyalty	Loyal	Loyal	Less loyal than Boomers	Less loyal than Boomers Loyal to colleagues and manager
Feedback		See negative feedback as more negative than Generation X and Y	Frequent feedback	Need for "thank you" and "well done" feedback Expect timely feedback Willing to receive informal feedback
Career advancement	Less motivated by promotion s than Generation X and Y	Less motivated by promotions than Generation X and Y	Seek rapid promotions Seek self development	Seek rapid promotions Want continuous learning Seek self development
Individualism vs. Teamwork		Motivated by relationship fit Motivated by work that allows social interaction Self reliant	Motivated by work that allows social interaction Seek team work	Seek teamwork Less motivated by work that allows social interaction
Authority / Management		Prefer servant leaders Respect authority Seek freedom from supervision	Prefer servant leaders Don't accord respect because of position Expect equity	Prefer servant leaders Self reliant and self sufficient Expect fairness and equity
Reward	Less motivated by status and pay than Generation X & Y	Less motivated by status and pay than Generation X & Y	Seek extrinsic rewards Seek high pay	Seek extrinsic rewards Seek high pay
Altruism	No difference in altruism	No difference in altruism	No difference in altruism	No difference in altruism

Note: gaps in the table above exist due to no evidence identified in relation to that variable in reviewed studies

Limitations of studies and research methodologies

The majority of the empirical studies were cross-sectional e.g., Atkinson (2011), Bransford, (2011), Cennamo and Gardener (2008), Davis *et al.* (2006), D'Amato and Herzfeldt (2008), Hess and Jepsen (2009), Jurkiewicz (2000), Lamm and Meeks (2009), McGuigan (2010) and Wong *et al.* (2008). These studies compared multiple generational cohorts in a sample selected at one period in time. Findings from cross-sectional studies yield age/generation effects. In other words while period is held

constant any observed effects could be due to either age or generational cohort (Kowske et al., 2010). A limitation of these cross-sectional studies is that they confound age and generation. Thus many of the differences identified in these studies could be due to age, career-stage or to generation (Twenge, 2010).

In the empirical literature there were very few time-lag studies. Time-lag studies examine people of the same age at a different time period (at different points in time) (Twenge, 2010). Time-lag studies yield period/generational cohort effects i.e., observed effects could be due to either generation (enduring differences based on birth cohort) or time period (change over time that effects all generations) (Kowske et al., 2010). Because time-lag studies require similar samples of the same age asked the same questions in different years they are not very common. Those studies reviewed that used a time-lag design included De Hauw and De Vos (2010), Kowske *et al.* (2010), Montana and Petit (2008), Smola and Sutton (2002) and Twenge *et al.* (2010).

While all three of these time-lag studies found that the more recent generations place less value on work for its own sake they each had a number of weaknesses. Smola and Sutton (2002) had a low response rate in their 1999 sample making comparisons with the 1974 sample problematic. Twenge *et al.* (2010) used high school students rather than actual workers in the workforce and the Kowske *et al.* (2010) study has data on job satisfaction from workers of many ages across 24 years. However, it can only directly compare young workers (and thus completely control for age) for Generation X and GenMe as Boomers were twenty-something workers before data collection began.

Montana and Petit (2008) used data collected at three time intervals, mid 1970s, mid 1980s and 2007 and found that there were more similarities than differences between Generation X and Generation Y in what motivated them. A limitation of this study is that the data in the three time periods was obtained from quite different sample populations. The data obtained by the researchers in 2007 was obtained from recent graduates and executive MBA students, the data obtained in the mid-1970s was from a sample of managers who were interviewed at a conference and the sample in the mid-1980s was obtained from employees of a number of different companies and government agencies who were attending a university executive development program. Comparability across these different samples could therefore be problematic.

Lastly in a study of graduating students in Belgium using matched samples obtained in 2006 and 2009 De Hauw and De Vos (2010) attempted to disentangle the effect of generational, contextual and individual variables on Millennial's psychological contract expectations. Minor differences based on generation, context and individual characteristics were identified. A limitation to the study was the small time-lag between both samples.

Twenge (2010) asserts that where time-lag studies and cross-sectional studies are not congruent the most logical explanation is that the cross-sectional study is also tapping differences due to age or career-stage. The other possibility is that the time-lag studies are finding a time period effect i.e., all generations have changed over time in the same way. This is less likely as work values remain fairly stable (Low, Yoon, Roberts, & Rounds, 2005). Nevertheless as Twenge (2010) points out, both possibilities should be considered.

Many studies note that to truly determine if there are generational cohort differences longitudinal research is required. Longitudinal studies are the only way of testing generational differences and accounting for age, life-stage, and period differences (Bransford, 2011). Longitudinal studies investigate the same individuals over time thus holding cohort constant. Differences identified are therefore due to either age or period. The review of the empirical studies in this chapter identified no longitudinal studies.

All of the studies reviewed, except McGuigan (2010), assigned participants to generational cohort categories based on their years of birth. McGuigan (2010) assigned participants to a cohort grouping based on their identification with a generational cohort style rather than on their birth year.

It is also of note that the number of generational cohorts under investigation varied. Barbuto and Miller (2008) investigated five cohorts. Cogin (2012), McNeese-Smith & Crook (2003), Montana and Petit (2008), Morgan & Ribbens (2006), Lyons *et al.* (2007), Sessa *et al.* (2007), Twenge and Campbell (2008), Farag *et al.* (2009), Spencer (2009), Brick (2011), Dries *et al.* (2008) and Whitman (2010) investigated four generational cohorts currently in the workplace. Other studies only investigated three of the generational cohorts e.g., Veterans, Boomers and Generation X (Egri & Ralston,

2004; Jurkiewicz & Brown, 1998) or Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Gursoy et al., 2008; Lamm & Meeks, 2009; McGuigan, 2010; Parker, 2007; Reiss, 2010; Sayers, 2006; Treuren, 2008; Twenge et al., 2010).

In addition, a number of studies reviewed investigated only two generational cohorts, predominantly Baby Boomers and Generation X (Appelbaum et al., 2005; D'Amato & Herzfeldt, 2008; Faber, 2001; Govitvatana, 2001; Jurkiewicz, 2000; Karp et al., 2002; Perryer & Jordan, 2008; Rhule, 2004; Santos & Cox, 2002; Smola & Sutton, 2002; Strutton, Pelton, & Ferrell, 1997; Yu & Miller, 2003). Finally several studies focussed on a single cohort, either Generation X (Burke, 1994; Eskilson & Wiley, 1999; Manolis & Levin, 1997; Mattis et al., 2004; Young, Hernon, & Powell, 2006) or Generation Y (O'Shea & Monaghan, 2009; Rassmussen, 2009; Terjesen et al., 2007).

Of the studies reviewed, 46 (87%) were undertaken in western economies such as the USA, Canada, UK, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand. Of those studies in English speaking western economies 30 (65%) were undertaken in the USA. A number of studies were also undertaken in non-English speaking European countries e.g., Belgium (De Hauw & De Vos, 2010; Dries et al., 2008), Holland (Lub et al., 2012) and Sweden (Sajjadi et al., 2012) and Europe (Eastern and Western) (D'Amato & Herzfeldt, 2008). While the study by Cogin (2012) was Australian, data was also obtained form Germany, China, Singapore and the USA. Only two of the empirical studies investigating generational cohorts reviewed were undertaken in New Zealand (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; McGuigan, 2010). The extent to which the characteristics identified in these studies can be generalised to New Zealand or the rest of the world is therefore questionable.

Several of the studies reviewed were questionnaire based (Burke, 1994; Eskilson & Wiley, 1999; Faber, 2001; Jurkiewicz, 2000; Mattis et al., 2004; Smola & Sutton, 2002; Yu & Miller, 2003; Zech, 2000), founded predominantly on rhetoric from the popular literature with little empirical evidence to back it up. Ordinal scales were used in a number of these studies (D'Amato & Herzfeldt, 2008; Ferres et al., 2003; Govitvatana, 2001; McGuigan, 2010; Rhule, 2004; Spence, 2009; Teh, 2002; Treuren, 2008) meaning that the findings indicate that one generational cohort rated a particular item more highly than another but the reader could not determine how much more important

the item was. It should also be noted that questionnaires and surveys do not fully capture the richness of interactions between each of the generational cohort's values and attitudes. These tools only allow participants to answer a set of predetermined questions.

Whilst the majority of the empirical studies reviewed were quantitative as outlined above, there were a number of qualitative studies. Qualitative studies enabled a richness of data that could not be collected via survey or questionnaire. Sajjadi *et al.* (2012) obtained their data via a series of interviews. Gursoy *et al.* (2008) used in-depth focus groups and Sayers (2006) used a combination of both interviews and focus groups. Real *et al.* (2010) not only gathered qualitative data via focus groups but also gathered quantitative data (via the 'Multi-dimensional Work Ethic Profile' questionnaire). Whereas Terjesen *et al.* (2007) collected both qualitative data (obtained via a series of repertory grid interviews) and quantitative data (obtained via a survey).

Other studies used published scales such as the Occupational Stress Inventory (Santos & Cox, 2002), Resident Assistant Motivation Questionnaire (Bell, 2002), Job Identity Stage Questionnaire (McNeese-Smith & Crook, 2003), the Schwartz Values Survey (SVS) (Egri & Ralston, 2004; Todd, Lawson, & Gnoth, 2004), Self Identity Scale (Morgan & Ribbens, 2006), Narcissistic Personality Inventory (Twenge et al., 2010), Attitude Toward Fun at Work Scale (Lamm & Meeks, 2009), Organisational Citizenship Behavior Scale (Lamm & Meeks, 2009), Adult Career Concerns Inventory (McGuigan, 2010), Job Insecurity Scale (McGuigan, 2010), Minnesota Importance Questionnaire (Hansen & Leuty, 2012); Protestant Work Ethic Scale (Cogin, 2012), and the Psychological Contract Questionnaire (Lub et al., 2012) to investigate differences between generational cohorts.

Many of the studies reviewed had limited ability to generalise findings beyond the settings that were under investigation e.g., the public sector (Barbuto et al., 2010; Jurkiewicz, 2000; Jurkiewicz & Brown, 1998; Treuren, 2008); education (Bell, 2002; Burke, 1994; Egri & Ralston, 2004; Eskilson & Wiley, 1999; Faber, 2001; Morgan & Ribbens, 2006; Parker, 2007; Reiss, 2010; Terjesen et al., 2007; Treuren, 2008) manufacturing (Egri & Ralston, 2004), nursing (Farag et al., 2009; McNeese-Smith & Crook, 2003; Santos & Cox, 2002), not-for-profit (Barbuto & Miller, 2008; Kunreuther,

2003), finance and technology (Rhule, 2004); hospitality (Gursoy et al., 2008), construction/building (Real et al., 2010) and engineering (Atkinson, 2011; Brick, 2011). It is of note that apart from two studies that examined blue-collar workers (Egri & Ralston, 2004; Real et al., 2004), studies investigated white-collar workers or those yet to enter the workforce (students).

A number of studies were also not able to be generalised to the population as a whole due to large inequalities in the size of the gender groups. The samples in the studies by Rhule (2004), Real et al. (2010) and Brick (2011) were predominantly male (71%, 95% and 92% respectively). The studies by Lester et al. (Lester et al., 2012) and Hess and Jepsen (2009) consisted predominantly of females (84% and 75% respectively).

It is also of note that a number of the studies reviewed used data from a secondary source and was originally collected for some other purpose. Kowske et al. (2010), Meriac et al. (2010), Hansen and Leuty (2012), Montana and Petit (2008), Smola and Sutton (2002), Treuren and Anderson (2010) and Twenge et al. (2010) all used data from a secondary source. It should be noted that all of these studies apart from Meriac et al. (2010) and Hansen and Leuty (2012) were time-lag studies. In fact the only time-lag study that did not use data from a secondary source was that of De Hauw and De Vos (2010). This was possibly because the time-lag period was only three years. The advantage of using data from a secondary source in time-lag studies is that data collected from the past is instantly able to be compared to data collected now. This prevents the researcher from having to wait years or decades to make comparisons. A disadvantage of using such data is that the data wasn't necessarily collected for the purpose of the current study and may not meet all the needs of the researcher.

A further limitation of the studies reviewed is in relation to the way in which these studies treat the variables under investigation. Any discussion on the effects of a single variable such as generational status as with the studies reviewed inherently represents an oversimplification (Strutton et al., 1997). Differences are often treated as isolated independent variables separate from each other. These isolated differences are then studied independently and connected to each other in an additive fashion (Holvino, 2003). Consequently the results are often misrepresented i.e., are they Scottish? A woman? Or a Baby Boomer? While people identify with or accentuate different aspects

of themselves and their relationships to groups, they also vary in the weight that they perceive each group as having in their self-concept (Ferdman, 1995). So while an individual may view herself as being 'Scottish', a 'woman', and a 'Baby Boomer' all at the same time, it should be recognised that different weightings may be assigned to each of these based on her individual self-concepts. However, while allowing for multiple group identities that vary from person to person, this approach is still insufficient because it continues to treat each group as being both unitary and separate (Ferdman, 1995).

Treating variables under investigation as discrete also assumes that each aspect of difference, such as being 'Scottish', a 'woman' or a 'Baby Boomer', means the same thing for each person. Given the number of groups to which an individual belongs, his or her social identity is therefore likely to consist of an amalgam of identities that are activated at different times under different conditions (Johnson & Packard, 1987). It is preferable to consider the ways in which various group memberships interrelate and influence each other (Elmes & Connelley, 1997). So while isolating dimensions of differences and social categories may be a good approach for the purposes of traditional scientific research, it is not the most effective manner to describe an organisational reality or to design and implement organisational change interventions (Holvino, 2003).

Like measures of central tendency a generational approach may illuminate characteristics of the group, but it also obscures the idiographic characteristics of the individual. Hence it must be remembered that whilst these studies provide increased understanding of generational cohorts they are inadequate for understanding any specific individual.

Researchers must also remember that just because something is true at a group level does not mean it is true for every individual member of that group (Ferdman, 1995). Cole, Smith & Lucas (2002) warn against generalizing about generations as if gender, culture and personal preferences don't exist. Generational analysis (looking at the world with only a generational lens) is only one perspective (Sayers, 2006) and does not take into account psychological, socio-demographic or many cultural factors that are also important to understanding individuals (Sayers, 2006). Even though the generations have been exposed to the same global events and social trends, differences do exist

within the generational cohorts (Sayers, 2006). Not all members of any given generational cohort will experiences key socio-economic events in the same way (Alwin & McCammon, 2003; Giancola, 2006). Differences in cultural upbringing, religion, socio-economic circumstances, family structures and individual personality traits all impact on members of the generation and their perceptions of what is important (Meredith, Schewe, & Hiam, 2002; Ryder, 1965).

In general the studies reviewed in this chapter portray the characteristics assigned to each generational cohort as homogeneous. Any discussion of characteristics of the generational cohorts can only be at group level and individual members not being homogenous (Burke, 1994; Ryder, 1965) confirming that individual differences do exist within each cohort (Jurkiewicz, 2000).

Gender, race/ethnicity, educational background and social class

It should be noted that few of the studies reviewed investigated what role variables such as gender, race and ethnicity, educational background and social class have on each generational cohort's values and attitudes. Eskilson and Wiley (1999) found variation along gender, race and social class lines although not always the ones they had hypothesized. Therefore, although the study found considerable consensus on Generation X values and expectations for their futures, the findings are tempered by the fact that variables such as gender, race and ethnicity and social class would likely shade the desires of each group.

Burke (1994), Morgan and Ribbens (2006), Terjesen et al. (2007) and Hansen and Leuty (2012) all found differences based on gender. In addition to gender differences, McNeese-Smith and Crook (2003) found value differences among nurses depending on their age, educational background, and ethnicity and Ng et al. (2010) found moderate evidence for variation within Generation Y based on gender, visible minority status, work experiences and academic achievement. Bransford (2011) found no between subject effects on leadership preferences for industry type, job type and race and. Jurkiewicz (2000) found no differences on factor rankings within cohorts by gender, hierarchical position or departmental assignment. Whilst Bransford (2011) and Jurkiewicz (2000) found support for homogeneity within cohorts the findings from Burke (1994), Morgan and Ribbens (2006), Terjesen et al. (2007), McNeese-Smith and

Crook (2003), Ng *et al.* (2010) and Hansen and Leuty (2012) all found support for heterogeneity within cohorts.

A number of studies controlled for variables such as gender, age, educational background, and career-stage to ensure that any differences identified could be attributed to generational cohort. Perryer and Jordan (2008) controlled for length of services, education level, gender and work pressure and found that generational identity was a significant predictor of organisational commitment. De Hauw and De Vos (2010) controlled for intention to work, gender and study type finding no significant relationship between graduation year and careerism (intention to change jobs frequently).

Cennamo and Gardner (2008) controlled for gender finding no significant generational differences on extrinsic, intrinsic, altruism, or social values. Kowske *et al.* (2010) controlled for age and period using an hierarchical age-period-cohort model and found work attitudes differed although the effect size was small. Hess and Jepsen (2009) controlled for individual and work-related variables such as year of birth, gender, education, number of dependents, organisational tenure, position tenure and career tenure and found more similarities than differences between the cohorts.

Disentangling the impact of age, period, career-stage and generational cohort

As discussed in Chapter 1, generational cohort theory forms the theoretical basis for cohort effects. Given that generational cohort theory is based on the premise that cohort effects persist throughout a person's life despite social and cultural advances (Arsenault, 2004), generational cohort differences are not believed to be attributable to age and life course events i.e., that the young people today will not behave like the older people today when they reach the same age (Rotolo & Wilson, 2004).

One of the challenges therefore, when investigating generational cohort differences is to determine what differences can be attributed to cohort effects and what differences are attributable to a person's life-stage, career-stage or period effect (Yang & Land, 2003). Accordingly, any investigation on generational cohort differences should take into account the period and age at which the individual observation took place (Ryder, 1965) and career-stage (Reiss, 2010). From the review of the empirical studies however, it

became clear that the findings from the majority of the studies could not be disentangled from age, period and/or career-stage.

Age effects are the variations due to the physiological growth, progression through development stages, and accumulation of experience (Kowske et al., 2010; Yang & Land, 2008). Since age effects are developmental in nature it is expected that as young people today age they will have similar attitudes and behaviors as older adults today (Rhodes, 1983). Period effects are variations due to historical events that occur at a specific point in time that the entire society gets caught up in (e.g., war and technological advances) (Alwin & McCammon, 2003; Kowske et al., 2010). Period effects affect all age groups simultaneously often resulting in shifts in social, cultural or economic climates (Yang & Land, 2003, 2008). The reactions of some cohorts to their historical experiences often become normative patterns that once rationalized by society influence the lives of later cohorts (Modell, 1989). Period effects are therefore, believed to leave generational differences intact (Rotolo & Wilson, 2004).

Career-stage is another issue to consider in generational cohort research (Reiss, 2010). As people go through different stages of their careers they experience changes in their needs, expectations, abilities and behaviour (Hall, 2002). The concept of career stages has historically been difficult to disentangle from life stages since the dominant career paradigm was advancement within one firm and original theories were predicated on the belief that career progression parallels a progression through a series of developmental life stages (Hall, 1976). There has now been a shift from traditional (organisational, linear) careers to more 'boundaryless' (non-linear) careers (Dries et al., 2008). Younger workers tend to be in the beginning of their careers and older workers are generally more established.

Super (1957), however, noted that employees could recycle back through the career stages (exploration, establishment, maintenance and disengagement) rather than always follow through each stage sequentially. Because people can recycle back through the career stages, career-stage cannot be measured through linear measures of age and tenure (Hess & Jepsen, 2009). A difficulty with the research on career-stage is that measurement of career-stage is rarely addressed (Hess & Jepsen, 2009). Career-stage

tends to be subjectively rated based on an individual's job status, position in the organisation, tenure, age and education (Conway, 2004 cited in Reiss, 2010).

The theoretical framework underpinning a number of the studies under review is that an individual's 'formative years' creates a generational sense of identity. Findings from several studies provide tentative support for the concept of generational cohorts having their own distinct 'generational personality' (e.g. Gursoy et al., 2008; Lamm & Meeks, 2009; Manolis & Levin, 1997; McGuigan, 2010; Perryer & Jordan, 2008; Reiss, 2010)

Many of the studies reviewed, however, were unable to disentangle the effects of age, period, cohort and career-stage (Burke, 1994; Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Jurkiewicz & Brown, 1998; McNeese-Smith & Crook, 2003; Smola & Sutton, 2002; Wong et al., 2008). Cennamo and Gardner (2008) concluded it was not possible to determine whether the differences between the groups identified in their study were linked to career-stage, life-stage or were genuine generational differences. Wong et al. (2008) noted their findings may be due to life-stage rather than birth cohort differences and Meriac et al. (2010) noted the differences identified in their study may be partially attributable to age or career-stage.

The findings from the studies under review do not strongly support generational theories, where the attitudes of cohorts are set by circumstances early in life and do not vary over time. As identified by Treuren and Anderson (2010) life-stage and career-stage explanations have been found to be more effective in explaining behaviors of cohorts. Taken together the generational, life-stage and career-stage literature have potentially significant implications for understanding this phenomenon. These studies are unable to determine whether the behaviour of a generational cohort is the same behaviour of a previous generation at that age, as argued by life-stage theory but set within the radically different set of lifestyle and career opportunities available to people entering the workforce in a new period.

According to Yang and Land (2003) until age-period-cohort effects are simultaneously estimated, the question of whether the trends are due to age, period or cohort components remains incompletely resolved. Are differences identified due to aging? Do cohort differences actually reflect only age effects? Are they period effects? Or does

aging explain only a tiny portion of the variation and therefore is not sufficient to account for the contributions of unique cohort experiences?

Limitations in the knowledge of generational cohorts

No clear and consistent picture of the characteristics of each of the four generational cohorts (Veterans, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y) emerged as a result of this review of the popular literature and empirical studies. While there were a number of empirical studies supporting generational differences (e.g. D'Amato & Herzfeldt, 2008; Egri & Ralston, 2004; Perryer & Jordan, 2008; Sayers, 2006), over half the studies challenged the assertion portrayed in the popular literature that the generations are vastly different finding little or no generational differences (e.g. Davis et al., 2006; Dries et al., 2008; Jurkiewicz, 2000; Lamm & Meeks, 2009; Lester et al., 2012; McNeese-Smith & Crook, 2003; Montana & Petit, 2008). Even when differences between two groups were found, a number of authors point out that there were alternative explanations for these differences such as period, age and career-stage (Burke, 1994; Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Jurkiewicz & Brown, 1998; McNeese-Smith & Crook, 2003; Smola & Sutton, 2002; Wong et al., 2008).

The generational cohorts, the review of the empirical literature identified a number of studies that found support for the depiction of the generational cohorts in the popular literature (e.g. Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Davis et al., 2006; Gursoy et al., 2008; Meriac et al., 2010; Ng et al., 2010; Sessa et al., 2007; Spence, 2009) while many other studies found little or no support for the depiction of the generational cohorts in the popular literature (e.g. Appelbaum et al., 2005; Atkinson, 2011; Mattis et al., 2004; McNeese-Smith & Crook, 2003; Wong et al., 2008).

Mackay *et al.* (2008) highlighted that the basic assumption that there *are* generational differences is rarely questioned by the popular literature and likewise, the generalizations about the cohorts are rarely challenged. There is a lack of consistency in definition of generational cut-off dates, aspect(s) under investigation in most studies was narrow and usually limited to one or two areas and few empirical studies investigated all four generational cohorts. Comparability of results from empirical studies and generalization beyond the population under investigation to the population as a whole is therefore problematic. Given these concerns there is an inherent danger in

assuming the veracity of the claims made about the generational cohorts in both the popular literature and empirical studies.

The current ambiguity surrounding generational differences is problematic. Much of the empirical literature assumes the existence of generational cohorts as distinct groups. Overall the literature has relied on two assumptions. It is assumed that each age group possesses distinct specific attitudes and preferences and that these are significantly different from those of other generational cohorts. It is also assumed that members of a generational cohort are essentially homogeneous in values, attitudes and preferences i.e., within any one generational cohort the members of that cohort are more likely to have similar attitudes and values than members of other age-based cohorts (Treuren & Anderson, 2010).

From the review of the literature it is not clear whether the different generational cohorts actually desire different things in a work context or if in fact it is a matter of perceived differences that have been perpetuated through commonly held biases. In addition, there is little empirical research that is independent of the generational cohort popular literature. McGuigan (2010) states that future research should not assume that generational cohorts described in the popular literature are valid. It is evident that further research into generational cohorts is required to empirically identify the characteristics of each of the four generational cohorts.

The generational approach to individual differences, both in the popular and empirical literature, has been criticised strongly (see Giancola, 2006; Macky et al., 2008; McGuigan, 2010; Parry & Urwin, 2011). A main criticism is the lack of empirical foundation to most of the literature regarding generational differences. Twenge and Campbell (2008) criticised Strauss and Howes' (1991) approach noting that no psychological data was used to validate the generational styles described. Twenge and Campbell (2008) also stated that whilst Zemke *et al.* (2000), Lancaster and Stillman (2005) and (Tulgan, 2000a) utilized qualitative evidence, their findings were limited by a lack of qualitative data. Due to a lack of empirical research, however, these sources are still heavily relied on throughout the generational differences research. The empirical results found regarding generational differences have also been criticised

(Giancola, 2006). The present study aims to add to the empirical literature by providing greater clarity around generational differences.

The current study

This thesis set out to empirically determine what each of the four generational cohorts (Veterans, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y) valued in a job independent of the literature (both popular and empirical). Comparisons between the findings of this study and both the popular literature and empirical studies were made.

Research Question 1

What do Veterans, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y value in a job?

Research Question 2

Are the constructs identified by each generation as being the most important in a job consistent with the depiction in both the popular literature and previous empirical studies?

Research Question 3

Are there gender differences in what each generational cohort values in a job?

Research Question 4

Are there generational differences between the four generational cohorts in what they value in a job?

Research Question 5

Will removal of participants from the cusp years (2 years either side of the generational cut-off point) result in better discrimination between the generational cohorts?

The next chapter will outline the repertory grid study. The reliability and validity of the technique as well as the method used in this study will be outlined. The results of this study will then be presented along with the limitations of the study..

Chapter 3   Study 1: The Repertory Grid

This chapter will describe the repertory grid technique and the reasons why it was chosen as the method for developing the questionnaire used in the main study (Chapter 4). The chapter goes on to describe the pilot study and the final method used for the repertory grid interviews. Finally the results from the repertory grid interviews are then provided.

The review of the popular and empirical literature in Chapter 2 identified that there is no clear and consistent picture of the characteristics associated with each generational cohort and no clear depiction of whether or not there are differences between the cohorts.

Since the depiction of the generational cohorts in both the popular literature and empirical studies is inconsistent and at times contradictory a method of researching the generational cohorts that enabled participants to describe what they value in a job independent of the literature was sought. The repertory grid technique was thus chosen to elicit constructs identifying what each cohort valued in their ideal job. Repertory grid interviews enable a structured approach that supported subsequent data analysis, but that also provided the flexibility to allow the exploration of ideas which emerged during the data-gathering phase.

The repertory grid technique

The repertory grid technique was developed by Kelly (1955) as a method of exploring personal construct theory. People develop constructs as internal ideas of reality in order to understand the world around them. In this theory people are seen as 'scientists' who derive hypotheses (have expectations) from our theories (our personal construing) (Fransella, Bell, & Bannister, 2004). Constructs are the discriminations that we make between people, events or things in our lives (Fransella et al., 2004). Constructs on the repertory grid are bipolar allowing for comparison in grids, as opposed to the comparison of 'concepts', which do not possess direction (Fransella et al., 2004). A grid, therefore, in this context, is an "implicit theoretical framework" (Fransella & Bannister, 1977). It represents a personal construct system, which is a cognitive map of a person's construct system (Hill, 1990; Osgood, Suci, & Tannenbaum, 1957). The

repertory grid enables investigation of the interrelationships between constructs elicited by either individuals or groups of individuals (Tan & Hunter, 2002) without imposing externally derived models and frameworks that reflect the perspectives of some other person or body of understanding (Cammock, 1991).

The repertory grid can be used either to investigate the individual or particular aspects common to many individuals without violating the theoretical assumption that we are all unique in certain other aspects (Bannister & Fransella, 1980). The degree of agreement between the construct systems of two people is a measure of the extent to which they are like each other and the extent to which they are likely to understand each other without effort (Stewart & Stewart, 1981).

The repertory grid technique provides a useful structure to articulate generational cohort norms, behaviours and assumptions using diverse concrete examples. The repertory grid technique enables participants to speak for themselves, within the context of what they value in a job[10], without the distorting influence of instrument or researcher preconceptions. This technique assists participants to clearly specify what they mean, which would not be as readily articulated in a semi-structured interview (Langan-Fox & Tan, 1997). In addition, the repertory grid technique minimises researcher bias (Cammock, 1991; Langan-Fox & Tan, 1997) and is difficult to fake (Langan-Fox & Tan, 1997).

The benefits of using the repertory grid technique are confirmed by applications in a variety of organisational settings. Originally developed in the clinical setting, the repertory grid has now been used in studies in management (Cammock, 1991; Rippin, 1996), information systems (Hunter, 1997; Moynihan, 1996; Tan & Hunter, 2000) education (Pope & Shaw, 1981), tourism (Pike, 2003), and generational cohorts (Terjesen et al., 2007). These studies indicate that the repertory grid technique is a useful method for developing characteristic and behavioural categories of the sort required in this current study.

The repertory grid comprises three components: elements, constructs and links (Dunn & Ginsberg, 1986; Easterby-Smith, 1980). Elements are the object of attention within the

domain of investigation and are the focus of the grid (Beail, 1985; Easterby-Smith, 1980). Elements are supplied by the researcher (supplied elements) or by the participant (elicited elements) (Tan & Hunter, 2000). Supplied elements are appropriate when researchers are interested in learning more about a given set of elements from various research participants; testing an existing theory or in comparing responses of a number of respondents given a standard set of elements (Reger, 1990; Tan & Hunter, 2002).

Constructs are the research participant's interpretations of the elements (Rippin, 1996). The repertory grid technique allows for several different methods of eliciting constructs including researcher provided constructs (supplied constructs), and a variety of participant elicited constructs. These triads (minimum context form), the elicitation technique known as the 'full context form' or group construct elicitation (Tan & Hunter, 2000).

The most common method of obtaining participant elicited constructs is the minimum context card form or triadic method (Beail, 1985; Harrison & Sarre, 1976). In this method the elements are randomly divided into groups of three (triads) and the participant is asked to name a way in which two elements are different from the third. Participants are then encouraged to use descriptors (constructs) that define that element most clearly to them. Triads of elements are presented to participants in sequential form by systematically changing one element each time and continues until the participant can generate no further constructs (Marshall, 1992). This method was chosen as the means of eliciting constructs in the current study.

The final component of the repertory grid are links. They are ways respondents evaluate the extent to which each element is characteristic of each construct. Links thereby reveal the research participant's interpretations of the similarities and differences between the elements and constructs (Tan & Hunter, 2002).

There are three ways of linking the elements to constructs; dichotomising, ranking and rating (Puddifoot, 1996; Tan & Hunter, 2002). Rating is the most commonly used method (Hunter, 1997; Latta & Swigger, 1992; Phythian & King, 1992) allowing

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[10] A position that participants either currently hold, previously held or one that they have never held but know a lot about

participants the greatest freedom when sorting the elements and does not force discriminations to be made where there are none (Tan & Hunter, 2000, 2002).

Each element is rated on a scale defined by the two construct poles (Fransella et al., 2004). An odd-numbered scale results in a mid-point that supports research participant decisions about element location on the scale. Participant-rating freedom is maximised when the range of rating values is greater than the number of elements. (Fransella et al., 2004) suggested that a 7-point scale approaches most participants' limits of discrimination. Hence, a 7-point scale is the most commonly used since it provides more scope for participants to express their views than smaller scales but is not beyond participants limits of discrimination (Fransella et al., 2004).

Reliability of the repertory grid

Unlike tests and questionnaires, the repertory grid, does not have specific content (Bannister & Fransella, 1986). Since there is no such thing as 'the grid' there can be no such thing as the reliability of 'the grid' (Bannister & Mair, 1968). It is therefore, fairly meaningless to make any general statements about a repertory grid's reliability and validity (Winter, 1992). Kelly (1955) indicated that he was more concerned with the consistency of a test than with its reliability and with its usability than with its validity (Winter, 1992). Any discussion about repertory grid reliability and validity, therefore, should be in relation to consistency and usability (its capacity for effective enquiry into the problem at hand) (Bannister & Fransella, 1986).

Slater (1972) argues that traditional means of investigating the reliability and significance of a grid are inappropriate because the theory from which psychometric methods of measuring reliability and significance are derived, assume that samples can be drawn at random from an objectively defined population. This assumption can be satisfied by nomothetic data and test scores but not by the idiographic data of the repertory grid. Mair (1964a) suggested replacing the traditional concept of reliability (that a reliable measure is expected to yield near identical scores for the same subject on different occasions) with the notion of predicting whether or not there should be change. He suggests that we should seek to understand change rather than view change as interfering with reliability (Mair, 1964a, 1964b)

Although repertory grids may capture cognitive construction systems that are receptive to change, a certain degree of stability must be assumed if one believes that subsequent behaviour is guided by the mental maps captured through the grid procedure (Ginsberg, 1989). It seems sensible, therefore, for researchers to evaluate the grid not in terms of whether it has high or low consistency, but whether or not it is an instrument that enables us effectively to inquire into the way in which people maintain or alter their construing (Bannister & Fransella, 1986; Fransella & Bannister, 1977). To this end, we may use test-retest coefficients to determine whether constructs and scales elicited are stable when we control for experiences that can influence changes in mental maps (Ginsberg, 1989).

Despite the level of argument to the contrary, some authors are reported by Smith and Stewart (1977) to have attempted to assess reliability of the grid by conventional methods such as test-retest. This involves giving the repertory grid interview twice, with a reasonable time in between, to a random sample of the population from which the participants come (Slater, 1977). According to Slater (Slater, 1977) the correlations between the scores on the two occasions, which is the measure of the test reliability, will be an unbiased estimate of the correlation in the population, provided the sample is a random one. Fjeld and Landfield (1961) concluded that given the same elements, subjects after a two week interval, produce very similar constructs (Pearson r=0.79) and when allowed to take the test entirely afresh and considering new elements, subjects equally reproduce their earlier constructs (Pearson r=0.80).

Sperlinger (1976) remarked that if a grid does elicit significant features of an individual's construing, grids completed by the same individual at different times should show some stability. However, consideration of reliability coefficients quoted for a particular instance of the application of grid method must take into account the particular measure extracted from the data supplied by the grid, the type of experimental situation within which repeat grid data were obtained, and the general parameters which affect reliability coefficients in any grid context (Bannister & Mair, 1968).

Validity of the repertory grid
Kelly (1955) has equated validity of the grid with usability, usefulness and increased understanding. Smith and Stewart (1977) agree that validity of the grid is complex to

assess. Bannister and Fransella (1986) assert that since the technique is not a test and does not have specific content, its validity can only be referred to in the sense that we can question its capacity to reveal patterns and relationships in certain types of data.

Fransella and Bannister (1977) state that while it is reasonable to question the validity of a particular format, constructed to try to yield particular information, it is not sensible to dispute the validity of the repertory grid as such. This is because the repertory grid has no specific content that espouses to measure a trait (as a questionnaire is designed to do) (Ginsberg, 1989). While we can dispute the usefulness of a particular trait, it is difficult to argue that although people attach meanings to the world, their constructs do not relate, or that the relatedness of their constructs is unimportant (Ginsberg, 1989).

The commonality corollary looks at how much similarity exists between the construct systems of different individuals when they construe the same set of external events. The corollary states *to the extent that one person employs a construction of experience which is similar to that employed by another, his processes are psychologically similar to those of the other person* (Tan & Hunter, 2000; p6). This concept is critical in generational cohort research for the generalizability to a wider population. The knowledge embodied in the grid must reflect generational cohort consensus as to what they find important in a job. Latta and Swigger (1992) demonstrated the commonality of construing among members of an homogenous group of subjects with commonality of construing demonstrated on two sets of constructs (Latta & Swigger, 1992).

A grid's validity has often been taken as self-evident thus leading the user away from rigorous scrutiny of method (Winter, 1992). Fransella and Bannister (1967) did not rule out, however, the viability of more traditional styles of validity, citing their study which assessed concurrent and predictive validity by demonstrating that voting behaviour was related to construing (Fransella et al., 2004). Thus Fransella and Bannister conclude that validity should be seen as referring to the way in which a mode of understanding enables us to take effective action.

A number of investigations have provided evidence of the validity of repertory grid technique by testing hypotheses derived from personal construct theory, and assumptions about grid method without concerning themselves to any great extent with

the prediction of behaviour independent of the grid (Winter, 1992). For example, if a grid is a valid measure of personal constructs, it is expected that its elicitation procedure would produce constructs on which elements are more highly differentiated than if they are on supplied constructs (Winter, 1992). Evidence from several studies support this assertion (Delia, Gonyea, & Crockett, 1971; Landfield, 1965)

Advantages and disadvantages of the repertory grid

There are a number of advantages of using the repertory grid. Repertory grid interviews can generate data that is often difficult to generate by other means (Rippin, 1996). The repertory grid allows the individual or groups under study to describe ways they compare and contrast what they value in their ideal job and does not impose predetermined constructs on participants. According to Dunn and Ginsberg (1986) one of the main advantages of repertory grid interviews is that it allows participants to generate their own constructs rather than asking unstructured questions about how they cognitively organise their world since questions of this type tend to elicit descriptions of 'espoused theories'.

The main disadvantage of the repertory grid is that the technique is time consuming and thus expensive. It requires considerable time investment from both the researcher and the participant (Rippin, 1996).

Repertory grid pilot study

A pilot study was undertaken to test the repertory grid interview methodology to ensure instructions were clear to participants and that the interview technique collected the required information efficiently and effectively. The pilot study consisted of eight participants, one male and one female from each of the four generational cohorts. Participants were in the workforce and were known to the researcher. Participants were given a copy of the information sheet (Appendix 2) informing them that the study was confidential and the purpose for which the data was going to be used. Participants were then asked to complete a consent form (Appendix 3).

In the interview participants were asked to provide demographic data including gender, age, ethnicity and industry grouping. Participants were then given six white cards (92 x

60mm in size) with black letters printed in the top left hand corner and labelled A to F. On cards A, B and C participants were asked to write the titles of three jobs they considered 'ideal'. On cards D, E, and F they were asked to write the titles of three jobs that they considered to be 'OK but less than ideal'. To elicit what each cohort valued in a job participants were asked about their 'ideal jobs' and their 'OK but less than ideal' jobs.

Predetermined combinations of three cards were presented to participants (see the rating sheet in Appendix 4). Participants were then asked to indicate which of the three jobs was more ideal than the other two and to describe what made it so. Participants were then asked in relation to this to describe what it is about the other job(s) that make it/them less desirable. The researcher then noted the participant's responses to these questions on the rating sheet.

Participants were then asked to place all six cards on the table in front of them and rate each of the six jobs on the construct they had just described using a seven point rating scale. One represented the positive end of the construct and seven represented the negative end. Participants then repeated this process with different predetermined triads of cards detailed on the rating sheet (Appendix 4). Participants continued to be presented with triads until either completing all 21 combinations of cards or until they were unable to think of any new constructs.

Once participants had completed generating constructs they were asked to rate each construct that they had identified on how important they felt it was to them in a job. The seven-point scale was again used with one representing the positive end of the scale (extremely important) and seven representing the negative end of the scale (not important).

At the conclusion of the interview participants were asked if they would like to receive a copy of the summary of results of the study and their email address was collected if they indicated they would like to receive a copy. Finally, participants were thanked for their time in participating in the study and asked some follow-up questions regarding how they found the repertory grid interview process, how clear they thought the instructions were and what they felt about the size and colour of the cards used.

Feedback from the pilot study showed that participants found the process easy to follow and that instructions were clear. Several participants also indicated they found the process interesting and had made them really think about what they value in a job. All participants reported being happy with the size of the cards used. The cards were big enough to write the title of a job on but still small enough to shuffle round during the interview process. Most participants had no objection to the cards being white although two participants indicated that they would have preferred coloured cards.

During the interview process it became evident that collecting the demographic data upfront was unnecessary as data apart from year of birth is optional in this study and collection of name and address is only necessary if participants want to receive a copy of the study summary findings. Participants had difficulty in identifying their industry grouping. Feedback suggested that information around industry groupings would need to be supplied in order for them to accurately provide their industry grouping, or should not be asked at all but incorporated into a code on the rating sheet.

As a result of the pilot study only minor changes were made to the method. The demographic section of the rating sheet was moved to the end of the interview, apart from the question asking participants to provide their year of birth. It was essential for the year of birth to be provided up front in order to place the participant in their generational cohort. The question regarding industry code was removed altogether and included as a code on the rating sheet that the researcher completed.

Repertory Grid Interviews - Method

Organisations where the researcher had a contact were initially approached to determine if they were prepared to participate in the repertory grid study. Further organisations were obtained from referrals from organisations that had participated in the repertory grid study or other contacts obtained by the researcher. All prospective organisations were sent a letter outlining what the study involved (Appendix 5) and an organisational consent form to complete (Appendix 6).

The researcher chose to go through employer since this was the most practical means of accessing employees. Going through employers enabled the researcher to access on-site

meeting rooms in which to undertake the repertory grid interviews and enabled the interviews to take place during work time. In addition, this method of accessing participants ensured that they were located in the same geographic region as the researcher.

Once organisation permission was granted, the researcher contacted the nominated coordinator in the organization to obtain names and contact details of employees who met the criteria and who had agreed to participate in the study. Those employees were then sent a copy of the information sheet via email or posted to their place of work (Appendix 2).

The researcher conducted Repertory Grid interviews during work hours, usually at the participant's place of work. Participants were informed that the repertory grid interview was confidential and of the purpose for which the data was being collected. Participants were then asked to complete a consent form before the interview could continue (Appendix 3). The researcher then asked the participant to state their year of birth. It was necessary to collect this data up front because refusal to give this information excluded them from the study. The instruction sheet and rating sheet (Appendix 4) were used to note participants' responses during the repertory grid interview.

As in the pilot study participants were presented with six white cards (92 x 60mm) with black letters printed in the top left hand corner. The repertory grid interview process that was undertaken was as described above in the pilot study.

Findings

A total of 64 employees from six industry groups (wholesale and retail trade; transport, storage and communication; business and finance services; education; health and community services and 'other' services) based in Wellington were interviewed using the repertory grid technique to identify what participants valued in their 'ideal job'. It should be noted that by excluding a number of the industry classifications used by the Australia and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (New Zealand Version), almost one third (30.1%) of the workforce was excluded from the sample population. The sample consisted of 28 percent of participants from *Business and Finance services*,

17 percent from both *Health and Community Services* and *Other Services*, 16 percent from *Education*, 14 percent from *Transport, Storage and Communication* and 8 percent from *Wholesale and Retail Trade*. *Transport, Storage and Communication* was significantly over-represented in the sample (14% in the sample vs. 8% in the workforce) and *Wholesale and Retail Trade* was significantly under-represented in the sample (8% in the sample vs. 32% in the workforce).

Table 3.1 Participant make up

	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Veteran	6	3	9	14.1%
Baby Boomer	9	12	21	32.8%
Generation X	11	17	28	43.8%
Generation Y	4	2	6	9.3%
	30	34	64	100%

A total of 14.1 percent of participants belonged to the Veteran cohort, 32.8 percent belonged to the Baby Boomer cohort, 43.8 percent belonged to the Generation X cohort and 9.3 percent belonged to the Generation Y cohort (Table 3.1). In addition, 82 percent of participants identified themselves as NZ European/Pakeha with the remainder identifying themselves with other ethnic groups.

650 constructs in total were identified from the 64 repertory grid interviews (Appendix 7). Baby Boomers on average generated the largest number of constructs and Generation Y the least. Baby Boomers were the only cohort that had a participant who generated constructs for all 21 combinations of cards outlined on the rating sheet in (see Appendix 4). The data is summarized in Table 3.2.

Once a construct was generated, participants were asked to rate all six jobs on the construct. A 7-point rating scale was used where 1 represented the positive end of the construct and 7 represented the negative end of the construct. For example, if the construct in question was *provides autonomy – micromanaged* participants rated the job as a "1" if they saw the job as providing a lot of autonomy or rated a "2" or "3" if the job provided some level of autonomy. If the job was seen as being completely

micromanaged then the job would be rated "7". A rating of "4" was given where the job was seen as neither autonomous or micromanaged. The boxplots in Figure 3.1 shows the distribution of participant's responses on the 7-point rating scale.

Table 3.2 Number of constructs generated by generational cohort

	Mean	SD
Veteran	11.4	4.2
Baby Boomer	11.6	4.9
Generation X	9.6	3.4
Generation Y	7.9	2.3

Figure 3.1 Boxplots of participants' rating for each job

Boxplot of Rating vs Job
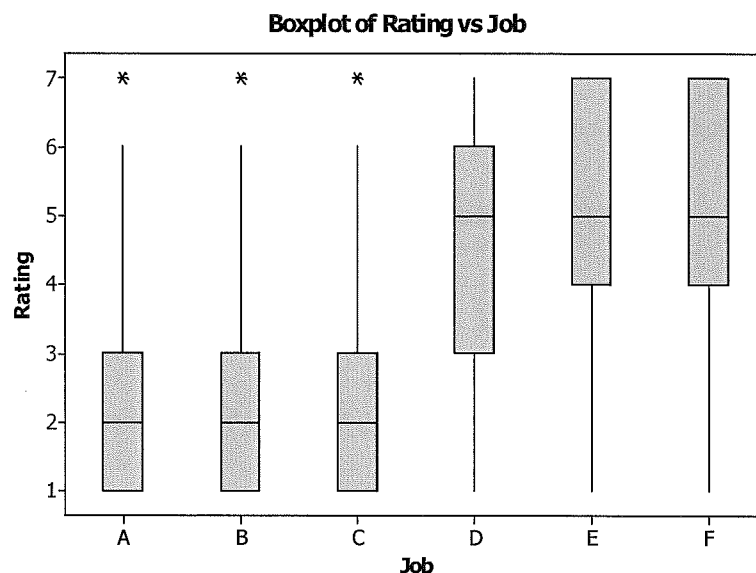
The boxplots in Figure 3.1 show that jobs A, B and C (participants' *ideal jobs*) all have a median rating of two whilst jobs D, E and F (participants *OK but less than ideal jobs*) have a median rating of five (Figure 3.1). Hence as expected, participants rated their ideal jobs (A, B and C) more highly than their *OK but less than ideal* jobs (D, E and F). Ratings for jobs A, B and C ranged from one to six (excluding one outlier where one participant rated jobs A, B and C as a 7) whereas, ratings for jobs D, E and F ranged from one to seven. This indicated that participants identified aspects they liked and disliked in both their ideal and less than ideal jobs.

Different combinations of three cards were presented to participants until either they had completed all 21 combinations of cards, or until they were unable to generate any more constructs. After completion of construct generation, they were asked to rate each construct on a 7-point scale on how important it was with 1 being 'extremely important' and 7 representing 'not important'. The boxplot in Figure 3.2 shows the distribution of participant's responses on the 7-point scale. The results show that participants rated the majority of the constructs they had identified as important to them in a job with a median rating of 'two' (reasonably important).

Using the methodology employed by Rippin (1996) the constructs generated in the 64 repertory grid interviews were then grouped into categories. Six raters independently allocated constructs to categories where the same or similar words were used to describe the same concept.

Figure 3.2 Boxplot of the cohort's response to the 'Importance' rating

Boxplot of Importance Rating
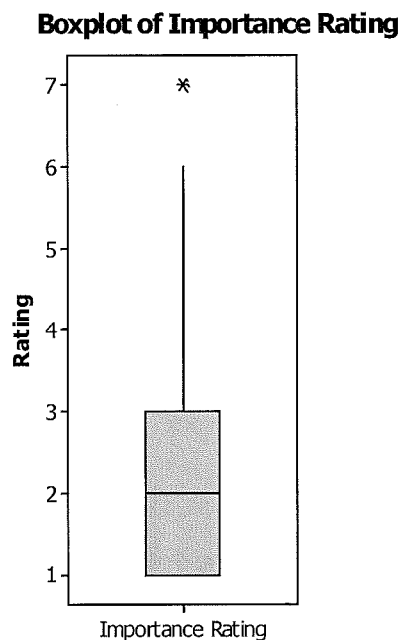
Five independent raters who worked in a Human Resources department in a not-for-profit primary health care organisation, plus the researcher, met together for half a day to assign constructs into categories. It was originally intended that six independent raters plus the researcher would be used, replicating the methodology employed in

Rippin's 1996 study. However, on the day, one rater was unable to participate due to illness.

Raters were given 650 cards each containing one of the dichotomous pairs of participant constructs and asked to group them into categories where the construct pairs had the same engendered meaning. Once the cards had been grouped, raters noted the constructs and gave the category a title they believed represented the constructs. For example, the following construct pairs *passion for the job vs. just a job*; *passion about it vs. /routine*; *passionate about it vs. working just for the money* were grouped together and labelled *Passion/Fun*. If raters were unable to determine what was meant by a construct or felt it did not fit into any grouping, they left the construct out.

In line with the methodology employed by Rippin (1996) constructs were assigned to categories when four or more of the six raters agreed on the construct category to which it belonged. All six raters assigned constructs to the same category 12.8 percent of the time. Five or more of the raters assigned constructs to the same category 28.9 percent of the time and four or more of the raters assigned constructs to the same category 47.2 percent of the time. Of the 650 constructs generated in the repertory grid interviews, 341 constructs (52.8%) were not assigned to categories and were discarded from further analysis. Predominantly these constructs were generated by one participant only and therefore, did not fit into any particular category. The number of constructs that did not fit into any category indicates a level of intergroup heterogeneity.

The remaining 309 constructs were grouped into a total of 15 construct categories. A frequency of constructs generated for each construct category was completed to identify constructs that the participants from each of the generational cohorts generated most often. As shown in Table 3.3, seven construct categories accounted for 78 percent of the 309 constructs that were assigned to categories.

Table 3.3 highlights that 80 percent of the 309 constructs were generated by either the Baby Boomer cohort or the Generation X cohort. Only 3.5 percent of the constructs generated were from the Generation Y cohort. Given this cohort generated the least constructs per participant this was not entirely unexpected.

Table 3.3 Frequency of construct by category that were generated by participants

| | Construct frequency by cohort | | | | | |
Construct category	Veteran	Boomer	Gen X	Gen Y	Total Frequency	Cumulative Frequency
People	7	25	28	1	61	20%
Leadership/ Accountability	10	16	13	1	40	33%
Remuneration	4	10	18	3	35	44%
Education/ Knowledge	6	10	12	1	29	53%
Career Progression	3	7	18	1	29	63%
Work/Life Balance	3	11	9	0	23	70%
Creativity	3	11	7	2	23	78%
Challenge	6	5	5	1	17	83%
Autonomy	1	5	6	0	12	87%
Travel	1	5	4	0	10	90%
Strategic	1	4	4	0	9	93%
Passion/Fun	3	1	4	0	8	96%
Stress	1	1	2	1	5	97%
Status	0	0	4	0	4	99%
Enjoyable/ Satisfying	0	0	4	0	4	100%
Total	**49**	**111**	**138**	**11**	**309**	

A summary of the most frequently generated construct categories in each of the cohorts is shown in Table 3.4. The aim was to identify the four most frequently generated categories by cohort. Ties in the frequency of generation produced a longer list in the case of Generation Y. When looking at the most frequently generated categories by cohort it can be seen that in the Veteran cohort this accounted for 58 percent of constructs generated, in the Baby Boomer cohort this accounted for 57 percent of constructs generated and in the Generation X cohort this accounted for 55 percent of constructs they generated and in the Generation Y cohort this accounted for 100 percent of the constructs they generated. This last result was most likely an outcome of the low number of constructs assigned to the construct groupings that were generated by this cohort.

In Table 3.4 it can be seen that the construct category *People* accounted for the highest percentage of constructs generated by both Baby Boomers and Generation X. This construct category was also one of the most frequently generated by both Veterans and Generation Y. *Leadership/Accountability* accounted for the highest percentage of constructs by Veterans. This was also one of the other three cohort's most frequently

generated constructs. The construct category *Remuneration* accounted for the highest percentage of constructs generated by Generation Y and was the second highest for Generation X. The construct category *Creativity* was the second most frequently generated by Generation Y and the fourth most frequently generated by Baby Boomers.

Table 3.4 The most frequently generated construct categories by cohort

Veteran	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y
Leadership / Accountability (20%)	People (23%)	People (20%)	Remuneration (28%)
People (14%)	Leadership / Accountability (14%)	Remuneration (13%)	Creativity (18%)
Education/Knowledge (12%)	Work/Life balance (10%)	Career Progression (13%)	Leadership / Accountability (9%)
Challenge (12%)	Creativity (10%)	Leadership / Accountability (9%)	People (9%)
			Education / Knowledge (9%)
			Challenge (9%)
			Career Progression (9%)
			Stress (9%)

Challenge and *Education/Knowledge* were amongst the most frequently generated constructs for both Veterans and Generation Y. *Career Progression* was amongst the most frequently generated constructs for both Generation X and Generation Y. *Stress* was one of Generation Y's most frequently generated constructs. Finally *Work/Life balance* was one of Baby Boomers most frequently generated constructs. Interestingly *Work/Life balance* was not identified as one of the most frequently generated constructs for Generation X and Generation Y. The popular literature suggests that both these cohorts seek work/life balance. It is possible that this construct was not elicited by either cohort because all six jobs identified by participants on cards A-F allowed work/life balance and therefore never became one of the constructs that differentiated between their 'ideal job' and 'OK but less than ideal job'.

Constructs rated most important by each cohort

The constructs each cohort rated as the most important to them in a job were identified (see Table 3.5). The aim was to identify the four most important construct categories for

each cohort but ties in the ratings for Generation Y produced a longer list for this cohort. It can be seen in Table 3.5 that no construct was identified by all generational cohorts. *Challenge* was the only construct grouping to be rated in the most important category by three cohorts. *Challenge* was rated as the most important construct category by Generation Y and third by both Veterans and Baby Boomers.

Strategic was rated as the most important construct category by both Veterans and Baby Boomers and *Passion/fun* was rated as the most important construct category by Generation X. This construct category was also rated fourth by Veterans. *Creativity* was in the most important construct categories for Baby Boomers and Generation Y and *Enjoyable/satisfying* was in the most important construct categories for Generation X and Generation Y. Surprisingly *Autonomy* was only identified by Veterans and *Work/life balance* was only identified by Baby Boomers. According to the popular literature both construct groupings would have been expected to be identified by Generation X. Unsurprisingly Generation X identified *Leadership/accountability* and *Education/knowledge*.

Table 3.5 Constructs rated as most important by cohort (Mean and SD)

Veteran	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y
Strategic (1.0; 0.0)	Strategic (1.75; 0.50)	Passion/Fun (1.0; 0.0)	Challenge (1.0; 0.0)
Autonomy (1.0; 0.0)	Creativity (1.75; 0.75)	Travel (1.50; 0.58)	Enjoyable/Satisfying (1.0; 0.0)
Challenge (1.5; 0.58)	Challenge (1.80; 1.33)	Enjoyable/Satisfying (1.3; 0.58)	Creativity (1.3; 0.58)
Passion/Fun (1.67;0.58)	Work/Life Balance (2.0; 1.1)	Career Progression (1.54; 0.78)	Leadership / Accountability (2.0; 0.0)
			Education/Knowledge (2.0; 1.0)

Most frequently generated vs. most important construct categories

When comparing the constructs that were most frequently generated with those that were rated as most important, the Generation Y cohort showed the most consistency, i.e., all the most frequently generated constructs were also rated as the most important constructs by this age group. This was most likely due to the fact that so few constructs generated by this cohort were included in the final construct groupings (N=11) all the

constructs were included in the table identifying the most frequently generated constructs shown in Table 3.4.

Two of the most frequently generated constructs identified by Baby Boomers were also their most highly rated construct grouping (*Creativity* and *Work/Life Balance*). Veterans and Generation Xers both had only one construct category that was both highly rated and frequently generated. For Veterans this was *Challenge* and for Generation X this was *Career Progression*. In most instances the most frequently generated constructs are not seen by participants as their most important construct categories.

Comparisons between what each of the cohorts valued in a job were also made. The results showed that what Generation X valued in a job has the least in common with other generational cohorts with only two construct categories in common with other cohorts (*Passion/fun* and *Enjoyable/satisfying*). Veterans, Baby Boomers and Generation Y all had three construct categories in common with other cohorts.

Veterans had the *Strategic, Challenge* and *Passion/Fun* construct categories in common with other cohorts, Baby Boomers had *Strategic, Challenge* and *Creativity* construct categories in common with other cohorts and Generation Y had *Challenge, Enjoyable/satisfying* and *Creativity* in common with other cohorts.

K J method

The KJ method was used to determine if the construct categories identified by all six raters using the methodology employed by Rippin (1996) could be replicated using another grouping technique. The K J method (named after its inventor Jiro Kawakita) allows groups to quickly reach consensus on priorities of subjective, qualitative data (Mizuno, 1988). An advantage of the method is that different groups can analyse the same data and will often come to the same results.

The same five (independent) raters who independently grouped the constructs as discussed previously were used for the K J method. The sixth rater used previously was the researcher who, in this exercise acted as the neutral facilitator whose role was to guide the raters through the process.

Each of the 650 constructs generated in the repertory grid interviews were written on a separate card. All of the cards were then laid out randomly on a large table. The facilitator asked the five raters to work together to put the cards into groups where they looked like they belonged together (i.e., where the raters believed the cards contained constructs that were the same or similar). The facilitator then asked the raters to leave to one side the cards containing constructs that they believed did not belong to any group. These were treated as 'lone wolf' or 'isolates' and were left out.

The facilitator asked the raters not to talk about the groupings at this point or to express any criticism or opposition to how raters grouped the cards. The raters silently started moving about the room physically putting the cards into piles where they believed they contained the same or similar constructs.

Once the raters had completed this task the facilitator asked them to select a name for each group that clearly portrayed the contents of the cards in the set, but was neither too broad nor a simple aggregation of the cards in the group. The raters were told that if when reading through each group, they realized that the group had two themes, they should then split the group into two groups. The raters were also instructed that if they identified that two groups had similar themes, these should be combined into one group.

Once the raters had agreed names for each of the groups they wee asked to spend some time looking at the constructs in each of the groups to see if there was agreement amongst themselves as to whether the construct fitted in the group or not or whether it should be moved to another group or discarded. Once the raters were happy with their groupings the facilitator made a note of the final grouping names and the constructs that had been allocated to the groups. 608 constructs were grouped into 33 categories and 32 constructs were discarded.

Consistency between the individual raters and the KJ method

A comparison between the results of the individual raters (discussed earlier in this chapter) and the KJ method was made. Considerable consistency between the two methods of grouping constructs was identified. When looking at the top 15 construct groupings identified in both methods it can be seen that overall 95 percent of the constructs identified by the individual raters were also identified by the KJ method (see

Table 3.6). There was 100 percent consistency in nine of the 15 construct groupings. These were the *Work/Life Balance*, *Creativity*, *Passion/Fun*, *Autonomy*, *Status*, *Travel*, *Enjoyable/Satisfying*, *Strategic*, and *Stress* construct groupings. The grouping with the least consistency was the *People* construct grouping (91.8% consistency). This high level of consistency between the methods was not entirely unexpected since the same raters were used for both.

Table 3.6 Consistency between the outcome of individual ratings and KJ method ratings

Construct	No of constructs from individual ratings	No of constructs from KJ method	Number of constructs rated the same	Percentage consistency
Remuneration	35	35	33	94%
Work/Life Balance	23	38	23	100%
Creativity	23	26	23	100%
Education/Knowledge	29	34	27	93%
Career Progression	29	31	27	93%
People	61	66	56	92%
Passion/Fun	8	19	8	100%
Leadership/Accountability	40	57	37	93%
Autonomy	12	28	12	100%
Status	4	11	4	100%
Travel	10	10	10	100%
Enjoyable/Satisfying	4	58	4	100%
Strategic	9	11	9	100%
Stress	5	7	5	100%
Challenge	17	27	16	94%
Total	309	458	294	95%

Limitations of the repertory grid study

One of the main limitations of the repertory grid technique is that eliciting constructs from individuals through repertory grid interviews is a time consuming process (Cammock, 1991) which as Hunter (1997) notes often leads to relatively small sample sizes e.g., 13 (Langan-Fox & Tan, 1997), 14 (Moynihan, 1996), 19 (Latta & Swigger, 1992), 32 (Terjesen et al., 2007) and 53 (Hunter, 1997). To successfully examine the cognitive maps of individuals a sample size of 15 – 25 within a population will frequently generate sufficient constructs to approximate the "universe of meaning" regarding a given organisational context (Dunn & Ginsberg, 1986; Ginsberg, 1989; Tan & Hunter, 2002). This is supported by the research conducted by Dunn and Ginsberg

(1986) where 17 respondents generated a total of 23 unique constructs. These constructs were however, completely generated after the 10th interview resulting in the last 7 interviews adding no new constructs (Dunn, Cahill, Dukes, & Ginsberg, 1986).

The labour-intensiveness of the repertory grid interviews resulted in a relatively small sample size, particularly in the Veteran and Generation Y cohorts. This methodology also imposed a geographical constraint on the sample. In addition, there were significantly less Veteran and Generation Y participants (9 and 6 respectively) than Baby Boomer and Generation X. Dunn *et al.* (1986) suggest that a minimum of ten participants are required to approximate the universe of meaning, therefore, a limitation of this study is small sample size in Veteran and Generation Y cohorts. As a result, the sample size of this study provides an insufficient basis for extrapolation of results beyond the current population.

While the use of the repertory grid technique enabled participants to identify what they valued in a job from their own perspective, in their own words in an unbiased manner, a limitation of the study was that there was an assumption that these would also be meaningful to the cohort group as a whole. It is unclear whether this would be the case.

Another limitation of using the repertory grid technique was the nature of how constructs were generated. Comparing combinations of three jobs generated constructs. For a construct to be generated it needed to be present in at least one job and not in the others. A construct might have been important to a participant but if it was present in all six jobs then it would not have been elicited by the participant. For example, if all six jobs the participant chose in the interview process enabled the participant to maintain *Work/Life Balance* then the repertory grid interview process would not have enabled the generation of *Work/Life Balance* as a construct, even if this was important to them.

It was also observed through the interview process that when participants used jobs that they hadn't had but knew quite a bit about, they came up with constructs that focussed predominantly on the job content and what they would be doing as opposed to who they would be working with, what their manager would be like and the physical environment and opportunities for *work/life balance*.

Chapter 4   Study 2: Generational Survey

Using the findings from the repertory grid interviews in Chapter 3, a questionnaire was designed and piloted. This chapter outlines the process used to develop the questionnaire, the final method used in the study and provides the results in relation to each of the research questions. An overall summary of the findings is then provided.

Questionnaire design

The constructs elicited in the repertory grid interviews were used to develop a questionnaire. This process is consistent with the methodology used by Cammock (1991), Rippin (1996) and Terjesen et al. (2007). Incorporating the constructs elicited from the repertory grid interviews into a self-administered questionnaire allows participants from a wider geographical area to be sampled. Participants are also able to complete the questionnaire at their own leisure, making data collection less disruptive to the organisation than the repertory grid technique. Questionnaires reduce the pressure for an immediate response, enabling participants to take time to comprehend each question and provide thoughtful answers (Dillman, 2000).

Questionnaire items were developed in a number of stages. Firstly the researcher and two independent people known to the researcher, reviewed the constructs grouped into the 15 construct groups outlined previously in Table 3.3. Where two of the three reviewers agreed a construct appeared to be asking the same question, it was eliminated since it would make no sense to include multiple questions that were asking the same thing. For example there were six constructs where the positive pole was identified as *Good Pay*. Obviously it would create a nuisance factor for participants if they were asked the same question numerous times.

The next stage of questionnaire development involved reviewing the construct descriptions in the remaining repertory grid construct list. Where two of the three reviewers felt the construct contained statements with different meanings, the construct was split into two separate questionnaire items. This review was carried out to ensure that constructs that contained different concepts were not included in the questionnaire in their raw form (i.e., as one questionnaire item). For example, the definition for the

construct *Job requires professional qualification/status vs. No identifiable professional relationship* was perceived by the two independent reviewers and the researcher as containing two slightly different concepts within the one construct.

If the construct description was included in the questionnaire in the form shown above, it was believed that this would have been confusing for the respondent. The construct therefore, needed to be split into two parts before it could be included in the questionnaire. In the questionnaire this construct became *Job requires professional qualification vs. No professional qualification required* and *High status job vs. Lower status job*. Appendix 8 contains a list of how the original constructs were separated and the final wording used in the questionnaire.

Using the methodology employed by Rippin (1996) a negative pole was created to accompany each of the positive descriptors by either putting the word 'doesn't' in front of the positive statement or incorporating the negative aspects of the job captured during the repertory grid interviews that reflected the opposite behaviour. Grammar was also changed to assist in the ease of reading. In most cases the words that were used to describe what participants considered as ideal and less ideal in a job in the repertory grid interviews were retained.

A total of 70 questions were incorporated into the questionnaire based on the constructs identified from the repertory grid interviews that were identified by both the independent raters and the KJ method ratings. Four questions identified by the individual raters but not by the KJ method were also included in the questionnaire. These were question 31 (*change in career direction vs. more of the same*), question 40 (*supportive team vs. unsupportive team*), question 41 (*working in a caring environment/care about colleagues vs. not caring about colleagues*) and question 52 (*opportunity to be self-employed vs. working for an organization*). These questions were included as it was felt that they would add value to the research. Construct items were incorporated into the questionnaire on a random basis.

Questionnaire rating scale

Participants were asked to think about their ideal job when completing the questionnaire. This was the reference point all participants completing the questionnaire

would be asked to think about. When participants thought of their 'ideal job' it was important that they knew a lot about the job to enable them to rate the job on a wide range of constructs.

According to Hinkin (1995), it is important that questionnaire scales generate sufficient variance among respondents for subsequent statistical analysis. In the review of questionnaire scales, Hinkin (1995) identified the used of scales with between three points and ten points. The scaled used in this study, consistent with Rippin (1996), used a seven point scale. Participants indicated on a seven-point semantic differential rating scale the degree to which the questionnaire items were descriptive of their 'ideal job'. The scale was positioned between the positive and the negative questionnaire construct items. The scale used is shown in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1 Questionnaire rating scale

	Extremely important	Important	Somewhat important	No Preference	Somewhat important	Important	Extremely important	
High pay	X							Low pay
High level of responsibility	↑					X		Little responsibility

This would indicate that *High Pay* is 'Extremely Important' in the participant's 'ideal job'	This would indicate that *Little Responsibility* is 'Important' in the participant's 'ideal job'
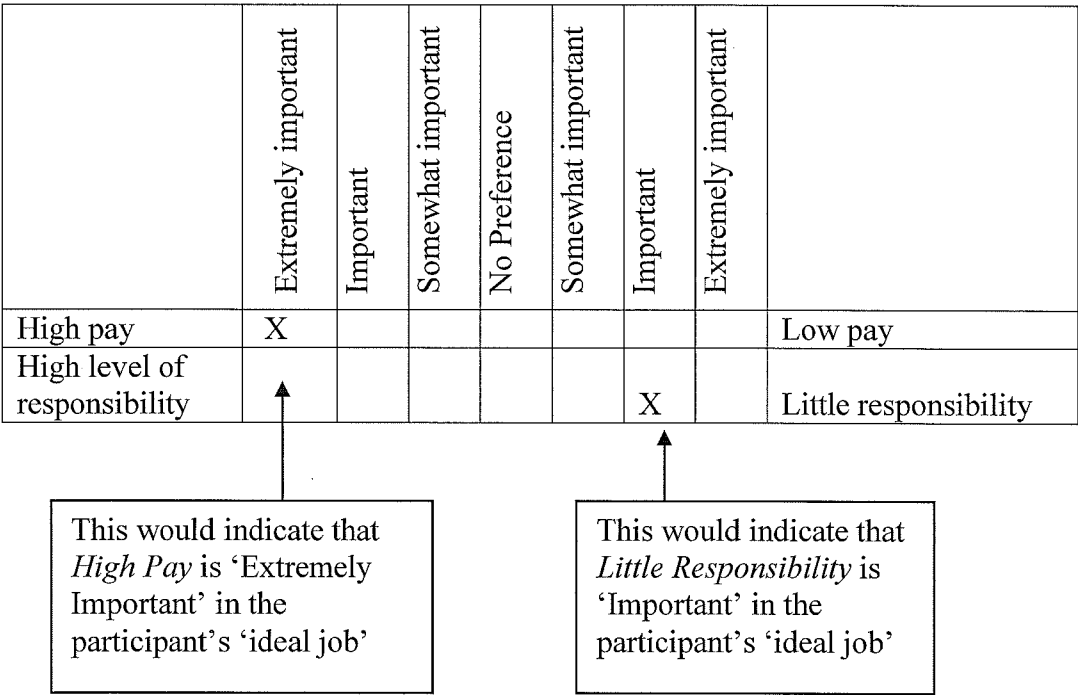
A number of demographic questions were also included. Participants were asked to identify their year of birth so the researcher could identify what generational cohort they belonged to. The questionnaire also asked participants to identify what industry grouping they belonged to, their ethnicity and their gender.

Questionnaire pilot study

A pilot study was undertaken to ensure questionnaire instructions were clear to participants, that they found the items to be unambiguous and that the questionnaire collected the required information efficiently and effectively. The questionnaire was piloted with 16 participants representing each of the generational cohorts and genders (i.e., two males and two females from each of the four cohorts). Participants in the pilot study were known to the researcher.

The pilot study identified areas where changes were required and the following changes were made in the final research methodology. A bullet point was added under the section 'a couple of pointers' specifying that for each item, participants should think about which statement best describes the ideal job they have in mind and that they should then put a cross in the appropriate box. Question 37 (*opportunity to network vs. no networking*) and question 44 (*opportunity to network vs. limited opportunity to network*) were identified as the same resulting in question 37 being removed from the pilot questionnaire was removed.

The researcher noted that several participants had not answered all of the questions. This may or may not have been intentional. To reduce the instance of incomplete questionnaires being returned, a sentence was added at the end of the questionnaire to remind participants to check through the questionnaire to ensure that they had not inadvertently missed any of the questions.

A return date was also added to the questionnaire. Feedback suggested that without a return date, participants might put the questionnaire aside to do at a later date and then forget to complete it.

Finally, it was suggested that participant's email address be stored in a different database than the responses to the questionnaire and that participants be informed of this on the questionnaire itself. A copy of the final questionnaire is provided in Appendix 9. No feedback was received relating to the scale design and the use of the construct dichotomy.

Questionnaire administration

Organisations where the researcher had contacts were approached to obtain permission to send out the questionnaire to targeted employees. Equal numbers males and females from each generational cohort were sought to complete the questionnaire. Organisations were sent a letter outlining the research purpose and process and what involvement from staff would be expected. The letter is provided in Appendix 10.

The researcher chose to go through organisations to access participants as the most practical means of accessing employees. Since a number of contacts in organisations willing to be involved in the study had been obtained by the researcher when undertaking the repertory grid interviews this was seen as a practical means of accessing employees. The researcher considered undertaking a random sample using the electoral role, however, the main barrier to using this method was practicality in terms of time and cost. Other barriers included the difficulty of ensuring respondents were in the workforce and that there were similar numbers of participants in each cohort.

Once permission was granted by the organisation, the researcher requested from the nominated contact person the names and contact details of employees who had agreed to participate in the study. The contact person in each organisation facilitated the distribution of the questionnaire to participants by either sending the questionnaire directly to them or supplying the researcher with the work email addresses of potential participants.

Questionnaires were sent out on a Monday, where possible, since according to Gillham (2000) this increased participant's likelihood of responding. In a few instances paper copies were sent to those that did not have access to an email address.

The questionnaire was sent out with a covering note and consent form that urged participants to complete the questionnaire and assuring them of confidentiality of responses. Participants were asked to complete the questionnaire within two weeks and return via email or fax to the researcher. Participants were given a consent form to complete prior to completing the questionnaire (see Appendix 3).

Findings

In discussing the findings, a number of points need to be taken into consideration. The findings discussed here are based on the sample obtained in this study and discussion of each generational cohort is therefore, based on participants from each of the generational cohorts and not the cohort as a whole. At the time the data was collected (between 2005 and 2006) many Veterans had left the workforce and many Generation Y were yet to enter the workforce so participants are necessarily either the tail end of the cohort (Veterans) or the older members of the cohort (Generation Y) and as such cannot be considered to represent of the cohort as a whole.

Participants

Thirty-five percent of respondents were from *Wholesale and Retail trade*, 21 percent from *Health and Community Services*, 17 percent from *Business and Finance Services*, 13 percent from *Education*, 10 percent were from *Transport, Storage and Communication*, and 3 percent from *Other Services*. One participant (1%) did not answer this question. The percentage of participants by industry grouping is reasonably representative of the number of people employed in the New Zealand workforce as at December 2004 according to Statistics New Zealand apart from *Health and Community Services* which is significantly over represented (21% vs. 13% of the workforce) and *Other Services* which is significantly under represented (3% vs. 16% of the workforce). It should also be noted that by excluding a number of industry classifications, almost one third (30.1%) of the workforce was excluded from the target population.

A total of 164 participants from six industry groups (Wholesale and Retail Trade; Transport, Storage and Communication; Business and Finance Services; Education; Health and Community Services; and 'Other' services) who were either from national organisations or organisations based in the lower north island returned the questionnaire.

Data from the questionnaires was collected over a three-month period between May and August 2006. A total of 135 questionnaires were returned from the 267 questionnaires that were sent out to 18 participating organisations representing the six industry groups

identified above. This was a response rate of 51%. However, one organisation did not follow the instructions to target just 48 participants meeting the criteria and sent the questionnaire out to all 400 employees in an organisation wide email inviting all employees to participate. Ten responses were obtained from this organisation. When this organisation was included in the total number of responses for the study increased to 145 but the response rate dropped to 21 percent.

The total number of questionnaires sent out to participants was not as high as originally planned. This was due in part to the number of small and medium-sized organisations that agreed to participate. These organisations were unable to supply 48 participants in the groupings identified earlier. Not all organisations had adequate male and female employees in each of the generational cohorts that were being sought. However, due to a lack of access to large organisations these small and medium organisations were included in the study.

In 2011, in an effort to boost the participant numbers in both the Veteran and Generation Y cohorts, a number of Veteran and Generation Y employees were approached to complete the questionnaire. Approaches were made to people who were known to the researcher or her supervisors. As a result, an additional 19 responses (6 Veteran and 13 Generation Y) were obtained.

In total 164 respondents returned a completed questionnaire. A total of 19.5 percent of participants belonged to the Veteran cohort, 28.7 percent belonged to the Baby Boomer cohort, 34.1 percent belonged to the Generation X cohort and 17.7 percent were Generation Y cohort (Table 4.1).

The proportion of numbers in the oldest two cohort groups is reflective of the New Zealand population (Veterans = 16% and Baby Boomers = 31.6%). However Generation X was significantly over-represented in the sample (34.1% compared to 28.8% of the New Zealand population) and Generation Y was significantly under represented (17.7% compared to 23.6% of the New Zealand population). The researcher notes that targeting equal sample sizes for each cohort would have played a part in the over-representation of the Veteran cohort in the sample compared to the proportion in the New Zealand workforce. It is also of note that the under-representation of the

Generation Y cohort in the sample could be attributable to the fact that a number of the Generation Y cohort are yet to enter the workforce.

Table 4.1 Participant make-up

	Male	Female	Unknown	Total	Percentage
Veteran	16	14	2	32	19.5%
Baby Boomer	28	16	3	47	28.7%
Generation X	35	16	5	56	34.1%
Generation Y	10	13	6	29	17.7%
	89	59	16	164	

Fifty-four percent of participants were male, 36 percent female and 10 percent did not respond to this question. Females were significantly under-represented in this study since 46 percent of the New Zealand labour force in December 2004 was female (Statistics New Zealand, 2012). Three-quarters of the sample identified themselves as NZ European/Pakeha. The remainder of the sample identified themselves as Maori, Pasifika or members of other ethnic groups.

Research Question 1 - What do Veterans, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y value in a job?

In order to answer research question 1 and determine what members of each cohort valued in a job, the average rating for each question (construct) was identified. Each response category was allocated a number from one to seven. The response 'Extremely Important' was allocated as one, 'Important' was allocated two, 'Somewhat Important' allocated three, 'No Preference' allocated four through to 'Extremely Important' on the opposite side of the scale being allocated seven. The highest rated questions were those that were either rated on average closest to one or seven. As stated in Murray, Toulson, *et al.* (2011) the data was treated as summative. While there is ambiguity in the literature about the legitimacy of treating such scales as equal interval rather than ordinal (Clason & Dormody, 1993; Friedman & Amoo, 1999; Jamieson, 2004; Shrigley & Koballa, 1984), ordinal scale use is widespread in both the management and social sciences when measuring attitudinal values (Devellis, 2003; Norman, 2010; Spector, 1992).

A summary of the top-rated constructs for each generational cohort is shown in Table 4.2. The aim was to identify the five most highly rated constructs for each cohort but ties in the 'importance' rating produced a longer list in the case of the Generation Y cohort (Murray et al, 2011). A full list of the mean and standard deviation (SD) for all questions is provided in Appendix 11.

Table 4.2 Questions rated as most important by cohort (Mean and SD)

Veteran	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y
Good Supportive Mgr. (1.45; 0.68)	Gives me job satisfaction (1.40; 0.54)	Gives me job satisfaction (1.36; 0.62)	Opportunity to learn (1.41; 0.63)
Gives me job satisfaction (1.47; 0.57)	Provides job fulfilment (1.57; 0.58)	Provides job fulfilment (1.52; 0.69)	Supportive team (1.50; 1.07)
Provides job fulfilment (1.53; 0.51)	Enjoy the people I work with (1.57; 0.62)	Allows quality of life (1.54; 0.63)	Gives me job satisfaction (1.55; 0.63)
Working in a caring environment (1.53; 0.57)	Supportive team (1.57; 0.68)	Good supportive Mgr. (1.54; 0.71)	Opportunity to use my skills (1.55; 0.69)
Good rapport with colleagues (1.63; 0.71)	Allows quality of life (1.60; 0.68)	Good rapport with colleagues (1.57; 0.60)	Opportunity for career progression (1.59; 0.73)
			Guaranteed income (1.59; 0.73)
			Working in a caring environment (1.59; 1.07)

Table 4.2 shows that *gives me job satisfaction* was rated highly by all four generational cohorts (Murray, Toulson et al., 2011). Baby Boomers and Generation X rated this construct as their most important construct whilst Veterans rated it their second most important construct and Generation Y rated it their third most important construct. *Job fulfilment* was also rated highly by three of the generational cohorts (Veterans, Baby Boomers and Generation X). Since the wording of questionnaire items was generated in the repertory grid participants' own words (Murray, Toulson et al., 2011) it is unclear what 'satisfied' or 'fulfilled' meant to them, all that can be determined is that they rate them as important.

Research Question 2 - Are the constructs identified as being important by each cohort consistent with their depiction in the popular literature and empirical studies?

Five constructs are rated highly by at least two generational cohorts: *good rapport with colleagues, good supportive manager* (Veterans and Generation X); *allows quality of life* (Baby Boomers and Generation X); *working in a caring environment* (Veterans and Generation Y) and *supportive team* (Baby Boomers and Generation Y). While empirical studies do report that Generation X seek work-life balance (Gursoy et al., 2008; Kunreuther, 2003; Mattis et al., 2004; Young et al., 2006), the popular literature often portrays Baby Boomers as workaholics. The results of this group of Baby Boomers call this stereotype into question.

Further, this study found Veterans identified *good supportive manager* as important whereas they are typically cast as comfortable with a top-down hierarchical style of leadership (Erickson, 2008). And contrary to the popular literatures portrayal, Veterans in this study value working in a caring environment. The finding that Veterans rate good rapport with colleagues as one of their most important constructs is also unexpected since there is no indication of this in the popular literature.

Similarly, this study found the Generation Y cohort do not conform to the popular stereotype: they do not rate *quality of life* highly, despite this description being part of their popular portrayal (Kunreuther, 2003). While their high-rating of *career progression* is consistent with the popular literatures portrayal which sees them as wanting to move up the corporate ladder quickly (Espinoza et al., 2010), it is unclear why Generation Y might rate having *guaranteed income* so highly. Overall, the Generation Y sample has a strong emphasis on items that related to learning and development but this description need no be interpreted as a cohort difference. Generation Y as the youngest cohort, are naturally seeking to establish themselves and grow in the workplace (Murray, Toulson et al., 2011).

When looking at which questions had a mean rating of more than 4.0 (i.e., a preference for the construct on the right hand side of the dichotomy) only two questions were identified. These are shown in Table 4.3. Note that no questions had an average response of between 6 and 7 indicating that the construct on the right hand side of the

dichotomy was 'Important' or 'Extremely Important'. The highest mean rating was 4.3 for the Veteran cohort on the construct b*eing CEO vs. not being CEO* and the Generation X cohort on n*ot demanding vs. demanding.* As noted earlier in this chapter, the questionnaire items were generated in the repertory grid participant's own words. What Generation X participants meant by 'demanding' cannot be determined precisely. All that can be said is that they have a slight preference for their ideal job being d*emanding.* In addition to Veterans, Generation X and Generation Y also had a slight preference for n*ot being CEO.* Baby Boomers had no mean ratings exceeding 4.0.

Table 4.3 Questions with a mean rating of more than 4.0 by cohort (with Mean and SD)

Veteran	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y
Not being CEO (4.3; 1.80)		Demanding (4.3; 1.50)	Not being CEO (4.14; 1.38)
		Not being CEO (4.2; 1.50)	

Research Question 3 - Are there gender differences in what each generational cohort values in a job?

In order to answer research question three, simple qualitative rankings for males and females of each generational cohort were undertaken. When examining what each of the generational cohorts value by gender the overall sample size reduces to 148 since 16 participants did not state their gender. The Veteran cohort comprised 16 males and 14 females, the Baby Boomer cohort 28 males and 16 females, the Generation X cohort comprised 35 males and 16 females and the Generation Y cohort comprised 10 males and 13 females. The sample sizes of some of these groups became small. This should be taken into account when interpreting the results.

Table 4.4 Constructs rated as most important by cohort and gender (Mean and SD)

	Veteran		Baby Boomer		Generation X		Generation Y	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
	Gives me job satisfaction (1.33; 0.51)	Good Supportive Manager (1.20; 0.41)	Gives me job satisfaction (1.69; 0.48)	Gives me job satisfaction (1.20; 0.53)	Good chance for promotion (1.44; 0.63)	Gives me job satisfaction (1.23; 0.49)	Gives me job satisfaction (1.46; 0.52)	Supportive team (1.33; .71)
	Supportive team (1.33; 0.51)	Allows Quality of life (1.31; 0.60)	Guaranteed income (1.69; 0.87)	Good rapport with colleagues (1.43; 0.50)	Allows quality of life (1.44; 0.63)	Good rapport with colleagues (1.43; 0.56)	Supportive team (1.46; 0.66)	Opportunity to learn (1.40; 0.70)
	Provides job fulfilment (1.40; 0.52)	Working in a caring environment (1.44; 0.63)	Enjoy the people I work with (1.75; 0.68)	Provides job fulfilment (1.46; 0.58)	Opportunity to use my skills (1.63; 0.62)	Provides job fulfilment (1.43; 0.61)	Passionate about the job (1.46; 0.66)	Enjoy the people I work with (1.40; 0.84)
	Opportunity to use my skills (1.47; 0.51)	Provides job fulfilment (1.50; 0.63)	Clear career pathway (1.81; 0.54)	Supportive team (1.46; 0.60)	Gives me job satisfaction (1.63; 0.81)	Good supportive Manager (1.46; 0.74)	Opportunity to learn (1.54; 0.66)	Opportunity for career progression (1.50; 0.85)
	Sincere relationships with people (1.47; 0.60)	Good rapport with colleagues (1.50; 0.73)	Good supportive Manager (1.81; 0.66)	Allows quality of life (1.46; 0.69)		Opportunity to learn (1.54; 0.61)		
						Allows quality of life (1.54; 0.66)		

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The constructs identified as important by each cohort were examined to determine if there were any gender differences. What extent gender played a role in participants choices are outlined in Table 4.4. When looking at the constructs identified as most important in their ideal job by male and female Veterans, *provides job fulfilment* was the only construct both genders had in common. The only construct in common between male and female Baby Boomers was *gives me job satisfaction*. This is a 20 percent overlap between what male and female Veterans and between what male and female Baby Boomer participants identified as being most important to them in their ideal job.

When looking at the constructs identified as most important in their 'ideal job' for male and female Generation X and Generation Y participants, each had two constructs in common. Generation X males and females rated both *allows quality of life* and *gives me job satisfaction* in their most important constructs and Generation Y males and females rated both *opportunities to learn* and *supportive team* in their most important constructs. This is a 40 percent overlap between what male and female Generation Xers and a 50 percent overlap between what male and female Generation Y participants identified as being most important to them in their ideal job.

When comparing the constructs rated as most important in by the overall generational cohort (see Table 4.2) with the constructs identified as most important for each cohort by gender it can be seen that all constructs rated as most important by Veterans, Baby Boomers and Generation X were also identified as most important by either the male or the female participants of that cohort. However, for Generation Y a number of constructs rated as most important to the cohort as a whole were not identified as most important by either Generation Y males or females. These constructs were *opportunity to use my skills*, *guaranteed income* and *working in a caring environment*.

When looking at the constructs rated as most important for each cohort (outlined in Table 4.2), it can be seen that male Veteran participants had only two of the five constructs that were consistent with the overall cohort and female Veteran participants had four of the five constructs in common. Similarly Baby Boomer males only had two constructs that were consistent with the overall cohort and female Baby Boomer participants had four of the five constructs in common. Generation X males had two of the six constructs that were consistent with the overall cohort results and Generation X

females had four of the six in common with the overall cohort results. When looking at the findings with respect to Generation Y it can be seen that the results show that when looking at male and females both have three of the four constructs in common with the overall results. Overall, the results indicate that what female Veterans, Baby Boomers and Generation X participants rate as important in their ideal job is more similar to the overall results for each generation than males.

Research Question 4 - Are there generational differences between the four generational cohorts in what they value in a job?

The results discussed thus far are drawn from analysis of the qualitative rankings. To further look at whether cohort membership could be determined by the way in which a participant answered the questionnaire, a linear discriminant analysis was performed. This technique *assumes that the summated rating scales are continuous (equal interval) rather than discrete (ordinal)* (Murray, Toulson, et al; 2011; p482). Such analyses with semantic differential scales are common in the literature (e.g., Friborg et al 2006; Heise, 1970; Parolini et al 2009).

A linear discriminant analysis was used as it has few assumptions and didn't require large difficult analysis that wasn't warranted. While logistical regression analysis was considered, it is not robust with small sample sizes and strictly speaking uses only two categories whereas this research required four categories. Multi-nominal logistic regression was also considered but it requires assumptions to be made in the analysis to get around the use of more than two categories.

A linear discriminant analysis using the computer program, MiniTab, was performed to test whether a cohort membership could be determined from each participant's responses to the questionnaire (Murray, Toulson et al., 2011). If it can be predicted what generational cohort participants are from, based on their pattern of responding to the questionnaire, then it suggests there are generational cohort differences in what is important to each cohort in their 'ideal job'. The discriminant analysis also looks at the cohorts themselves and how predictable they are. If the pattern of responding for each cohort group is predictable then there is homogeneity with the cohort.

The analysis allocates participants to the group that was closest in terms of the Manhalanobis distance (i.e., the distance between the multi-variate populations (Manly, 2005). The percentage of correct allocations is an indication of how well the groups can be separated using the available variables (i.e., how well the generational cohorts can be separated given how they answer the questionnaire) (Murray, Toulson et al., 2011: p485).

The sample used contained 138 participants (28 Veterans, 37 Baby Boomers, 50 Generation X and 23 Generation Y). MiniTab excluded 26 of the 164 participants from the analysis since they contained missing values i.e., did not answer one or more question. The initial results showed that participants were allocated to the correct cohort grouping 88.4 percent of the time (Table 4.5). There was some variation in the predictive accuracy between cohorts. Generation X participants were correctly classified into the correct cohort 84 percent of the time, whereas Veteran participants were correctly classified as such 96.4 percent of the time.

Table 4.5 Linear discriminant analysis summary of classification

| Put into group | True Group | | | |
	Veteran	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y
Veteran	27	0	1	0
Baby Boomer	1	33	5	2
Generation X	0	1	42	1
Generation Y	0	3	2	20
Total N	28	37	50	23
N correct	27	33	42	20
Proportion	0.964	0.892	0.840	0.870

N=138. N correct =122. Proportion correct = 0.884

Cross-validation was undertaken to determine the level of accuracy of assigning a participant to the correct generational cohort to be determined when it was not part of the original data set used to form the discriminant equations (Murray, Toulson et al., 2011). When the cross-validation discriminant equations were formed (i.e., the discriminant function was generated without the data point in it and then the group for that data point was predicted) the accuracy of correctly allocating a participant to their

cohort grouping was reduced to 38.4 percent (Table 4.6). The lower accuracy of correct allocations is not unexpected. According to Manly (1991; p97) *it is not surprising to find that an observation is closest to the centre of the group where the observation helped to determine that centre.* The magnitude of the drop in predictive accuracy is attributed to the small sample size. The smaller the sample size the larger the effect omitting one participant from the analysis has on the overall results. Veterans remained the cohort that was correctly allocated to the right cohort with the greatest accuracy. Generation Y became the cohort allocated to the right cohort with the least accuracy. The results show that the pattern of responding for each cohort is low (i.e., each cohorts pattern of responding is not predictable) indicating intergroup heterogeneity. The results, therefore, indicate within cohort differences.

Table 4.6 Linear discriminant analysis summary of classification using cross-validation

Put into group	True Group Veteran	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y
Veteran	12	5	7	4
Baby Boomer	2	14	12	7
Generation X	6	11	21	6
Generation Y	8	7	10	6
Total N	28	37	50	23
N correct	12	14	21	6
Proportion	0.439	0.378	0.420	0.261

N=138. N correct =53. Proportion correct =0.384

The squared distance between each of the four cohorts was also obtained to determine the separation between the cohort groups (i.e., the distinctness of each of the cohort groups) and are shown in Table 4.7. The squared differences between the groups ranged from between 7.71 and 16.06. The results of this analysis show that the greatest difference between two groups occurred between Veterans and Baby Boomers suggesting that they are the most dissimilar cohorts. The closest distance between two cohorts occurred between the Baby Boomers and Generation Xers suggesting that these two cohorts were the most alike. There was a similar distance between the Generation Y and Baby Boomer cohorts and the Generation X and Generation Y cohorts. Finally the

difference between Veterans and Generation Xers and between Veterans and Generation Y cohorts was very similar.

The squared differences in Table 4.7 do not provide any absolute differences between the groups. Therefore, it cannot be said that the difference between Baby Boomers and Veterans (16.06) is twice that of the difference between Baby Boomers and Generation Xers (7.71) or that there are significant differences between the cohorts. All calculations are based on the variables from this study. Should the variables change then the value of the squared differences will also change. It is therefore the relative differences that are of interest (i.e., which cohorts are close together and which are further apart).

Table 4.7 Squared distance between groups from linear discriminant analysis using full data set

	Veteran	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y
Veteran	0.0000	16.0598	13.1495	14.7516
Baby Boomer	16.0598	0.0000	7.7100	12.7470
Generation X	13.1495	7.7100	0.0000	12.9845
Generation Y	14.7516	12.7470	12.9845	0.0000

Figure 4.1 Scatter plot of differences in discrimination between cohorts

Question (in order of magnitude of difference)

123
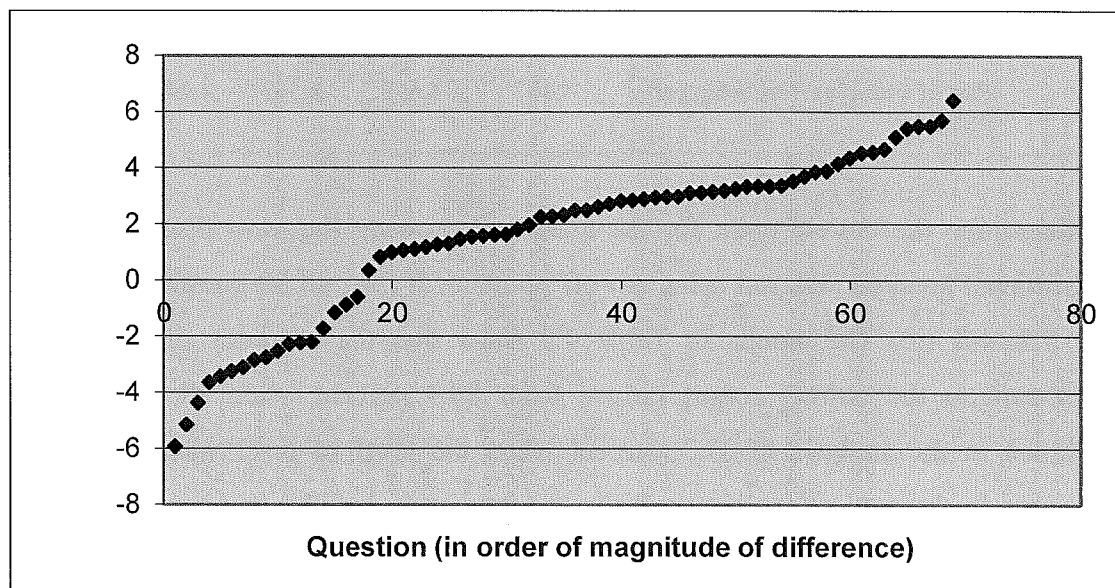
When investigating the linear discriminant function for the cohorts, a scatter plot of the difference in discrimination (i.e., the difference between the highest and lowest discrimination score for each construct) was undertaken to determine visually what questions showed the most and least discrimination. From the scatter plot in Figure 4.1 it was felt six questions evidenced little discrimination between how the cohorts answered the questions. These six questions are shown in Table 4.8. Hence, these questions did not help determine from a participants answer, what cohort the respondent belonged to.

Table 4.8 Constructs that provided the least discrimination on responses

Question number	Construct	Cohort				
		Veteran	Boomer	Gen X	Gen Y	Difference
3	Work allows freedom of lifestyle vs. Work controls lifestyle	7.119	6.672	6.489	6.699	0.63
7	Direct influence on income vs. Fixed income	0.654	0.447	0.346	1.028	0.682
33	Ability to assist others to achieve vs. No ability to assist others to achieve	0.751	0.777	1.495	0.529	0.966
50	Financial decisions vs. No financial decisions	1.332	1.119	1.254	1.894	0.775
55	Being CEO vs. Not being CEO	3.775	3.152	2.85	3.666	0.925
56	Part of a team vs. Not being part of a team	4.187	4.658	4.562	4.446	0.471

To determine the cut-off point for the questions showing the most discrimination, a discriminant analysis was run using cut-off points of 0 (i.e., all 69 questions), 1.0, 2.0, 3.0, 3.5 and 4.0. The results in Table 4.9 show that the accuracy of allocating a participant to the correct cohort ranged from 88.4 percent when all 69 questions remained in the analysis to 31.3 percent when the level of discrimination was 4.0 (resulting in three questions remaining in the analysis). A full summary classification for each of the linear discriminant analysis using the questions at each level of discrimination is provided in Appendix 12

Table 4.9 shows that the accuracy of allocating participants to the correct cohort when the results are cross-validated is considerably reduced. The difference in levels of accuracy, however, is more similar than when the results were not cross-validated. When all 69 questions were used in the analysis the accuracy was 38.4 percent. The highest level of discrimination (43%) was found when all questions with discrimination of 1.0 or more were included (a total of 64 questions). When looking at a discrimination level of 2.0, 3.0 and 3.5 it can be seen that there is very little difference in the cross validated results. It appears that using a discrimination level of 3.5 resulting in a questionnaire of nine questions would provide similar levels of accuracy in assigning participants to the correct cohort based on their answers to these questions than if a larger number of questions were used. The full summary classification for each of the linear discriminant analysis using cross-validation using the questions at each level of discrimination is provided in Appendix 13.

Table 4.9 Level of discrimination and accuracy of allocation to a cohort

Level of discrimination	Number of Questions in analysis	Number of participants in analysis	% of time accurately allocated to correct cohort	Cross validated results
0	69	138	88.4%	38.4%
1	64	142	88.7%	43.0%
2	33	153	59.5%	33.3%
3	17	158	47.5%	31.0%
3.5	9	160	41.2%	31.3%
4	3	160	31.3%	18.1%

Using a cut-off point of 3.5 would have resulted in a manageable questionnaire consisting of nine questions whilst still maintaining a similar level of predictive accuracy to that of using the larger 69 item questionnaire that was used in this study. The linear discriminant analysis summary classification shown in Figure 4.10 shows that 41.2 percent of the time a participant can be allocated to the correct cohort from the way they answer the nine questions generating the most discrimination on the questionnaire. This is in excess of the 25 percent accuracy level you would expect by pure chance.

Table 4.10 Linear discriminant analysis summary classification for questions with discrimination greater than 3.5

Put into group	True Group Veteran	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y
Veteran	14	11	9	6
Baby Boomer	7	18	11	1
Generation X	5	9	20	6
Generation Y	5	8	16	14
Total N	31	46	56	27
N correct	14	18	20	14
Proportion	0.452	0.391	0.357	0.519

N=160. N correct =66. Proportion correct =0.412

Table 4.11 Linear discriminant analysis summary classification using cross-validation for questions with discrimination greater than 3.5

Put into group	True Group Veteran	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y
Veteran	11	14	9	7
Baby Boomer	7	13	12	2
Generation X	7	11	18	10
Generation Y	6	8	17	8
Total N	31	46	56	27
N correct	11	13	18	8
Proportion	0.353	0.283	0.321	0.296

N=160. N correct =50. Proportion correct =0.313

If cross-validation, however, is used, the accuracy of allocating a person for whom the data has been collected and has been removed from the data set when forming the discriminant equations to the correct cohort reduces to 31.1 percent. The Veteran cohort remained the cohort with the most accuracy in correctly allocating to the right cohort. This result is also consistent with the results from the cross-validation on the full data set (refer to Table 4.5). The accuracy in correctly allocating to the right cohort for both Baby Boomers and Generation Y was little more than chance (i.e., 25%).

The squared difference between each of the four cohorts is shown in Table 4.12. The greatest difference between two cohorts occurred between the Veterans and the Generation Y cohorts suggesting they are the most dissimilar. When comparing to the complete data set (refer to Table 4.7) these two cohorts were found to have the second greatest difference between two cohorts.

Table 4.12 Squared distance between groups from linear discriminant analysis for questions with discrimination of greater than 3.5

	Veteran	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y
Veteran	0.00000	0.46994	0.84066	2.05216
Baby Boomer	0.46994	0.00000	0.53918	1.68637
Generation X	0.84066	0.53918	0.00000	0.59124
Generation Y	2.05216	1.68637	0.59124	0.00000

The closest difference between two cohorts was between the Veteran and the Baby Boomer cohorts suggesting these two cohorts were the most alike. However, when using the full data set (164 minus 26 incomplete questionnaires) these two cohorts were identified as having the greatest difference (i.e., the most dissimilar). Similar differences can be seen between the Baby Boomer and Generation X cohorts and the Generation X and Generation Y cohorts. It can also be seen that the magnitude of the differences is much smaller than the magnitude of the differences identified in Table 4.7.

The nine questions that were identified as having a discrimination difference of greater than 3.5 are shown in Table 4.13. (see Appendix 14 for the full list of the differences in discrimination). As expected little consistency was found between the nine constructs identified as providing the most discrimination and those that cohorts rated as their most important constructs in their ideal job (Table 4.2). In order to provide higher levels of discrimination at least one cohort would have had to rate the construct in question as less important than the other cohorts. The constructs identified as providing the most discrimination which were also rated in the top five by at least one cohort were *Opportunity for career progression, Enjoy the people I work with, Working in a caring environment* and *Gives me job satisfaction*. Given that the findings showed more

similarities between the cohorts than differences, little consistency between the most highly rated items and the items providing the most discrimination was expected (Murray, Toulson et al., 2011).

Table 4.13 Constructs that provided the most discrimination on responses

| Question number | Construct | Cohort | | | | |
		Veteran	Boomer	Gen X	Gen Y	Differences
26	Opportunity for career progression vs. No opportunity for career progression	2.90	1.66	2.66	-0.60	3.5
27	Provides opportunity for management experience vs. Little opportunity for management experience	0.78	-3.07	-2.70	-2.19	3.85
34	Face-to-face contact with people vs. Little face-to-face contact with people	-0.63	2.89	1.14	1.45	3.52
36	Enjoy the people I work with vs. Less social workplace	1.40	-2.87	-1.09	-2.60	4.27
41	Working in a caring environment (care about colleagues) vs. Not caring about colleagues	1.90	4.33	.59	6.51	5.92
44	Passionate about the job vs. its just a job	.74	-2.84	-1.38	-2.53	3.58
62	Gives me job satisfaction vs. Gives me no job satisfaction	6.62	10.19	8.74	9.97	3.57
66	Allows strategic planning and input vs. Follow someone else's strategic plan	-5.26	-1.74	-2.42	-2.59	3.52
68	Intellectually stimulating vs. Very routine	0.26	-0.09	-0.31	3.98	4.29

While the questions in Table 4.13 provided the most discrimination between each of the cohorts, the level of importance participants placed on each of the constructs in each of the nine questions was not able to be determined. The mean rating and standard deviation for each cohort on these nine questions is provided in Table 4.14. While these questions provide the most discrimination between the cohorts, the importance each cohort places on the constructs in each of these questions varies. Participants from all four cohorts rated *working in a caring environment* and *gives me job satisfaction*

between 'extremely important' and 'important'. In addition, three of the four cohorts rated *passionate about the job* (Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y), *intellectually stimulating* (Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y) and *enjoy the people I work with* (Veterans, Baby Boomers and Generation Y) between 'extremely important' and 'important'.

Table 4.14 Mean importance rating for each cohort on the 9 constructs (including SD)

Question Number	Construct	Cohort			
		Veteran	Boomer	Gen X	Gen Y
26	Opportunity for career progression vs. No opportunity for career progression	2.48 (0.98)	2.45 (0.90)	1.86 (0.98)	1.59 (0.73)
27	Provides opportunity for management experience vs. Little opportunity for management experience	3.06 (1.34)	2.74 (1.33)	2.45 (1.03)	2.34 (1.08)
34	Face-to-face contact with people vs. Little face-to-face contact with people	2.13 (1.24)	2.28 (1.23)	2.0 (0.89)	2.24 (1.27)
36	Enjoy the people I work with vs. Less social workplace	1.84 (0.80)	1.57 (0.62)	2.20 (0.60)	1.66 (0.90)
41	Working in a caring environment (care about colleagues) vs. Not caring about colleagues	1.53 (0.57)	1.64 (0.71)	1.84 (0.85)	1.59 (1.07)
44	Passionate about the job vs. its just a job	2.06 (0.72)	1.72 (0.79)	1.68 (0.74)	1.69 (0.97)
62	Gives me job satisfaction vs. Gives me no job satisfaction	1.47 (0.57)	1.40 (0.54)	1.36 (0.62)	1.55 (0.63)
66	Allows strategic planning and input vs. Follow someone else's strategic plan	2.71 (1.37)	2.70 (0.99)	2.79 (0.99)	2.69 (0.89)
68	Intellectually stimulating vs. Very routine	2.00 (0.50)	1.87 (0.82)	1.79 (0.62)	1.86 (0.77)

Participants from all four cohorts rated *allows strategic planning* and *face to face contact with people* as less important with mean ratings between 'important' and 'somewhat important'. In addition, three of the four cohorts (Baby Boomers, Generation

X and Generation Y) rated the construct provides *opportunity for management experience* between 'important' and 'somewhat important'.

Research Question 5 - Does eliminating participants from the cohort cusp result in better discrimination?

To determine whether removing participants from the cusp of the cohort cut-off dates would effect the results, participants with birth years one and two years either side of the cohort cut-off were removed from the analysis. Table 4.15 shows the number of participants remaining in each cohort after those born in the cups years are removed.

Table 4.15 Number of participants by cohort

Cohort	Full Cohort	Cohort minus 1 year	Cohort minus 2 years	Total reduction in participants
Veteran	32	25	19	13
Baby Boomer	47	41	37	10
Generation X	56	48	41	15
Generation Y	29	19	14	15
Total Participants	164	133	111	53

Eliminating participants whose birth years were one year either side of the original cut-off dates resulted in 31 participants (19%) being excluded from further analysis. Eliminating participants whose birth years were two years either side of the original cut-off dates resulted in 53 participants (32%) being excluded from further analysis. The greatest reduction in participants was seen in both the Generation X and Generation Y cohorts where 15 participants were excluded. Proportionally, however, the Generation Y cohort had the greatest reduction in participants dropping from 29 to 14 (52%) indicating that over half the participants in Generation Y cohort had birth years close to the cohort cut-off date.

Analysis was undertaken on the reduced data set with participants born within the two years either side of the cohort cut-off dates removed from the data set. Using linear discriminant analysis participants were allocated to the correct generational cohort 94.7 percent of the time (see Table 4.16). This means that when participants born two years

either side of the cohort cut-off dates were excluded from the data set, the proportion of participants correctly allocated to the correct cohort grouping increased from 88.4 percent to 94.7 percent. No misclassifications occurred in the Generation Y cohort (i.e., all Generation Y participants were correctly assigned to this category). Apart from one Baby Boomer participant who was classified as a Generation Y respondent based on his/her responses to the questionnaire, all other misclassifications were allocated to the cohort immediately before or after their correct cohort.

Table 4.16 Summary of classification from linear discriminant analysis using reduced data set (excluding participants 2 years either side of cohort cut-off date).

| Put into group | True Group | | | |
	Veteran	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y
Veteran	22	0	0	0
Baby Boomer	1	29	2	0
Generation X	0	2	42	0
Generation Y	0	1	0	14
Total N	23	32	44	14
N correct	22	29	42	14
Proportion	0.957	0.906	0.955	1.000

N=113. N correct =107. Proportion correct =0.947

The squared distance between the groups was also obtained for this reduced data set. The results of this analysis is outlined in Table 4.17 and shows that the range of square differences increased significantly when those participants that were within two years of the cohort cut-off date were excluded from the analysis. The squared differences ranged between 8.92 and 32.16. Results here indicate that the greatest difference between two groups is between the Veteran and Generation Y cohorts followed by the Generation X and Generation Y cohorts. This differs from the results on the full data set (refer to Table 4.7) where the biggest difference is between the Veteran and Baby Boomer cohorts followed by the Veteran and Generation Y cohorts. The closest difference between two cohorts remained the Baby Boomer and Generation X cohorts.

However, when cross-validation was undertaken, the accuracy of allocating the correct generational cohort to the correct cohort grouping reduced to 32.7 percent. The results

of the cross-validation are shown in Table 4.18. This is less than the 38.4 percent that was obtained when using the full data set (refer to Table 4.6). This however, still exceeds chance where you would expect to at least predict the correct cohort 25 percent of the time. The small sample sizes in the Veteran and Generation Y cohorts that resulted from the removal of participants from the cusp years may have impacted on these results.

Table 4.17 Squared distance between groups from linear discriminant analysis using reduced data set (2 years either side of cohort cut-off date)

	Veteran	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y
Veteran	0.0000	18.1398	20.3376	32.1566
Baby Boomer	18.1398	0.0000	8.9205	26.0520
Generation X	20.3376	8.9205	0.0000	31.2252
Generation Y	32.1566	26.0520	31.2252	0.0000

Table 4.18 Linear discriminant analysis summary of classification using cross-validation (excluding participants 2 years either side of the cohort cut-off date)

Put into group	True Group Veteran	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y
Veteran	8	7	5	4
Baby Boomer	6	9	17	4
Generation X	5	11	17	3
Generation Y	4	5	5	3
Total N	23	32	44	14
N correct	8	9	17	3
Proportion	0.348	0.281	0.386	0.214

N=113. N correct =37. Proportion correct =0.327

Summary

The findings identified a number of constructs rated as important by each generational cohort (i.e., what they valued in their ideal job). A number of constructs thus identified were consistent with depictions in the popular literature and empirical studies. Baby

Boomers identified it is important that they *enjoy the people they work with*, Generation X rated *quality of life* as important and Generation Y identified *opportunity to learn*, *supportive team* and *career progression* as important. A number of constructs identified in this study were not consistent with the popular literature and empirical studies. Veterans, for instance, were identified as rating a *supportive manager*, *good rapport with colleagues* and *working in a caring environment* as important. Baby Boomers identified *quality of life*, *working in a supportive team*, *job satisfaction* and *job fulfilment* as important to them in their ideal job. Generation X identified *job fulfilment*, *job satisfaction*, *having a good supportive manager* and *good rapport with colleagues* as important. Generation Y identified *job satisfaction*, *opportunity to use their skills*, *guaranteed income* and *working in a caring environment* as important in their ideal job.

When looking at observations based on qualitative rankings identified a number of generational differences. However, the findings indicated more generational cohort similarities than differences. When looking beyond simple qualitative rankings, linear discriminant analysis indicated that patterns of responding by participants predicted which cohort they were from higher than chance (>25%) indicating there were some overall generational cohort differences. These differences were, however, not strong. Whilst there are similarities in constructs each cohort identified as important, there are differences in the overall pattern of responding by each cohort. In addition, gender differences were also identified indicating within cohort heterogeneity.

Removal of participants from the cusp of generations was found to increase the discrimination between cohorts (i.e., increased the accuracy by which participants were allocated to the correct cohort based on their pattern of responding) lending weight to the concept that generational cohorts are linear rather than categorical.

Chapter 5   Discussion

This thesis set out to answer the questions outlined in Chapter 2 (to determine what the characteristics of the four generational cohorts were, whether there were any differences between them and whether the characteristics identified with each cohort in the popular literature were valid). This chapter discusses the results in relation to each of the research questions and goes on to discuss the implications for human resource management. The contribution this thesis makes to the body of knowledge is outlined along with the limitations of this study and possibilities for future research. The final conclusions are then drawn in Chapter 6.

Research Question 1 - What do the generational cohorts value in a job?

The study identified constructs that each cohort rated as most important to them in their ideal job. These constructs are summarized in Table 4.2. The study found that Veterans value a good supportive manager, a job that gives them satisfaction and provides job fulfilment and working in a caring environment where they have a good rapport with colleagues. Baby Boomers were found to value a job that gives them satisfaction and provides job fulfilment and that allows quality of life and where they work in a supportive team and enjoy the people they work with. Generation X value a job that gives them satisfaction and provides fulfilment, allows quality of life, and where they have a good supportive manager and good rapport with colleagues. Finally, Generation Y value the opportunity to learn, career progression, to use their skills, job satisfaction, a supportive team, guaranteed income and to work in a caring environment.

These constructs are simply those constructs with the highest mean for each cohort. Other constructs were also identified as important by each cohort and other constructs identified in Table 4.2 simply represent those that were identified as the *most* important by each cohort based on the responses of the participants in this study.

The rating scale used in the questionnaire was an ordinal scale. Ordinal measurements describe order, but not relative size of degree of difference between the items measured. The numbers that were assigned to the ratings in this scale give the level of importance

of the construct under investigation. No comment can be made, therefore, in relation to the size of the difference between ratings, only that one construct was rated more highly than another. It should be noted, therefore, that findings simply identify the constructs each cohort identified as most important to them in their ideal job.

Research Question 2 - Do the findings support the depiction of the generational cohorts in the popular literature and empirical studies?

The findings of this study offer only limited support for the depiction of the characteristics of each generational cohort in the popular literature and from empirical studies. This study identified that all cohorts rated the construct *gives me job satisfaction* as one of their most important their ideal job. This was the only construct rated in the highest rated constructs (shown in Table 4.2) by all cohorts. Therefore, the results are unable to tell us what gives each generational cohort satisfaction, only that participants' from each cohort place a high level of importance on having job satisfaction in their ideal job. However, what gives one person job satisfaction may not necessarily give another person job satisfaction. While the popular literature discusses what these generational cohorts seek in a job, none of the empirical studies reviewed investigated job satisfaction.

Job fulfilment was rated as one of the most important constructs by Veterans, Baby Boomers and Generation X. The finding in relation to Baby Boomers is consistent with the popular literature. Baby Boomers are depicted as the first generation to use work as self-fulfilment (Family Work Institute, 2002) and expect work to provide meaning (Walker Smith and Clurman, 2007). Generation Y did not rate job fulfilment as one of their most important constructs which is also consistent with their depiction in the popular literature. While Generation Y is depicted as seeking meaningful work (Aldisert, 2002) they are also depicted as seeing work as a means of supporting their 'real life' (Sheahan, 2005). The finding with respect to Veterans and Generation X did not support the depiction in the popular literature. The depiction of both Veterans and Generation X does not suggest that either generational cohort seeks job fulfilment. However, Generation X are depicted as seeking fun in the workplace and moving on

when a job is no longer fun (Tulgan, 1995). None of the empirical studies reviewed investigated job fulfilment.

Both Baby Boomers and Generation X in this study were found to place importance on wanting quality of life (work/life balance). The findings with respect to Generation X are consistent with their depiction in the popular literature (Conger, 1997; Kupperschmidt, 2000a; Orme, 2004; Sweoberg, 2001) and the findings in a number of empirical studies. Greenwood *et al.* (2008) identified that Generation X sought work-life balance and Mattis *et al.* (2004) found that Generation X rated personal and family commitments more highly than work commitments and sought flexible work arrangements. Gursoy *et al.* (2008) and Lub *et al.* (2012) found work/life was more important to Generation X than to Baby Boomers and Generation Y. Contrary to the depiction in the popular press Baby Boomers also placed a high importance on wanting quality of life. The popular literature depicts Baby Boomers as 'workaholics' (Hall and Richter, 1990) and living by the motto 'live to work' (Sweoberg, 2001). A number of empirical studies also supported this depiction. Gursoy *et al.* (2008) and Smola and Sutton (2002) found that Baby Boomers worked to live and felt that work should be one of the most important parts of a person's life. However, it cannot be ruled out that this result may have been due to participant's life or career-stage.

The results of this study identified that Generation Y did not rate wanting *quality of life* as one of their most important constructs in their 'ideal job'. While this finding did not support the depiction in the popular literature of Generation Y expecting a healthy balance between their personal and professional life (Boyett, Boyett, Hensen, and Spirgi-Herbert, 2001; Esponoza, Ukleja, and Rusch, 2010; Pendergast, 2010; Richardson, 2010), it did support the findings from a number of empirical studies. Treuren (2008) and Treuren and Anderson (2010) that found Generation Y ranked *flexible work arrangements* and *work/life balance* lower than Generation X and Baby Boomers. However, a number of studies found that Generation Y valued *leisure* as the most important work value (Real et al 2010; Cogin, 2012). Sajjadi *et al.* (2012) also found that Generation Y placed more significance on *free time* and seeking reasonable *work/life balance* than preceding generations.

This study identified that Veterans and Generation X rated *good supportive manager* as one of their most important constructs. The review of the popular literature and empirical studies did not identify any studies that addressed generational differences with respect to a *good supportive manager*. The popular literature depicts Generation X as being cynical towards management and seeking autonomy (Coupland, 1991). However, they are also depicted as seeking competent, credible managers that coach and mentor rather than command and micro-manage. It is unclear from the results as to whether Generation X would constitute this as a *good supportive manager* or not. The popular literature depicts Veterans accepting the traditional executive decision-making command model of management (Conger, 1997; King, 2001) with fairness provided by consistently applying the rules to everyone (Erickson, 2008; 2010). Perhaps Veterans see a *good supportive manager* as one who operates in this style of management and consistently applies the rules to everyone.

Working in a *supportive team* was rated highly by both Baby Boomers and Generation Y participants. This finding is consistent with the depiction of both cohorts in the popular literature. Here Baby Boomers are depicted as being relationship-focused, using their keen appreciation for democracy and teamwork to form task-forces to accomplish projects and goals, but not at the expense of relationships (Weston, 2001; Hatfield, 2002). The popular literature depicts Generation Y as placing emphasis on working, belonging to and participating in teams (Orrick, 2008; Salkowitz, 2008). The qualitative study by Gursoy *et al.* (2008) of 91 hospitality workers also supports this depiction of Generation Y, finding that this cohort likes teamwork. However, the findings from a number of empirical studies did not support both the findings of this study and the depiction of these cohorts in the popular literature. Jurkeiwicz and Brown (1998) and Jurkeiwicz (2000) did not identify any differences on the motivational factor *working as part of a team*.

Having *good rapport with colleagues* was rated highly by both Veterans and Generation X, *working in a caring environment* was rated highly by Veterans and Generation Y and *enjoying the people I work with* was rated highly by Baby Boomers. It can be argued that *good rapport with colleagues* and *enjoying the people I work with* are similar values resulting in all generational cohorts valuing getting along with the people they work with. The review of the popular literature did not suggest that Veterans sought

good rapport with colleagues or *working in a caring environment*. The finding that Baby Boomers place importance *on enjoying the people they work* with is consistent with the popular literature that depicts them as being relationship-focussed (Hatfield, 2002; Weston, 2001). In addition, the finding that Generation Y place importance on *working in a caring environment* is consistent with the popular literature where they are depicted as placing emphasis on belonging (Orrick, 2008; Salkowitz, 2008) and seeking respect and appreciation (Sujanksy and Ferri-Reed, 2009) as well as honest open feedback and mentoring (Fenn, 2010). Little support for the findings was found from the empirical studies reviewed. Twenge (2010) found no differences between Baby Boomers and Generation X with respect to the values they place on work that allows social interaction. Lyons *et al.* (2007), Real *et al.* (2010) and Hansen and Leuty (2012) found that Generation X and Generation Y place greater importance on co-workers than Veterans and Baby Boomers.

Generation Y also rated the *opportunity to learn* and the *opportunity for career progression* in their most highly rated questions (constructs). This is consistent with the depiction of Generation Y in the popular literature where they are depicted as avoiding work that doesn't provide learning and growth (Rhule, 2004; Zemke, 2001) and as seeking to move up the corporate ladder quickly (Esponoza et al, 2010). The findings are also consistent with those of Ng *et al.* (2010), De Hauw and De Vos (2010) and Sajjadi *et al.* (2012). Ng *et al.* (2010) found Generation Y identified the *opportunity for advancement* as a top priority and that they had expectations for rapid promotions and pay increases expecting promotions in the first 18 months of their first job. De Hauw and De Vos (2010) found Generation Y had high expectations for personal career development and Sajjadi *et al.* (2012) found Generation Y had strong inclination for rapid career advancement. Unexpectedly Generation X did not rate the opportunity to learn and the opportunity for career progression in their most highly rated questions. The popular literature depicts Generation X as seeking skill advancement, growth and experience and career-broadening opportunities (Orme, 2004). The findings from two previous empirical studies also identified that Generation X rate career advancement and as important (Lub et al., 2012; Smola & Sutton, 2002).

The finding in the current study, that Generation Y rated the *opportunity to learn* as important supports the findings by Terjesen *et al.* (2007) where it was identified that

one of the five most important organisational attributes for Generation Y is that organizations invest heavily in training and development of their employees. The results also support the findings by Lester *et al.* (2012) in their study of 263 employees that found Generation Y rate continuous learning higher than Generation X. It cannot be ruled out that the results with respect to opportunity to learn and the opportunity for career progression in the current study are not due to career-stage or life-stage.

Generation Y rated the *opportunity to use my skills* as one of their most important. This finding is consistent with the depiction of Generation Y in the popular literature where they are seen as wanting to contribute and collaborate with decision-makers from the beginning (Zemke, 2001). However, the researcher did not find any support for this finding in the empirical studies reviewed. Contrary to the depiction in the popular literature, the study by Jurkiewicz and Brown (1998) found that when compared to Generation X, Veterans felt their special attributes were under-valued. It cannot be ruled out that these findings in the current study were as a result of career-stage or age.

Finally Generation Y also rated guaranteed income as one of their most important. The review of both the popular literature and empirical studies found no evidence that Generation Y had a preference for *guaranteed income* over *at risk income*. The popular literature depicts Generation Y as having high expectations of pay and conditions (Richardson, 2010) and getting promotions based on merit rather than longevity (Sujansky and Ferri-Reed, 2009). It cannot be ruled out that these results may have been due to life-stage or career-stage.

Research Question 3 - Gender differences in what cohorts value in a job

Strong support was found for heterogeneity within cohorts with respect to gender. When identifying the questions (constructs) that were rated as most important for each cohort by gender the findings indicated that Veteran male and female participants only had one construct that they both rated as most important (*provides job fulfilment*) as did Baby Boomer male and female participants (*gives me job satisfaction*).

When identifying the questions (constructs) that were rated as most important for each cohort by gender the findings indicated that Generation X male and female participants had two constructs that they rated as most important (*allows quality of life* and *gives me job satisfaction*). Generation Y also had two constructs that were rated as most important by both male and female participants (*supportive team* and *opportunity to learn*).

The findings are consistent with the findings of Burke (1994), McNeese-Smith and Crook (2003), Morgan and Ribbens (2006) and Tergensen *et al.* (2007) all found support for heterogeneity within cohorts. The findings by Denecker et al. (2008) suggest that heterogeneity within generational cohorts may be as much as between them. Ng *et al.* (2010) and Hansen and Leuty (2012) also found support for heterogeneity within cohorts. In particular Burke (1994), Morgan and Ribbens (2006), Tergesen *et al.* (2007) and Hansen and Leuty (2012) all found differences based on gender.

Research Question 4 - Generational differences in what cohorts value in a job

Limited support was found for the assertion that there are differences between what the different cohorts identified as important (i.e., what they value) in their 'ideal job'. When identifying the constructs rated as most important by cohort only 12 constructs were identified by the four cohorts indicating 55 percent overlap between what they rated as important to them in their ideal job. In fact only two cohorts had a construct that was unique to them. Baby Boomers were the only cohort to identify *enjoy the people I work with* as one of their most important constructs. Generation Y was the only cohort to identify *opportunity to learn, opportunity to use my skills, opportunity for career progression* and *guaranteed income* in their most important constructs. Veterans had four constructs in common with Generation X and two constructs in common with both Generation X and Generation Y.

Baby Boomers had three constructs in common with Generation X and two constructs in common with Generation Y. Generation X and Generation Y had only one construct in common. The findings indicate that Veterans and Generation X have the most values in common and Generation X and Generation Y have the least in common. The

findings showed that while there are some differences in the constructs identified as most important by each cohort and the order of the ranking of each construct, there were considerable similarities in what each cohort identified as important in their ideal job.

The meanings ascribed to each construct by each cohort may be different. For example *gives me job satisfaction* was rated as one of the most important constructs by all four cohorts. However, it is not known what comprises job satisfaction for each generational cohort, only that they value a job that gives them satisfaction. In addition, having a supportive manager was rated as one of the most important constructs by both Veterans and Generation X. For Veterans this may mean having someone that leaves them to get on with the job and provide feedback and support once or twice a year but for someone from Generation Y it might mean their manager providing regular feedback along with coaching and mentoring and genuinely caring about their development. So while a number of generational cohorts may have rated different constructs with similar levels of importance, what they expect in the workplace or the behaviours that manifest as a result may be quite different.

While the discussion above has focused on the constructs that were rated as most important (i.e., those with the highest scores), the study did not ask participants to rank the importance of one construct over another. Therefore, participants could have rated all 69 questions as extremely important if they so wished. As a result no comment can be made as to whether one question was ranked as more important than another only that it was rated more highly than another.

As discussed in Chapter 4 linear discriminant analysis was undertaken to determine whether group membership could be determined by the way in which a participant answered the questionnaire. If it could be predicted what generational cohort participants are from based on their pattern of responding to the questionnaire then it would suggest that there are generational differences in what they value in their ideal job. The results identified six questions as having little discrimination (these were outlined in Table 4.8). While the response by each cohort identifies slight differences in the average response for these questions, the discriminant analysis shows these questions show very little discrimination between each of the cohort's answers. These included *work allows freedom of lifestyle, direct influence on income, ability to assist*

others to achieve, financial decisions, part of a team and *being CEO*. The inclusion of these questions added little or no value in discriminating between the cohorts.

Although these questions provide little in the way of discriminating ability between cohorts, it is worth noting the level of importance each cohort placed on these constructs. None of the constructs identified as being of little discrimination were selected as being in the most important group by any of the cohorts. All cohorts rated being part of a team, having the ability to assist other to achieve and doing work that allows freedom of lifestyle as 'important'. All cohorts rated work where you get to make financial decisions and having a direct influence on income as 'somewhat important'. All cohorts identified that they had no preference for a role where they were the CEO or for roles where they were not the CEO. All cohorts valued work that allows freedom of lifestyle, being part of a team and to achieve and to a slightly lesser degree the ability to have a direct influence on income and the ability to make financial decisions.

Only nine of the 69 questions were identified as giving reasonable discrimination between the four cohorts. These included opportunity for career progression opportunity for management experience, face to face contact with people, enjoy the people I work with, working in a caring environment, passionate about the job, gives job satisfaction, allows strategic planning and input and is intellectually stimulating. The fact that only nine out of the 69 questions (13%) provided a level of discrimination supports the hypothesis that there are more similarities between the generational cohorts than differences.

Little consistency was found between the nine constructs identified as providing the most discrimination between cohorts and the constructs the cohorts rated as most important to them in their 'ideal job'. The three questions in common were question 36 (*Enjoy the people I work with vs. Less social workplace*), question 42 (*Good rapport with colleagues vs. Difficult relationships*) and question 63 (*Provides job fulfilment vs. Doesn't provide job fulfilment*). Given that the findings showed more similarities between the cohorts than difference, little consistency between the most highly rated questions and the questions providing the most discrimination was expected.

A shortened version of the questionnaire may prove useful for future academic research. A shorter questionnaire may help to increase organisational participation and participant response rates as a result of the reduced time commitment to complete.

Research Question 5 - The impact of removing the cusp years

The impact of excluding participants from the cusp years (two years either side of the cohort cut-off date) using discriminant analysis the predictive accuracy of allocating a participant to the correct category increased from 88.4 percent to 94.7 percent.

This increased accuracy supports the notion that the cut-off points between the cohorts are somewhat arbitrary. Whilst this thesis used specific cut-off dates for the purpose of the research, in reality being born for example on the 31st December 1982 (i.e., Generation X) will not make you vastly different from someone born on 1st January 1983 (i.e., Generation Y). Thus, the cut-off points between each of the cohorts can be viewed as guidelines for when one cohort ends and another begins. As a result the characteristics that describe each cohort are more likely to be representative of its members who are born nearer the middle of the birth years than those born near the cusp.

When the discriminant analysis was cross-validated the predictive capability reduced greatly. The results showed that a person would only be allocated to the correct category 32.7 percent of the time. This is greater than chance where you would expect at least 25 percent of people to be allocated to the correct category. Support was therefore found for the assertion that cohorts are most distinct in the middle and less distinct at the edges. This finding supports the assertion that generational cohorts are linear rather than categorical in nature (Sessa et al., 2007; Twenge & Campbell, 2008; Twenge et al., 2010).

Implications for human resource management

A major implication this study has for human resource management (HRM) is that organisations should be wary of thinking the descriptions of each of the generational cohorts portrayed in the popular literature are a true reflection of reality (Murray, Legg, & Toulson, 2010). In today's multi-generational workplace the better we are able to

understand the differences and similarities of each generational cohort in employment and what motivates them, the better we will be able to tap those motivators and gain the best from employees (Murray et al., 2010). Increased knowledge and understanding will aid communication, improve employee engagement, increase productivity and ultimately improve the bottom line.

At this point there is little empirical evidence to suggest that generational differences are prominent within organisations. Nonetheless, there is potential for the mere perception of generational differences to cause damage in the workplace (DeMeuse and Mlodzik 2010). However, employee's currently live and work within the context of these stereotypes which are attached to their generational cohort. Managers who possess stereotypes of generational cohorts, whether accurate or not, may unknowingly create factions with an organisation. As with other stereotypes, managers may consciously or unconsciously adopt attitudes, behaviours and expectations based on sweeping generalisations rather than reality. As manager's behaviours influence their peers and direct reports, they perpetuate inaccuracies in their thinking.

By providing perspectives on the similarities and differences between the generational cohorts, this thesis has provided insight into each of the generational cohorts and what they value in a job. This study has gone some way to providing a better understanding of the differences and similarities of the generational cohorts in the New Zealand workplace, however, no panacea guaranteeing the answer of how to perfectly manage each cohort can be suggested (Murray et al., 2010). If there are more similarities than differences between the cohorts, the trend toward designing HR programmes to specifically target generational cohorts is unnecessarily skewed toward a circumstance that only exists in the popular media (Jurkiewicz and Brown, 1998).

While this study identified many similarities between the cohorts in what they wanted in a job (in addition to several differences) it is postulated that the way these are manifest in the organisation in behaviours and outcomes may be different (Murray et al., 2010). Although having a *supportive manager* was identified as important by three of the generational cohorts in this study what each of these cohorts sees this being could be quite different. Therefore, what may differ between the cohorts is how these similar values manifest themselves in the workplace (Murray, Legg, & Toulson, 2011; Murray,

Toulson et al., 2011). Deal (2007) highlights that the different generational cohorts have similar attitudes towards a wide range of issues but that they just have different ways of expressing them.

This study suggests that human resource management strategies based on the assumptions of generational differences may, at best, be misguided and at worst, detrimental to the organisation. Given the perceptions of a widening generation gap and generational conflict portrayed in the popular literature but not supported in both this study and a growing number of other empirical studies, overcoming these false stereotypes will be a challenge facing HR practitioners and organisations for some time to come.

Changes in attitudes and behaviours in the workplace may be due to generational shifts rather than generational cohort differences. Savvy organisations will be able to figure out when generational shifts are large enough to warrant changes in policies and practices for employees of all generations and which ones they should be aware of but not put resources towards addressing (Deal et al. 2010). Levinson (2010) focuses on whether generational differences in attitudes and life choices get translated into behavioural differences that in turn lead to substantially different work outcomes.

The findings of this current study are a useful starting point for discussion but managers must remember to manage people from these generational cohorts as individuals (Sujansky & Ferri-Reed, 2009). The findings of this study support the suggestion that managers should remember to focus on individual differences rather than relying on generational stereotypes, which appear to not be as prevalent as the existing popular literature suggests. For example, the portrayal of Generation Y in the literature as very different to preceding generations may really be 'sheep in wolves' clothing (Murray, Legg et al., 2011). According to Perryer and Jordan (2008, p42) *managers should be cautious about ascribing different value sets or potential motivators to employees based simply on their generational cohort. Ultimately every employee is different, and needs to be treated as an individual if employee commitment and employee output is to be maximized.*

Given the plethora of popular literature out there, however, proclaiming generational differences and reinforcing the generational stereotypes, managers and employees may consciously or unconsciously adopt attitudes, behaviours, or decisions based on these sweeping generalizations rather than reality. Weston (2001) cautions against stereotyping individuals based on generational values and characteristics as this can lead to self-fulfilling expectations. Basing management actions on popular stereotypes of generational differences may appropriately be characterised as 'managing by myth' (Davis et al., 2006). Stereotypes of generations are just that, stereotypes, and as such are as accurate and applicable as any stereotype (Deal, Altman, & Rogelberg, 2010). According to Weston (2001) the challenge for managers is to acknowledge the inherent differences in generations without approaching individuals with preconceived biases.

The findings of this study, consistent with that of Davis *et al.* (2006) provide strong caution that some (or much) of the guidance offered in books and articles in the popular press may represent little more than overly simplistic views, sweeping generalisations and unverifiable advice. Generation-based stereotypes held by managers also have the potential to generate perceptions of injustice and create divisiveness in organisations (Davis et al. 2006). Alwin (1998; p54) noted the tendency for *'generational myths' to become infused in our consciousness and become part of the fabric of social knowledge and belief'*. Perceived inequities could create divisiveness and conflict between members of the generational groups. It is strange that stereotypes of people of different generations are so commonly accepted when stereotypes based on other demographic categories e.g., race and gender, are so much less acceptable (Deal et al., 2010). Just because stereotypes are currently socially acceptable does not mean that they are accurate (Deal et al., 2010) or will continue to be acceptable in the future.

While there is merit in understanding the differences between the generational cohorts, organisations must not lose sight of the fact that there is a growing body of empirical evidence to suggest that there is more heterogeneity within generational cohorts than between cohorts. Consistent with the findings of Parry and Urwin (2011) the finding of this study show that a convincing case for consideration of generational cohort as an additional distinguishing factor for diversity management has yet to be made. There can be no substitute for managers engaging with employees individually to understand their

values (Murray et al., 2010) and managers should also try to treat employees as individuals and not just members of their generation (Twenge 2010).

The findings of this study are consistent with Kowske *et al.* (2010) whose principal finding was that generational effect sizes were small, which suggests generations are more similar than different.

Contribution of this thesis

This thesis contributes to the growing body of knowledge exploring what the four generational cohorts (Veterans, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y) value in their ideal job in the New Zealand context. This thesis's strength was that it did not rely on preconceived ideas or characteristics purporting to belong to each generational cohort. Instead the generational members generated their own constructs of what was important to them in a job.

Another contribution of this thesis is the development of a sound psychometric model for researching generational cohorts, a questionnaire based on the experiences and views of the cohorts that measures the differences between these cohorts. This model warrants further testing on much larger samples that are more representative of the New Zealand workforce.

There is little, or contradictory, empirical evidence for generational differences in work values. This thesis provides valuable insight into what the different generational cohorts identify as important to them (i.e., what they value) in their 'ideal job', thereby, adding to the body of empirical research. The findings from thesis challenge the popular literatures depiction of generational cohorts and identified that while there are some differences between the cohorts there are more similarities than differences. This then raises the possibility that there may be more heterogeneity within generational cohorts than between them.

The pace of change and demographic shifts within the New Zealand population impact the four generations of workers and will continue to impact upon the workplace in the future. This thesis demonstrates the dangers, particularly in practical management, of

stereotyping with respect to cohort membership and differences that have been so eloquently argued in the literature, so far as practical Human Resource Management is concerned. Thus this thesis has contributed to the body of applied HRM knowledge as well, by demonstrating empirically the danger of popular attitudes towards people in organisations which has implications managers and HR practitioners in how they manage staff across the generations now and in the future.

Limitations of this study

While there was an attempt to obtain participants from throughout New Zealand, the majority of participants were from the lower North Island (predominantly Wellington and Palmerston North). The values and attitudes of employees living in Wellington, New Zealand's capital city which is made up largely of government departments, may have been different to those participants living in Auckland (New Zealand's largest city), the South Island or in small town rural New Zealand. The inclusion of Palmerston North, whilst not a small rural town, mitigates to some extent the limitation of using predominantly Wellington-based organisations / participants.

It should be noted that the study had a relatively small sample size (N=164). Generalizations to the New Zealand population as a whole based on such a small sample size are limited. The researcher recommends that a larger sample be studied to determine whether the conclusions found in this study remain stable and therefore, adapted to the rest of the population. In addition, while the number of Veteran and Generation Y participants reflected the proportion in the workforce, a larger or more controlled sample might have yielded enough respondents in those categories to provide richer information for comparisons. These issues therefore, raise concerns about the generalizability of the results to the New Zealand workforce as a whole.

At the time the data was collected many Veterans had exited the workforce and many Generation Y were yet to enter the workforce. Participants in from the Veteran cohort consisted of only those at the tail end of the cohort and participants from the Generation Y cohort consisted only of those at the beginning of the cohort. Therefore, as suggested by Kowske *et al.* (2010) the participants from these cohorts cannot adequately represent the entire generation in terms of what they value in a job. The study can only reflect the

perspectives of those members of the different generational cohorts in the workplace (i.e., those people who were in employment) at the time the data was collected. Many Veterans had left the workforce and many Generation Y were yet to enter the workforce at the time the data was collected.

There was an attempt to have the industry categories that were representative of the New Zealand workforce. While the 1996 Australia and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (New Zealand Use Version) was used as a basis for obtaining representativeness of the New Zealand workforce, several categories were excluded and thus not sampled. Since the repertory grid study was being conducted in Wellington, New Zealand, it was decided to exclude Agriculture; Forestry and Fishing; Mining; Manufacturing; Electricity; Gas and Water supply and Construction because it was felt that these industries were not representative on the Wellington workforce. Since consistency was sought between repertory grid study and the main study, the same industry classifications were excluded in the main study. As a result, almost one third of the workforce was excluded from the target population. Therefore, the findings from this study cannot be generalized to the New Zealand workforce as a whole.

Another limitation of this study is its use of a questionnaire. Questionnaires are also subject to the vagueness and inaccuracies that occur with the use of language (Rippin, 1996). People define and interpret words differently (Gael, 1988; Labaw, 1980; Stewart, 1988) and misunderstandings are unable to be corrected since the researcher is not present (Gillham, 2000). Whilst it is anticipated that misunderstandings in this study were reduced since the use of the repertory grid in the development of the questionnaire enabled collection of constructs using the participant's own words, differences in understanding cannot be ruled out. It can, furthermore, not be determined if there is measurement equivalence across items for all the generations studied. Meriac *et al.* (2010) identified that several dimensions on the scale in their study were not equivalent across cohorts, indicating that item content may not operate in the same manner across groups. Direct examinations of mean differences might be misleading because generational cohorts may be interpreting scales differently (Meriac et al., 2010). According to Deal *et al.* (2010), to assume that survey items mean the same thing to all respondents without demonstrating measurement equivalence can result in faulty conclusions. This possibility was somewhat minimized by the use of the repertory grid

technique to develop the questionnaire using participants' own words. However, the effect of the low number of constructs generated by Generation Y in the repertory grid interviews may have been reduced by the administration of the questionnaire to a new group of Generation Y participants. In addition people from different points in the lifecycle or from different socio-cultural backgrounds might attribute different meanings to the varying questions (Treuren and Anderson, 2010).

Any discussion on the effects of a single variable such as generational status inherently represents oversimplification (Strutton et al., 1997). Like measures of central tendency a generational cohort approach may illuminate characteristics of the group, but it also obscures the idiographic characteristics of the individual. Hence it must be remembered that whilst this thesis provides increased understanding of generational cohorts, it is inadequate for understanding any specific individual.

This study did not set out to identify what role, if any, variables such as race and ethnicity, position in the organisation, socio-economic status had on each generational cohorts values and attitudes. The effects of gender were however, identified and have been discussed earlier in this chapter. Eskilson and Wiley (1999) investigated these variables finding variation along gender, race, and social class lines although not always the ones hypothesized on the basis of reasoning and previous research. As suggested by Kowske *et al.* (2010) the findings do not extend to other countries and cultures, which may have different generational definitions. Future research should therefore, take into consideration what impact other dimensions of diversity within the generational cohorts may have on their values, attitudes and characteristics.

The use of a 7-point scale with dichotomous anchors on each end of the rating scale appears not to have been the most effective rating scale. The fact that only three questions had an average rating of 4.0 or more indicated that few participants used the 'important' and 'very important' ratings on the right hand side of the scale, so these anchors added little value. Further research is warranted using only the left hand anchor point on the scale. The use of a 7-point rating scale where 1 is 'unimportant' and 7 is 'extremely important' could possibly enable more sensitivity of the scale and consequently might lead to greater discrimination.

A question the research methodology did not seek to address was why different generational cohorts differ in valued attributes and behaviours. The study looked at what the different generational cohorts valued in their 'ideal job' but not how these values translated into behaviours in the workplace. It should also be noted that although the questionnaire required participants to rate how important each construct in each question is to them it does not force participants to rate one construct over another. In fact, a participant could rate all questions as 'extremely important'. Further research that identifies how participants rate each construct in relation to each other would be of value.

There is still important research to be done in the area of what generational cohort's value in a job. The recruiting and retention of high quality personnel is a continuing challenge that deserves further research attention (Young et al., 2006).

Future research

A number of avenues for future research have been identified as a result of the findings of this study. these include asking participants to rank constructs by their importance, use of another rating scale in the questionnaire, investigation of whether what the different cohorts identify as important to them in a job translate into different behaviour in the workplace

There would be considerable value in future research in asking participants to rank their top five constructs in order of importance to them in a job. Furthermore, there may be aspects of a job that must be present for an individual to take the role (i.e., non negotiable aspects that if they are not present then the individual will not take the job). It would be valuable to identify if there are differences in these non negotiable aspects between the four cohorts. In addition, exclusion of the left hand side of the scale and introduction of a new 7-point rating scale could possibly lead to more discrimination being identified.

The current study did not seek to investigate how what each cohort identifies in their 'ideal job' translates to behaviours in the workplace. Knowing how (if at all) what each

cohort identifies as important in their ideal job translates to behaviours in the workplace would be of value to both academic researchers and HRM practitioners.

Given the methodological complexities presented by generational differences such as the interdependencies of age, period and career-stage, future research should strive to work with data in which age, period and career-stage can be controlled (Kowske et al., 2010). Controlling for age by concentrating on similar ages within each generation as Twenge's (2000) work has done is one such approach. More statistical approach for defining generational cohorts – similar to that used by Egri and Ralson (2004) and Hess and Jepsen (2009) should be employed. According to Hess and Jepsen (2009), more robust methods for defining generational cohort cut-offs would also be beneficial.

Further research to determine whether these results could be replicated with blue-collar workers is warranted. Appelbaum *et al.* (2005) investigated generational differences in a railway company, however, to date the majority of the popular and empirical research is based on white-collar workers or university students. It is therefore unknown whether these generational cohort characteristics apply to blue-collar workers or whether this applies only to white-collar workers. This raises the question of whether the expectations and ability to make choices based on job preference differ between blue- and white-collar workers. Generational cohort theory suggests that there will be no differences between blue-collar and white-collar employees as generational personality determines generational cohort differences. However, there is not current evidence to support this assertion.

In relation to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, blue-collar workers may have little choice but to select jobs that meet their needs at the bottom of the pyramid such as psychological and safety needs (food, water, sleep, safety and security of employment) and therefore choose jobs predominantly on job security and pay rather than self-actualizing and esteem needs (creativity, problem solving, confidence, respect of others, self-esteem) such as opportunity to make a difference and the ability to be creative. Whilst what blue-collar workers seek in their ideal job may be the same as other workers, what they are prepared to accept in the workplace in today's economic climate (with an unemployment rate of 6.4%), may very well be different.

What part do other forms of diversity play? The impact of individual differences could be explored further. The findings of this study support those of Denecker *et al.* (2008) and Giele and Elder (1998) in that there is more heterogeneity within a generational cohort than between. Is this phenomenon related to generational cohorts as a whole or just a narrow slice of white professionals in western economies (Kunreuther, 2003)? The current study was predominantly made up of NZ European/Pakeha white-collar participants. Future research could parse out individual variables of interest, such as age, job level or personality. It is possible that events appealing to particular aspects of group identity (e.g., race, gender and class) may overshadow overall cohort effects (Duncan and Agronick, 1995). Further research is required to clarify this area.

Research with a future longitudinal focus would solve the problem of understanding generational cohorts by taking into account effects of cohort life-cycle and period i.e., those effects related to the historical circumstances in which values are measured (Rotolo & Wilson, 2004). The research used the assumption, gleaned from theory of generations, that members of a generational cohort become 'fixed' with a set of values that coalesced during their formative period (Scott, 2000). Since values are theorized to be relatively stable over time (Rokeach, 1973) this assumption seems reasonable. However, only longitudinal research can verify the validity of this assumption (Lyons et al., 2007). Studies with 10, 15 and/or 20 year intervals would provide good longitudinal findings to enable researchers more understanding of the cohorts as they move through the life stages. However, this type of research is time consuming, expensive and proves difficult to get the number of participants required to allow for a drop out rate over subsequent years (Lyons et al., 2007). There is also the difficulty in being able to relocate participants over long time periods.

Differences in a number of studies could be attributed to other factors (e.g., life-stage, period, gender and career-stage) instead of a true generational divide. While this study investigated the impact of gender it did not control for occupation, career-stage or ethnicity. More empirical research on generational differences at work, especially controlling for age and time period is needed (Macky et al., 2008). There is a need for more studies which examine specific variables across generational cohorts, to establish with more vigour whether or not differences really exist and if they do exist, the quantum of those differences (Perryer and Jordan, 2008).

There is also a need for further research to determine which characteristics are unique to each generational cohort and which are particular to each life-stage in general in recent history (Burke, 1994). Are characteristics of Generation Y today unique to them or did Veterans, Boomers, and Generation X display similar characteristics when they were that age? Hence, are the characteristics due to life-stage or are they enduring characteristics that are determined by cohort affiliation? This thesis identified what the generational cohorts value in a job at a specific point in time. However, it could be argued that each of the generational cohort's life experiences along with societal changes over the coming years may alter what they value in a job. For example, the concept of work/life balance wasn't topical 50 years ago. However, society has changed over recent decades and many employees today seek a balance between their working life and their personal life (Smola & Sutton, 2002). Further research is required to better understand and determine whether differences that exist are due to generational cohort differences as opposed to childhood and family environment, religious values, gender, life-stage and/or other influences.

Any future research should also include the next generational cohort which the popular literature has already begun to discuss and refer to as Generation Z (McCrindle, 2009) or Linksters (Johnson & Johnson, 2010). This generation is currently younger than 14 years old. Given cohort members will enter the workforce in the coming decade, research investigating this cohort would be of value to organisations. Little is known about this generational cohort. However, it is believed that Generation Z are the most planned for, 'mollycoddled' and materially endowed generation to date. According to McCrindle (2009) they live highly organized lives with little freedom. They are seen as internet savvy, technologically literate multi-taskers who move from task to task quickly but place more value on speed than accuracy. They are task focused, sophisticated, empowered and serious, Generation Z are used to accessing to vast amounts of knowledge at the click of a button, however, their computer-focussed mindset means that they sometimes struggle with the more basic activities of life (McCrindle, 2009). Johnson and Johnson (2010) predict that this generation will have a tough time with face-to-face contact with co-workers and customers given their reliance on technology as a means of communication. It is also expected that this generation will have a focus on corporate social responsibility (Johnson & Johnson, 2010). They will be

entering the workforce in an era of declining labour supply with more people exiting the workforce than entering.

Further research chould also consider 'generational identity', the extent to which an individual aligns themselves with the generational differences. It would be of value to take into account the degree to which an individual aligns themselves with the characteristics depicting each of the generational cohorts. Just because an individual is born in a particular year does not automatically mean that this individual aligns with the characteristics of the associated generational cohort. This would be particularly relevant when a participant's birth year is near the cusp of the generational cohorts.

It should also be noted that the data collected for this research was obtained at a time (June 2005 – August 2006) when the world economy was quite different to the current reality. At that time the world economy appeared buoyant and New Zealand had been enjoying fairly strong economic growth with annual growth in gross domestic product at 5.5 percent for the year ending March 2007 (Source www.stats.govt.nz). Since 2008 there has been a global financial crisis and a rapid shift in the global landscape. The economic bubble burst and across the globe (including in New Zealand). GDP dropped to 2.0 percent for the year ending March 2009 and fell again by another 0.4 percent in the year ending March 2010 (Source: www.stats.govt.nz). There has also been a dramatic rise in redundancies, unemployment and bankruptcies. Unemployment in New Zealand now sits at 6.4 percent (Department of Labour). And the unemployment rate for youth (predominantly Generation Y) is higher than for other age groups (16.2%). Current thinking would suggest this wouldn't have much effect on what they valued in a job, which would be determined by their generational personality but would on what they were prepared to accept in a job as a job was better than no job. In the study of Millennials by De Hauw and De Vos (2010) identified that recession does not influence expectations. Further research conducted in the current economic climate to identify whether the global financial crisis has had any impact if any this would have had on the results obtained in this study.

Future research could investigate not only what each generational cohort values but why they differ in *what* they value in a job, and does this result in different behaviours in the workplace. The current data set does not contain the information needed to address

whether value differences matter in terms of work-related outcomes? A priority for future research, therefore, could be to identify if value differences affect workplace outcomes, including the bottom-line (Lester et al., 2012).

Although this study represents a snapshot in time it does however, provide a broad foundation for further research. The natural progression of this study is to undertake a larger national study based on the constructs developed in the repertory grid interviews. Future research could also focus on how the constructs identified translate to behaviour in the workplace.

There is also a need for longitudinal or time-lag studies to disentangle the effects of age, period and career-stage. This will enable both researchers and HR practitioners to determine whether differences (or a lack thereof) are in fact due to cohort effects rather than age, period or career stage.

Chapter 6   Conclusions

This chapter concludes the thesis and summarises the findings. It also provides recommendations for future research in this area to assist in further growing this body of knowledge along with the final conclusions of this thesis.

Summary of results

This thesis set out to empirically determine the characteristics of each of the four generational cohorts in the New Zealand workforce and whether differences between these cohorts existed. This thesis then sought to explore whether the findings from this study were consistent with descriptions of the generational cohorts in the popular literature and empirical studies.

The constructs rated as most important by Veterans were: having a good supportive manager, a job that *gives me job satisfaction* and *provides job fulfilment, working in a caring environment* and having *good rapport with colleagues*. Baby Boomers rated a job that *gives me job satisfaction* and *provides job fulfilment* as their top rated constructs along with *enjoying the people they work* with, being in a *supportive team*, and a job that *allows quality of life*. Generation X also rated a job that *gives me job satisfaction* and *provides job fulfilment* as their top rated constructs. They also identified a job that *allows for quality of life*, a *good supportive manager* and having *good rapport with colleagues* in their top rated constructs. Finally the constructs rated as most important by Generation Y were *opportunities to learn*, a *supportive team*, a job that *gives me job satisfaction*, the *opportunity to use my skills*, the *opportunity for career progression, working in a caring environment* and having *guaranteed income*.

The findings of this study offer only limited support for the depiction of the characteristics of each cohort identified in the popular literature and in empirical studies. A number of constructs identified were consistent with depictions in the literature. Baby Boomers identified it is important that they *enjoy the people they work with*, Generation X rated *quality of life* as important and Generation Y identified *opportunity to learn, supportive team* and *career progression* as important. A number of constructs identified in this study were not consistent with the literature. Veterans

were identified as rating a *supportive manager, good rapport with colleagues* and *working in a caring environment* as important. Baby Boomers identified *quality of life, working in a supportive team* and *job satisfaction* and *job fulfilment* as important to them in their ideal job. Generation X identified *job fulfilment, job satisfaction, having a good supportive manager* and *good rapport with colleagues* as important. Generation Y identified *job satisfaction, opportunity to use their skills, guaranteed income* and *working in a caring environment* as important in their ideal job.

Strong support was found for heterogeneity within cohorts with respect to gender. Veteran male and female participants only had one construct that both groups rated as important (*provides job fulfilment*). Baby Boomer male and female participants also only had one construct that both groups rated as important (*gives me job satisfaction*). Both Generation X and Generation Y male and female participants had two constructs that both groups rated as important. Generation X males and females both rated allows *quality of life* and gives *me job satisfaction* as important and Generation Y males and females both rated *supportive team* and *opportunity to learn* as important.

Considerable overlap between the constructs each generational cohort rated as important in their ideal job was found, providing limited support for differences between them. Only two cohorts had a construct that was unique to them. Baby Boomers were the only cohort to identify *enjoy the people I work with* as one of their most important constructs. Generation Y was the only cohort to identify *opportunity to learn, opportunity to use my skills, opportunity for career progression* and *guaranteed income* in their most highly rated constructs. The remaining constructs identified by each of the generational cohorts were also rated in the top rated constructs by at least one other generational cohort pointing to more similarities than differences between each of the generational cohorts. All four cohorts identified *gives me job satisfaction* as one of their most important constructs and three of the four cohorts identified *provides job fulfilment* as one of their most important constructs. The results of this study therefore, do not support the assertion in the popular literature that there are vast generational differences.

The use of discriminant analysis identified that only nine of the 69 questions provided reasonable discrimination between the generational cohorts i.e., could predict generational cohort membership from the pattern of responding to the questions. This

further supports the finding that there are more similarities between the generational cohorts than differences. In addition, the removal of participants from the cusp years from the analysis increased the accuracy with which participants were allocated to the correct cohort, lending support for the assertion that cohorts are most distinct in the middle and less distinct at the edges. This suggests that they are linear rather than categorical in nature.

Conclusion

When discussing generational cohorts, it must be remembered that we are talking about generalities. While there may be some value in trying to explain the attitudes of individuals and groups according to their generational cohort membership, it should be recognised that individual differences exist within the cohort just as they do within any psycho-socio-cultural grouping. The generalisations discussed here may be a starting point for debate, but manages must remember to manage people from these generational cohorts as individuals.

This study adds to the body of empirical research by providing valuable insight into what the different generational cohort's identified as being most important to them in their ideal job. The findings from this study challenge the depiction of generational cohorts identified in the popular literature and identified that, whilst there are some differences between the cohorts there are more similarities than differences. This raises the suggestion that there may be greater heterogeneity within generational cohorts than between them.

Using a technique whereby assigned cohort members generated their own constructs of value in a job, a survey was developed which found more similarities than differences between these cohorts. One of the challenges of management research and theory development is to understand the realities of workplaces and the people who make them up. These realities are both complex and ambiguous, particularly when it comes to managing people. In the field of HRM simplistic notions and solutions touted in the popular press (often based on stereotypes, clichés and generalizations), are a crude map of what is a highly complex world. Populist notions can be basic stumbling blocks when it comes to managing diversity. As human beings, we have to make certain

generalisations in order to cope with our realities, and organisations do the same. However, in the end, there can be no substitute for managers engaging with employees individually to understand their particular values.

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Appendix 1: Review of empirical studies summary table

Author(s)	Year	Topic	Outcome	Origin
Burke	1994	Examined the prevalence of Generation X attitudes and values	Identified values and attitudes that were reasonably consistent with Generation X characterizations	Canada
Jurkiewicz & Brown	1998	Investigated whether there were differences in relative importance of work related factors between generational cohorts	Found little difference between the cohorts ratings of work-related factors suggesting more similarities than differences between cohorts	USA
Eskilson & Wiley	1999	Investigated whether there was a set of values and goals that distinguish Generation X	Findings offer little substance to identifying a generational cohort that is distinct in values, goals and expectations. Contrary to the literature the findings suggest Generation X were likely to achieve their life goals	USA
Jurkiewicz	2000	Investigated work related differences and similarities between Boomers and Generation X	Findings indicated more similarities than differences between the cohorts. The findings also identified a lack of similarity between what participants reported wanting from jobs and commonly held assumptions about what they want	USA
Faber	2001	Investigated differences between Generation X and an older cohort on six values characteristic of Generation X	Differences on 3 of the 6 values were identified. Findings also showed Generation X did not exhibit popular expectations for Generation X.	USA
Govitvatana	2001	Sought to identify the characteristics associated with Baby Boomers and Generation X. Also investigated different motivations between Baby Boomers and Generation X	Differences between Boomers and Generation X were identified on only 8 of 33 work motivators. However, findings identified characteristics associated with Baby Boomers and Generation X were consistent with the popular literature	USA

Author(s)	Year	Topic	Outcome	Origin
Smola & Sutton	2002	Investigated whether there were generational differences in work value and whether work values remain constant or change as workers grow older.	The results showed that Generation X work values were significantly different from those of Boomers. Support was found for the premise that values are influenced more by life events and socialization and less by age and maturity.	USA
Ferres, Travaglione & Firns	2003	Investigated the differing levels of trust, commitment, procedural justice and turnover intention between a group of Generation Xers and older employees (a mix of Matures and Boomers).	Significant differences were identified in 3 of the 5 areas under investigation. However response patterns were not found to differ according to age.	Australia
McNeese-Smith & Crook	2003	Investigated the extent to which values are associated with age group and job stage	Findings suggest that differences that exist may be more a result of age than generational cohort	USA
Egri & Ralston	2004	Investigated the value orientations of veteran, boomer and Generation X managers and professionals in both China and the USA	Identified significant cohort differences between Chinese Boomers and Generation Xers on all values. Significant cohort differences between the American cohorts were only found on three values	China / USA
Mattis, Gerkovich, Gonzelez & Johnsen	2004	Investigated whether the widely held assumptions about Generation X were a myth or a reality	Consistent with the literature Generation X was found to expect advancement, work-life balance, flexibility, innovative and fun organisation and a casual dress code. Contrary to the literature the study found Generation X were loyal and committed to their organisations.	Canada / USA

Author(s)	Year	Topic	Outcome	Origin
Appelbaum, Serena & Shipiro	2005	Investigated the factors that were stereotypically seen as motivating Baby Boomers and Generation X	The findings didn't support the stereotype that "young workers are lazy". Age was found to be an irrelevant variable in determining whether the stereotype under investigation held any truth. No support was found for the stereotypes associated with Baby Boomers and Generation X and more similarities than differences between the cohorts were found	Canada
Lyons, Duxbury & Higgens	2005	Assessed generational differences in human values	Identified generational differences although the magnitude of the differences were small. Differences also supported the notion of generations as significant social categories	Canada
Yu & Miller	2005	Investigated work values, attitudes and expectations of Boomers and Generation X in a non-western setting	Identified significant differences between Boomers and Generation X in all aspects of work characteristics in the Taiwan manufacturing industry. No significant differences were found between the generational groups in the Taiwan education sector.	Taiwan
Davis, Pawlowski & Houston	2006	Examine age-cohort differences in work commitments of Baby Boomers and Generation X	Results suggested that work commitments of Baby Boomers and Generation X are more homogenous than different	USA
Morgan & Ribbens	2006	Investigated the different generational attitudes of motivation and management	Identified generational cohort differences and that generation Y's motivation and preferred managerial style is different than that of previous cohorts.	USA

Author(s)	Year	Topic	Outcome	Origin
Sayers	2006	Investigated generational differences in Australian workers with particular focus on the changing trends and influences in the workplace and how the different generations view and deal with these changes	Identified that all three cohorts ascribed to differing preferred working styles and held differing expectations of their organisation.	Australia
Sessa, Kabocoff, Deal & Brown	2007	Investigated whether there are generational differences in today's US manager in terms of attributes perceived to be important for leaders and as perceived by the managers themselves	The study identified that managers and professionals in different generational cohorts do value different attributes in leaders and reported behaving differently. The study also found a number of similarities across the generational cohorts.	USA
Terjesen, Vinnicombe & Freeman	2007	Investigated organisational attributes attracting Generation Y to apply for a job and the perception of the importance placed on those organisational attributes	Identified the 5 most important organisational attributes for Generation Y. In additions the study identified sex differences in both importance of organisational attributes and the perceived extent of their presence in organisations	UK
Barbuto & Miller	2008	Investigated the relationship between generation and source of work motivation	The study found more similarities than differences between the cohorts. Differences between the cohorts were found in only two areas – goal internalization and instrumental motivation.	USA
Cennamo & Gardner	2008	Investigated differences in work values, job satisfaction, affective organisational commitment and intentions to leave	Some differences were identified but fewer than were expected. Significant generational differences were found for individual work values involving status and freedom but not for extrinsic, intrinsic, social, altruism- related and perceived organisational values.	New Zealand

Author(s)	Year	Topic	Outcome	Origin
D'Amato & Hertzfeldt	2008	Investigated the relationships of learning and organisational commitment on talent retention across generations.	Generation Xers and Generation Y were found to place more importance on status and freedom work values than Baby Boomers. Baby Boomers reported better person-organisation fit values with extrinsic values and status values.	Europe
Dries, Peperman & Kerpel	2008	Investigated whether people from the four different generations hold different beliefs about the meanings of career and career success	No significant differences were found with respect to how people evaluate career success. Bounded career types were found to still be the predominant career type although this decreased with generation. All generations were found to place importance on security.	Belgium
Greenwood, Gibson & Murphy	2008	Investigated differences in value systems between Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y	Identified significant differences in both terminal and instrumental values of the different generational cohorts	USA
Gursoy, Maier & Chi	2008	Investigated generational differences and similarities among hospitality employees and managers	The study identified a number of characteristics associated with each cohort and found significant generational differences in world views, attitudes towards authority and perspectives on work.	USA
Montona & Petit	2008	Examined motivation of different generations – pre Boomers, Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y	Identified more similarities than differences between the four cohorts	USA
Perryer & Jordan	2008	Investigated organisational commitment in Baby Boomers and Generation X	Found generation to be a good predictor of organisational commitment after removing a number of demographic variables. Generation X found to be significantly less committed than Baby Boomers	Australia

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Author(s)	Year	Topic	Outcome	Origin
Treuren	2008	Investigated employment preferences of baby boomer, Generation X and Generation Y students and whether Generation Y rate Generation Y employment attributes more highly than non Generation Y	Found that Generation Y did not have substantially different expectations about future employment conditions compared to Baby Boomers or Generation X and do not rate Generation Y employment attributes more highly than other cohorts.	Australia
Twenge, Konrath, Foster, Campbell & Bushman	2008	Investigated differences in narcissism across generations	The study found moderate increases in narcissism across generations	USA
Wong, Gardiner, Lang & Coulon	2008	Examined whether personality and motivational driver differences exist across generations	Found few meaningful differences. Those identified were not in line with popular depictions of the generations and could not be disentangled from age and career-stage	Australia
Hess & Jepsen	2009	Investigated how employees from different generational groups and different career stages perceived their psychological contracts	Overall findings indicated more similarities than differences between the cohorts. Small but significant differences between individual's psychological contract perceptions were based on both career-stage and generational cohort.	Australia
Kim, Knight & Crutsinger	2009	Investigated Generation Y's perceptions of role conflict, role ambiguity and supervisory support on job characteristics, job performance and job satisfaction	Findings suggest Generation Y are likely to adapt job characteristics to make work meaningful. No significant impact on job outcomes was found in respect to "employees perceptions of role conflict" and Generation Y employees job performance found to have negative impact on retail career intention	USA

Author(s)	Year	Topic	Outcome	Origin
Lamm & Meeks	2009	Investigated how generational differences moderate the relationship between workplace fun and individual workplace outcomes	Identified that Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials respond differently to workplace fun and cohort membership moderates the relationship between workplace fun and some individual workplace outcomes. Millennials also showed the strongest positive association between workplace fun and job satisfaction	USA
Spence	2009	Investigated the importance the generational cohorts attributed to 20 well documented leader traits and which traits they preferred	All cohorts identified preference for demographic style of leadership communication. Generational differences were found regarding the number of leader traits they expect leaders to embody.	USA
De Hauw & De Vos	2010	Investigated the effect of generational contextual and individual influences on Millennials career expectations	Using two matched samples of Millennials obtained in 2006 and 2009 only minor differences based on generation, context and individual characteristics were identified	Belgium
Kowske, Rasch & Wiley	2010	Examined generational differences in work attitudes	Identified small generational differences exist with regard to certain work attributes after accounting for age and period effects suggesting the generational cohorts are more similar than different	USA
Maxwell, Odgen & Broadbridge	2010	Explored the linkage between Generation Y's career expectations/aspirations and engagement	Found Generation Y is self centred and career focussed, that they seek good pay and challenging work	Scotland

Author(s)	Year	Topic	Outcome	Origin
McGuigan	2010	Investigated the relationship between measures of age, generational identity and career-stage	Findings supported the popular literature which indicated that each generational cohort is likely to approach work and their careers in a different way – although the findings provided more support for a dichotomy between Baby Boomers and Generation X/Y	New Zealand
Meriac, Woehr & Banister	2010	Examined the differences in work ethic between Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials	The findings supported differences in work ethic between Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials	USA
Murphy, Gibson & Greenwood	2010	Examined value differences between managers and non-managers in general and by generation	Statistically significant differences between the generations were identified on all but 2 of the instrumental values. Managers across all three generations were found to share 3 of the 5 top terminal values and also instrumental values of importance while non-managers only shared 2 of the top 5.	USA
Ng, Schweitzer & Lyons	2010	Explored career expectations and priorities of members of Millennials and whether there is empirical evidence to support the popular stereotypes of Millennials	Found Millennials placed the greatest importance on individualistic aspects of the job. Also identified heterogeneity within the Millennial cohort based on traditional demographic groups such as gender, visible minority status, work experience and academic achievement	Canada
Real, Mitnick & Maloney	2010	Examined workplace beliefs and values of three generations of skilled construction workers.	Millennials, Generation X and Baby Boomers were found to be more alike than different with few meaningful quantitative differences identified. Differences identified were thought to be more likely a result of experience, position or age than generation.	USA

Author(s)	Year	Topic	Outcome	Origin
Reiss	2010	Examined differences between generational cohorts to receiving negative feedback or criticism.	No differences in motivational or self-efficacy levels between the cohorts was found. A significant differences was found between Boomers and Generation Y in relation to rating of perception of the negative feedback.	USA
Treuren & Anderson	2010	Sought to determine if Generation Y preferences for future employment are statistically different from those of Generation X	No statistical differences found in ranking of employment preferences between the cohorts. Findings suggested that Generation Y do not appear as a distinct, separate cohort or set of expectations	Australia
Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman & Lance	2010	Investigated the attitudes of three generations of high school leavers using a time-lag methodology.	Identified small to moderate generational differences in work values between the three generations most predominantly represented in today's workforce. On average younger workers today have different work values than young workers 15 and 30 years ago.	USA
Atkinson	2011	Investigated work attitudes of Boomers and Generation X and what effect differences might have on organisational outcomes	No differences were found on work-life balance, work centrality, learning goal orientation, organisational commitment or extrinsic job satisfaction. The findings did show that Boomers were more satisfied with their work overall and with intrinsic aspects of their work	USA

Author(s)	Year	Topic	Outcome	Origin
Benson & Brown	2011	Investigated differences between Generation X and Baby Boomers in job satisfaction, organisational commitment and the willingness to quit	A strong generational effect was found i.e., Baby Boomers were found to have higher job satisfaction and a lower willingness to quit than Generation X. Only a weak relationship was found between the cohorts with respect to work commitment.	Australia
Bransford	2011	Examined generational differences that might exist in individuals preferences towards specific leadership styles	Overall results revealed that there was not a significant main effect of generational group on participant's leadership preferences. A number of consistencies were identified across generational cohorts.	USA
Brick	2011	Examined whether there were differences in motivators across the four generations and whether or not there are generational differences in the preferences of ideal company values	Found significant differences among generations in their preferences of work motivators and company values	USA
Cogin	2012	Examined the work values of Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y across five countries – Australia, USA, China, Singapore and Germany	Established the legitimacy of intergenerational differences as a social categorization finding generational differences even when the effects of culture and life-stage were controlled for.	Australian (data from USA, China, Singapore, Germany & Australia)
Hansen & Leuty	2012	Investigated work values across three generations (Silent Generation, Baby Boomers and Generation X)	Small generational differences were identified – Silent Generation placed more importance on "Status" and "Autonomy" than Baby Boomers or Generation X and Baby Boomers and Generation X were found to place more importance on "Working conditions", "Security", "Coworkers" and "Compensation".	USA

Author(s)	Year	Topic	Outcome	Origin
Lester, Stanifer, Schultz & Windsor	2012	Investigated a number or work related concepts and the degree to which workers valued them. In addition the study investigated whether there were more perceived differences than actual differences	Few significant differences between cohorts were identified. The study identified that perceived differences outnumbered actual differences	USA
Sajjadi, Sun and Castillo	2012	Investigated generational differences between Generation Y and preceding generations in work attitudes occurring in multigenerational workplaces in Sweden	The different generations tended to demonstrate apparent differences in respect to work attitude (apart from individual vs. team orientation) in the context of the working environment	Sweden

Appendix 2: Repertory Grid Study Information Sheet

Massey University
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS
Kaupapa Whai Pakihi

DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT: A GENERATIONAL COHORT PERSPECTIVE
INFORMATION SHEET

The Nature and Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate what people value in a job. Using the Repertory Grid technique I will interview people from the New Zealand workforce to determine what they value in a job.

Who are we?

This research is being undertaken by Kristin Lyon in partial fulfillment of her PhD in Human Resource Management. Kristin's supervisors are Professor Stephen Legg and Associate Professor Paul Toulson in the Department of Human Resources Management at Massey University.

What are we asking you to do?

The study will involve an interview with the researcher using the repertory grid technique (a type of structured interview). The interview will take approximately one hour of your time to complete. In this interview you will be asked to identify your most ideal jobs and jobs you find OK but less ideal. You will also be asked a series of questions based around these jobs that will help to determine what you value in a job.

How we got your name

We are aiming to determine what different generational cohort's (Veterans, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y) value in a job. To do this we have obtained permission from your employer to approach employees to participate in this study. You are one of the randomly selected employees that have been selected from your organization to take part in this study.

Anonymity and confidentiality

Anonymity and confidentiality of all data will be upheld by ensuring that all questionnaire and data forms and computer files will be labeled using only a code number that is special to you. The data that we obtain will then be stored securely within the principal researcher's office. All data will be stored for a period of at least five years, after which hard copies of all data will be shredded and computer files will be deleted.

Uses of the Information

The data collected during the course of this research will be used by the researcher in partial fulfilment of a PhD in Human Resource Management. In addition, the information obtained from this research will be used for writing paper(s)for publication in a scientific journal. The information will not be disseminated in a format that exposes the identity of any individual participant or lead to any harm.

Your right to decline to take part in this research

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In this research you have the right to:
- Decline to participate;
- Decline to answer any particular question;
- Withdraw from the research at any time;
- Ask any questions about the research at any time during participation;
- To provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher
- To be given access to a summary of the findings of the research when it is concluded. This will be sent to you at the email/postal address you provide on the consent form.

At no time during this research do I wish to pressure you to continue if you want to stop.

Who to contact if you want to know more

We trust that this information sheet will provide you with all the information that you will need. If you want to know more, or you have any questions of any kind, the researchers may be contacted as follows:

Kristin Lyon: email kristinjanelyon@hotmail.com or by writing to HRM Dept, Massey University, Private Bag 11222, Palmerston North

Stephen Legg: email s.j.legg@massey.ac.nz or by writing to HRM Dept, Massey University, Private Bag 11222, Palmerston North.

Paul Toulson: email p.toulson@massey.ac.nz or by writing to HRM Dept, Massey University, Private Bag 11222, Palmerston North.

Note: This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee, PN Application 04/149. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Professor Sylvia V Rumball, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee, Palmerston North, telephone 06 350 5249, email humanethicspn@massey.ac.nz

Appendix 3: Participant Consent Form

Massey University
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS
Kaupapa Whai Pakihi

DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT: A GENERATIONAL COHORT PERSPECTIVE

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

THIS CONSENT FORM WILL BE HELD FOR A PERIOD OF FIVE (5) YEARS

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature: _____   Date: _____

Full Name (printed): _____

Appendix 4: Repertory Grid Interview Instructions And Rating Sheet

Massey University
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS
Kaupapa Whai Pakihi

REPERTORY GRID INTERVIEW

INSTRUCTIONS & RATING SHEET

(To be completed by the researcher during the repertory grid interview)

INSTRUCTIONS

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research. I greatly appreciate you giving up your time to talk to me today.

The objective of this study is to investigate people's attitudes towards work. The purpose of this interview is therefore, to find out what your attitude is towards work. In order to do this I will be using a method called the repertory grid technique. The repertory grid process is a structured interview which will help you describe what you really feel about your work. You will be asked to make a series of systematic comparisons and I will guide you through each of the steps as we go. There are no right or wrong answers so please answer as truthfully as possible.

The process will take approximately 1 hour. I would like to confirm with you now that you are able to commit an hour of your time to complete this repertory grid interview or if you would prefer to reschedule this session for a more suitable time?

Please remember that what you say in this interview is confidential. You will not be identified by name in any of the research. The information I obtain from these interviews will be used to design a questionnaire that will be used in the next phase of the research and for writing paper(s) for publication in a scientific journal.

Before we go any further can you please tell me your year of birth?

I would now like to begin by working through an example of the repertory grid exercise with you to show you how it works.

If you are asked to describe an ideal manager and a less ideal but OK manager you might come up with the following features that describe these objectives. I will refer to these features as constructs:

Ideal Manager	**Less Ideal but OK Manager**
Leads the team	Not a team player
Provides Autonomy	Micromanages

| Charismatic | Lacks charisma |
| Good at the job | Bad at the job |

Now we are going to do something similar, but with regard to jobs that you have held.

I am now going to give you six cards, which are labelled A to F in the top left hand corner. On cards A, B and C please write the titles of three jobs that you consider to be your ideal jobs. These jobs should be jobs that you might realistically hold or have held that you know quite a lot about. On cards D, E and F can you please write the titles of three jobs that you consider to be OK but less ideal. These jobs should be jobs that you might realistically hold or have held and know quite a lot about.

It does not matter what the titles of the jobs are that you put on the cards. What is important is that the titles represent your ideal and OK but less ideal jobs

Can you please place the cards labelled B (i.e., ideal job), D, and E (i.e., OK but less ideal jobs) in front of you on the table.

"Think about what it is that makes one or two of these jobs more ideal than the other(s). What makes it more ideal?"

Please indicate which of the job(s) are more ideal and describe what it is about this or these jobs that makes it/them more ideal.

In relation to this what is it about the other job(s) that make it/them less desirable.

You should note that when coming up with this second description of the construct that it does not necessarily need to be the opposite of the first one. For example if your construct is that your ideal job "provides autonomy" you might come up with a variety of descriptions for your OK but less ideal job such as "micromanaged", "no autonomy", "restrictive" etc.

Now that you have described the positive and negative dimensions of the behaviour please place all six cards on the table in front of you.

I would now like you to rate all six jobs on the construct you have just described, with 1 representing the positive end of the construct and 7 representing the negative end of the construct.

For example if we look at rating the construct "provides autonomy – micromanaged" if you see job "A" as providing a lot of autonomy you might rate is "1", if you see it providing autonomy but not absolutely autonomous you might rate it a "2" or "3". On the other hand, if you see the job as being micromanaged (not very autonomous) then the extreme rating would be a "7", slightly less would be a "6". The rating of "4" means that you see it as neither autonomous or micromanaged.

The same ratings can be allocated to two or more jobs. You may also find that in many cases, jobs you initially categorised as least desirable might score quite well on a number of constructs and the reverse might occur for the desirable jobs.

We are now going to repeat this process with a different combination of cards. We will continue repeating this process until we have completed all of the combinations of cards or until you are unable to think of any new constructs.

Now that we have obtained and rated all of your constructs I would like you to rate how important each construct is to you using a 7 point importance scale with 1 representing the positive end (extremely important) and 7 representing the negative end (not important).

We have now completed the repertory grid interview. I would like to finish off by collecting some demographic information.

Researcher completes the demographic information on Rating Sheet.

Would you like to receive an abridged version of the results?

If participant indicates they would then complete the contact details section of the rating sheet.

I would like to thank you for your time. This process has been very useful and I have learnt a lot about your attitude towards work.

Do you have any questions about this process or about what will happen to your information after today?

Once again I appreciate the time you have given me today in completing this repertory grid interview.

RATING SHEET

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Date: _____

Year of Birth: _____

TRIADS	What is it about the job(s) that makes it ideal	Most liked job example A	Most liked job example B	Most liked job example C	Least liked job example D	Least liked job example E	Least liked job example F	What is it about the job(s) that makes it OK but less ideal	Importance Rating
BDE									
DEF									
ACD									
CEF									
BCD									
AEF									

TRIADS	What is it about the job(s) that makes it ideal	Most liked job example A	Most liked job example B	Most liked job example C	Least liked job example D	Least liked job example E	Least liked job example F	What is it about the job(s) that makes it OK but less ideal	Importance Rating
ABD									
CDE									
BDF									
ABE									
CDF									
BDE									
ABF									
BCE									
ADE									

TRIADS	What is it about the job(s) that makes it ideal	Most liked job example A	Most liked job example B	Most liked job example C	Least liked job example D	Least liked job example E	Least liked job example F	What is it about the job(s) that makes it OK but less ideal	Importance Rating
FCA									
BEF									
ECA									
DFA									
BCF									
CBA									

DEMOGRAPHICS

Ethnicity:

NZ European or Pākehā ☐   NZ Māori ☐   Pacific Islander ☐

Other European ☐   Asian ☐   Other ☐

Gender

Male ☐   Female ☐

Would you like to receive a copy of the summary of the results?

Yes ☐   No ☐

If Yes — where can this be sent?

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Appendix 5: Letter To Organisations Seeking Permission To Access Participants For The Repertory Grid Study

Massey University
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS
Kaupapa Whai Pakihi

[insert date]

[name of organisation]
[address]
WELLINGTON

Dear [insert name]

Re: Study on Diversity Management – A Generational Cohort Perspective

I recently met with you to discuss the involvement of [insert name of organisation] in a research project on diversity management with respect to generational cohort differences. At this meeting you indicated that this would be acceptable. I am therefore seeking your formal permission for the research to proceed. I have included a detailed overview of the research procedure. Please note that this project has already been approved by the Massey University Ethics Committee.

In addition, to securing your formal approval to proceed with the project I would also like to set in place some dates when I can begin data collection. I would like to minimise the disruption to your organisation and therefore suggest that you propose dates and times of the day in [insert month] 2005 that would be most suitable for you.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of the research or require clarification of any matter then please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

Kristin Lyon

Procedure for the Diversity Management – A Generational Cohort Perspective Study

Securing Participants:

1. The organisation nominates a staff member to act as coordinator with the researcher.

2. We aim to secure approximately 8 participants (2 participants from each generational cohort (preferably 1 male and 1 female). It is important that we retain as far as possible an equal balance of numbers from each generational cohort as well as by gender. The coordinator will then provide the researcher with the names of 2 employees in each of the four generational cohorts (Veteran's, Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y).

3. The selected participants will then be sent a letter by the coordinator which a) introduces the researchers, b) explains the nature of the research and the procedures in which they will be involved, c) requests their participation, and d) asks them to provide their written consent prior to participation.

4. Where a participant declines participating in the study the coordinator will supply the name of an additional staff member who meets the participation criteria of the employee who declined to participate.

Note: It is anticipated that in some organisations over-sampling will occur in some categories due to the nature of their workforce.

Collecting Data:

The study will involve a one on one interview with the researcher using the repertory grid technique (a type of structured interview). This will take up to one hour of their time. The interview will involve asking participants questions that will elicit what they value in a job.

To minimize the participants time away from work it is anticipated that the repertory grid interviews will be conducted in the employee's place of work. It is therefore suggested that the organization will nominate an interview room for this purpose.

The information supplied by participants will be completely confidential and a numbering system will be used to ensure confidentiality. Your organization will not be identified (other than by an industry code) unless you give the researcher permission to do so.

A summary of the results of this study will be made available to participants and the participating organisations. In addition, the data collected during the course of this research will be used by the researcher in partial fulfilment of a PhD in Human Resource Management at Massey University and may be used for writing an article or articles.

Appendix 6: Organisational Consent Form

Massey University
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS
Kaupapa Whai Pakihi

DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT: A GENERATIONAL COHORT PERSPECTIVE

ORGANISATION CONSENT FORM

THIS CONSENT FORM WILL BE HELD FOR A PERIOD OF FIVE (5) YEARS

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree to [insert name of organization] participating in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature: _____   Date: _____

Full Name (printed): _____

Position: _____

Appendix 7: Full list of constructs generated

Number	Ideal about the job	Less ideal about the job
1	task variety	repetition
2	face to face contact	isolated
3	high level of responsibility	unimportant
4	total autonomy	no autonomy
5	exciting	dead boring
6	creative	allows for no creativity
7	flexible hours	set working hours
8	making a difference	zero impact
9	in control of work life balance	no control of work life balance
10	mental exertion	physical exertion
11	opportunity to work with stimulating people	work with non stimulating people
12	higher financial rewards	low financial rewards
13	opportunity to use skills	little opportunity to use my skills
14	being my own boss	being a lackey
15	respect in the job	no respect
16	self fulfilment related to idealism	good at getting personal gain from someone else
17	get to make policy developments (long term improvements)	just involvement 1 on 1 with people
18	strategic work	day to day work with people
19	opportunity for broad professional development	narrow field of knowledge
20	enjoyable	less enjoyable
21	outdoors	indoors
22	dealing with cold hard facts	dealing with emotions
23	uses my skills and expertise	fear of failure
24	high interest in area	not so interested
25	feel can make a difference	makes little difference
26	freedom to choose how and when I work	strict disciplines on time and outputs
27	quantifiable results	debatable outcomes
28	working with large groups of people	little or no people interaction
29	ability to travel	stuck in the office
30	allows creativity	rigid structure
31	enables healthy diet	promotes unhealthy diet
32	enables effective work/life balance	slave to the job
33	dress down environment	dress up environment
34	direct influence on income	fixed income
35	positive people interaction	negative people interaction
36	autonomy	heavily managed
37	challenging	boring
38	high level of responsibility	less responsibility
39	ability to use skills and expertise	lesser use of skills
40	no commuting	long commute to work
41	face to face people contact	phone contact

Number	Ideal about the job	Less ideal about the job
42	task variety	repetitive
43	autonomy	less autonomy
44	broad specialist knowledge required	narrow speciality knowledge
45	ability to influence the direction of the organisation	indirect impact on the direction of the organisation
46	working with people	working with things/facts
47	accountability/sense of achievement over time	short term involvement
48	on-going professional development	no personal growth/development
49	being involved in change	focussed on the now
50	face to face people contact	remote interaction
51	high autonomy	very scheduled
52	control over earning potential	fixed salary regardless of hours of work
53	able to influence direction of the company	no direct ability to influence
54	ability to assist others to achieve	no ability to assist others
55	gives me a personal sense of satisfaction	limited ability to provide a sense of achievement
56	higher pay	less pay
57	set 40 hour work week	requires long hours
58	ability to manage own time	responsive job
59	requires drawing on broad range of skills	repetitive tasks
60	allows creativity	set tasks
61	ability to get out of the office	office/desk bound
62	buck doesn't stop with me	all the responsibility
63	feeling valued and able to contribute	feel like one of the masses
64	fun and popular role	less fun everyday role
65	ability to be subject matter expert	generalist
66	ability to be a leader	follower
67	high level of teamwork	solo
68	enables work/life balance	disruptive to work/life balance
69	low stress	high stress
70	can choose hours of work	long hours of work
71	high level of job satisfaction	low level of job satisfaction
72	feel can make a difference to peoples lives	don't have much impact
73	challenging	not challenging
74	face to face contact with people	working alone
75	leader	follower
76	opportunity for networking	contacts confined to the position
77	guaranteed income (salary)	unstable income
78	autonomy	controlled
79	use my training and experience	need to learn new skills
80	own boss/ independent	structured roles
81	phone contact with customers	face to face
82	get out and about	desk job (tied to desk)
83	positive interaction with customers	negative interaction with customers

Number	Ideal about the job	Less ideal about the job
84	less contact with customers	almost constant contact with customers
85	use my expertise /experience	doesn't use my expertise/experience
86	social environment	less social environment
87	flexible hours	rigid set hours
88	good job security	job uncertainty
89	good salary	hourly wage
90	opportunity for creativity	no opportunity for creativity
91	flexibility	less freedom
92	own boss	reporting to someone else
93	better money	medium pay
94	less stress	more stressful
95	challenging	monotonous
96	interesting	straight forward
97	allows creativity	less scope for creativity
98	office/desk job	manual / physical job
99	deals with concepts	deals with numbers/analytical
100	varied tasks	repetitive tasks
101	person to person customer contact	back office
102	better pay	lower pay
103	provides security	less security
104	customers put trust in me	I just provide a service
105	something I enjoy	a means to an end
106	face to face people contact	behind the scenes
107	making the best of my skill set	anyone can do them
108	good team dynamics (teamwork)	working in isolation
109	ability to manage own workload	micromanaged/planned role
110	responsibility	no or little responsibility
111	choice in what you do	being told what to do
112	opportunity to meet wide variety of people	less opportunity to meet people
113	high level of responsibility	little responsibility
114	interesting job	less interesting job
115	high salary	low salary
116	more challenging	less challenging/easy
117	ability to focus on the job rather than dealing with organisational politics	having to deal with organisational politics
118	job is seen as prestigious	job not seen as prestigious
119	opportunity to lead	no opportunity to be a leader
120	opportunity to see results of my work	never seeing the results of my work
121	in my area of interest	crap student job
122	developmental role on my career path	not related to chosen career path
123	passionate about it	only do the job to pay the rent
124	gives me a sense of satisfaction	no personal satisfaction
125	feel I can make a difference	just a job
126	provides opportunity for personal development	little opportunity for personal development
127	more interesting	boring
128	more challenging	easy

Number	Ideal about the job	Less ideal about the job
129	more prestigious	less prestigious
130	utilizes my skills	waste of my skills
131	better pay	less pay
132	more responsibility	less responsibility
133	less hours of work	more/longer hours of work
134	less stressful	more stressful
135	more personal satisfaction	less personal satisfaction
136	autonomy	inflexibility
137	genuine field of interest	uninterested in the role
138	variation in location	fixed location
139	person oriented	little person to person dealings
140	creative freedom	do things by the book
141	higher pay	lower pay
142	sense of freedom	feeling trapped
143	higher status	lower status
144	flexible working hours	fixed shifts
145	job satisfaction	low job satisfaction
146	ability to make a difference	decisions make little difference on the business
147	high recognition for effort	low recognition for effort
148	good team camaraderie	lack of team camaraderie
149	favourable opportunities for career progression	lower opportunities for career progression
150	utilizing all my skills and experience	more limited roles
151	more challenging	less challenging/less responsibility
152	something I am passionate about	not necessarily my passion
153	allows creativity and innovation	limited opportunity for creativity
154	relationships built around shared passion	relationships built for commercial objective
155	more varied role	more task focussed and limited
156	aligned with personal and professional values	only indirectly aligned with personal value set
157	opportunity to travel	office bound
158	ability to make things happen	responding to others objectives
159	feel like making a difference	feel like a small cog in a big wheel
160	working with talented engaging people	working with individuals who lack flare and imagination
161	well resourced organisation	limited resourcing
162	others perceive the role as valuable	role perceived by others as of limited value
163	impacts on communities quality of life	job outcomes have limited impact on community
164	well remunerated	poorly remunerated
165	encourages global perspective	world stops at NZ shores
166	provides opportunity for professional development	limits personal and professional development

Number	Ideal about the job	Less ideal about the job
167	job requires professional qualification/status	no identifiable professional association
168	strategic role	short term tactical role
169	working in community	business oriented
170	more variety	less variety
171	transferable skills	industry specific skills
172	provides kudos/status	run of the mill
173	in area of personal interest	a job
174	managing people	being managed
175	able to make decisions	follow others decisions
176	more strategic planning and input	follow someone else's strategic plan
177	environment of fun and vibrancy	business as usual
178	cutting edge technology	standard business tools
179	better pay	lower pay
180	enables work/life balance	no work/life balance
181	flexible work hours	rigid set times
182	overseas travel opportunity	no overseas travel opportunity
183	lots of interaction with people	isolated job
184	good supportive manager	useless manager
185	good chance for promotion	no potential for promotion
186	ability to make a difference	business as usual
187	opportunity to work with talented people	working with boring people
188	good team work	insular/no team support
189	enjoyable	feeling apprehensive at work
190	give job satisfaction	just work
191	transferable skills	industry specific skills
192	lots of responsibility	less direct responsibility
193	being my own boss	working for a wage
194	flexible	40 hour week/salary
195	working for the community	working for profit/shareholders (profit driven organisation)
196	pride in my work	just another brick in the wall
197	interesting	day to day existence
198	power	taking orders (no power)
199	positive client feedback	abusive clients
200	good honest hard work	morally questionable
201	good teamwork	unsupportive team
202	challenging	brain dead
203	input into decision making	being told what to do
204	enjoy the people I work with (social)	non social workplace
205	allows problem solving (trusted)	not trusted to deal with problems
206	gave confidence in dealing with people	not being able to deal with customers
207	full of variety and change	boring day to day
208	realistic workload	increasing workload
209	to be independent	working for someone else
210	opportunities to learn	no development
211	able to meet customers needs	just providing a service
212	more responsibility	less responsibility

Number	Ideal about the job	Less ideal about the job
213	feeling like making a difference	making no difference
214	good pay	moderate pay
215	flexible hours	shift work (set shifts)
216	able to have fun on the job	professional job
217	passionate about the job	just a job
218	able to see results	not having results
219	proud to do the job	ashamed to do the job
220	teamwork	working alone
221	working in a caring environment (care about colleagues)	not caring about colleagues
222	variety of location	sitting at a desk
223	helping people	working with paper
224	mobile	tied to a desk
225	varied tasks	repetitive
226	physically active	not very active (mainly sitting)
227	working with kids	not working with kids
228	being creative	not being creative
229	meeting a variety of people	meeting the same people
230	interesting	boring
231	higher pay	lower pay
232	passionate about it	routine
233	casual dress	corporate uniform
234	set hours of work	not set hours of work
235	in my area of interest	not in my skill base
236	I know I can do it	no idea how to do it
237	variety in the job (dynamic)	less variety
238	enjoyable	less enjoyable
239	it's a part of me	distant to me (not as personal)
240	international/global perspective	domestic focus
241	uses my knowledge	no use of my knowledge
242	an easy job	hard job
243	contributes to the public good	less contribution to the public good
244	have more knowledge of what is going on in the organisation	mundane - just a worker
245	more interesting	less interesting job
246	people focussed	solitary
247	passion/keenness for the job	mundane
248	high status job	lower status job
249	opportunity for career progression	no opportunity for career progression
250	provides opportunity for management experience	little opportunity for management experience
251	opportunity to travel	limited in terms of duties
252	opportunity for client contact	less opportunity for client contact
253	broad breadth of role	more restrictive role
254	structured role	vague role
255	more ability to influence (autonomy)	less autonomy
256	higher salary	lower salary

Number	Ideal about the job	Less ideal about the job
257	the recognised expert in the field	more generalist roles with others doing the same role
258	aligned with career aspiration	not aligned with career aspiration
259	opportunity to travel	office based
260	proud to say this is the job I hold	very average job
261	manual labour	office bound
262	managed role	very autonomous
263	additional benefits e.g., car park	no additional benefits
264	small size of the organisation	large organisation
265	opportunity for learning and development	expect that you currently hold the skills
266	supportive colleagues	less personal environment
267	direct customer contact	little customer contact
268	opportunity for supervision	no staff responsibilities
269	public recognition for a job well done	little or no recognition
270	strategic	task focussed
271	attractive job title	unattractive job title
272	ability to influence the CEO	inability to influence the CEO
273	opportunity for team work	sole practitioner
274	high level of responsibility	more confined role
275	I enjoy it (the process of the job)	interested in end results
276	job variety	less variety
277	I like the organisation itself (and what it does)	less pleasant context
278	being CEO	not being CEO
279	ability for public influence for change	less ability for public influence
280	working with a wide range of communities	more narrow focus
281	opportunity for networking/relationship management	less relationship with communities
282	opportunity to travel	stuck in one place
283	limited financial responsibility	buck stops with me regarding finances
284	strategic role	less strategic
285	good pay	less pay
286	direct impact on social justice	less impact on social justice
287	commitment of people I work with	less commitment
288	wide variety of skills to be used	very focussed roles
289	a lot of people contact	focussed structured role
290	ability to look past the boundaries (forward looking)	today focussed
291	relationship management component	highly structured role
292	challenging role	routine
293	allows innovative thinking	structured thinking (process driven)
294	the scope and impact of the role is wide and on-going	discrete end to tasks
295	able to influence	not able to influence
296	ownership for results	service transactions
297	leadership role	support role

Number	Ideal about the job	Less ideal about the job
298	autonomy	dependence
299	ability to make a difference	beholden to someone else
300	get creative satisfaction	following the others
301	personal interest	have the skills / need the money
302	satisfy my ambition	have skills / can do
303	able to be independent	hostage to senior management
304	utilize language as content	style of language (no substance)
305	ability to advocate for change	doing someone's advocacy
306	ability to influence others	focussed on self
307	emphasis on written communication	focuses on numbers and data
308	more strategic	more operational
309	involves relationship management	isolated
310	constantly changing	business as usual type work
311	clear career progression pathway	limited career progression opportunity
312	good earning potential	limited / capped earning potential
313	autonomy	work is directed
314	opportunity to travel	office based
315	interest	boredom
316	intellectually challenging	simplicity
317	higher pay	lower pay
318	variety	sameness
319	complex human issues	individual human resources
320	large organisation	small organisation
321	big financial decisions	little/small financial decisions
322	ability to do good (social contribution)	little impact
323	career and personal development opportunity	backward step
324	more people contact	far less people contact
325	more challenging	very routine
326	lot of variety and change	not a great deal of changes
327	management	set tasks that don't change
328	helping people and making a difference	just providing a service
329	ability to make decisions	little decision making input
330	get out and about	tied to a desk
331	community involvement	no community involvement
332	get to initiate correspondence	little to no preparation of correspondence
333	space for creativity	routine
334	higher pay	lower pay
335	more autonomy	less autonomy
336	ability to make a difference	working for the money
337	self employed	always answering to a manager
338	lots of people contact	solitary work environment
339	recognition of work by others	your work being taken for granted
340	working outdoors	working in an office
341	varied work	boring
342	no bureaucracy	lots of bureaucracy

Number	Ideal about the job	Less ideal about the job
343	no limits to career possibilities	limited career possibilities
344	related to area of interest and education	limited relationship to interest/education
345	enjoyable	less enjoyable
346	lots of variety	more repetitive
347	opens up future job prospects	limited job prospect for future
348	opportunity to work with wide variety of people	limited interaction with people
349	opportunity to learn new skills	limited amount of skills to be learnt
350	high pay	low pay
351	in-depth	superficial only get to scratch surface
352	less responsibility	too many soft issues to deal with
353	more control of the work I do	work programme more controlled by others
354	intellectually challenging job	commercially driven
355	self managing	dictated by needs of others
356	ability to work when I want	large volume of continuous work
357	good money	bad money
358	positive interactions with people	insincere people relationships
359	find it interesting	less interesting
360	relaxed dress code	corporate dress code
361	has more value in terms of outcomes	outcomes are less finite
362	ability to make a difference	very defined and no opportunity to think outside the square
363	creative	structured
364	ability to blue sky think	boxed
365	get to work with like minded people focussed on the outcome	working with people who don't focus on the big picture (internal politics)
366	get to influence outcomes	don't have the same amount of influence
367	comfortable with the role	frustration with dealing with people all day
368	the job is also my hobby	just a job
369	get to make a difference	routine - just a job
370	provides transferable skills	limited as to where can use skills
371	variety	routine/repetitive
372	opportunity to work in area that is also my hobby	just work
373	self managing/ stand alone	line management role under influence of others
374	flexibility in level of involvement	less flexibility - controlled by others
375	guaranteed income	at risk income
376	passion/interest	less interest/passion
377	knowledge and comfort with the role	lack of knowledge/comfort with the role
378	opportunity to travel	limited opportunity to travel
379	good earning potential	fixed salary
380	challenging	been there done that
381	have the skills	do not have the skills

Number	Ideal about the job	Less ideal about the job
382	flexibility in hours/location of work	fixed hours/location
383	gives me job satisfaction	less satisfaction
384	passion for the profession	not that interested in the job
385	level of autonomy	less autonomy
386	uses my skills	less use of abilities
387	level of responsibility for results	less responsibility for influencing results
388	opportunity to work in a team	less teamwork
389	better pay	less pay
390	enjoy it	less enjoyable job content
391	intellectually stimulating and challenging	less stimulating and challenging
392	authority for decision making	less authority for decision making
393	is a career enhancing position	limited career enhancing value
394	provides learning and development opportunity	no increase in learning
395	senior/status position	non management position
396	variety of tasks	specific tasks
397	people contact	isolation
398	rewarding	less rewarding
399	recognised as the expert	less recognition of expertise
400	exciting	mundane
401	less stressful/demanding	more stressful/demanding
402	exciting and dynamic	less exciting/dynamic
403	dealing with people	isolated job dealing with processes
404	opportunity to organise	dealing with process
405	feel confident and capable of doing the job	less confident
406	feel in control	out of my depth
407	interesting	less interesting
408	variety	routine/cyclical
409	autonomy	compliance and deadline driven
410	green pasture opportunities (allows creativity)	little creativity - follow the system
411	ability to influence	limited ability to influence
412	ability to make a difference	just a process driven job (assembly line)
413	flexibility in how you work	no flexibility (routines to follow)
414	control in decision making	little control /decision making
415	get to see end results	work goes on and never finishes
416	networking opportunities	limited people contact
417	development opportunities	no development opportunities
418	meaningful/purposeful work	churning out stuff
419	new opportunity	been there done that
420	familiar with the job and have the skills	boredom and no skills
421	challenging/mentally stimulating	not challenging
422	allows quality of life	not being in control of destiny
423	personal interest	been there done that so less interesting

Number	Ideal about the job	Less ideal about the job
424	utilizes my skills	run of the mill job which has less use of my skills
425	development opportunities	no development required
426	flexibility	not flexible
427	gives me personal satisfaction	just doing a job
428	good pay	lousy pay
429	flexible hours	rigid or no flexibility in hours of work
430	opportunity for creativity	boring / no room for creativity
431	clear objectives are set	less clear/less focussed outcomes set
432	get to use my brain	set formula to follow
433	less physically taxing	physically taxing
434	allows for creativity	structure and less creativity
435	interest in the area	less interest in the area
436	opportunity to learn	less opportunity to learn
437	career development opportunities	dead end job
438	used my skills and expertise	less use of my skills (just churned out goods)
439	challenge	repetitive / boring
440	opportunity for problem solving	no opportunity for problem solving
441	variety	repetitive
442	project based job - intuitive planning	more on-going work
443	more authority	no authority
444	creativity	mundaneness
445	making a difference	not making a difference
446	visible results	no sense of achievement
447	people oriented	not so people oriented
448	helping others	selfish
449	allows creativity / imagination	more structured
450	management	being a worker
451	creating good learning /teaching resources	doesn't provide learning/teaching
452	opportunity to help people	less opportunity to help people
453	people interaction	less people interaction
454	inside job	outside job
455	more control	less control
456	physical nature of the work	desk bound
457	variety	lacking variety
458	teamwork	hierarchical
459	creativity	conforming
460	aligned with my values of doing good	task oriented
461	working with people	working with ideas
462	challenge	less challenging
463	ability to focus in depth	dispersal
464	multifaceted - drawing on wide skill base	narrow scope
465	leadership of people	isolation
466	creative energy	shaping and formulaic activity
467	narrower accountabilities	multitudinous accountabilities
468	low stress	high stress
469	engagement with people and ideas	predetermined

Number	Ideal about the job	Less ideal about the job
470	a change in direction/career	more of the same
471	precise work	imprecise
472	direct influence on outcomes	not direct influence over outcomes
473	passion for the job	its just a job
474	outdoors	indoors
475	peaceful/quiet	loud machinery
476	I'm the boss	not the boss
477	gives me satisfaction	creates frustration
478	can have fun	little opportunity for fun
479	challenge	less challenging
480	uses my experience	little experience in the area
481	opportunity to learn new skills	less opportunity to learn new skills
482	managing others	being managed
483	adequate pay	inadequate pay
484	opportunity to be self employed	working for an organisation
485	flexible work hours	non flexible work hours (fixed)
486	being paid for creative freedom	it's a basic job
487	self employed	working for someone else
488	personal fulfilment	marketplace driven
489	associated lifestyle with job	a grind
490	engaged with manufacturing culture	don't show fruits/outcomes so immediately
491	opportunity for recognition/success	no opportunity/success
492	creative commitment to self	hierarchical employment
493	enjoyable	less enjoyable
494	opportunity for career development	limited career development opportunity
495	total control	working to a brief
496	enjoyable physical working environment	less enjoyable working environment
497	project based work	sense of on-going/non completion
498	being own boss	working for someone else
499	more challenging	less challenging
500	teamwork	individual
501	self employed	working for others
502	high interest in job	little interest in job
503	ownership for rewards	rely on getting rewards from others
504	good pay	not good pay
505	work with people	less people contact
506	fixed hours	involve long hours/overtime
507	being own boss	part of big organisation
508	new challenge	defined role
509	opportunity for change in career direction	been there done that
510	project nature of the work	on-going work
511	ability to influence	less influence
512	ability to see outcome (from concept to fruition)	only deal with one part of process
513	recent/relevant experience	need to retrain
514	easier to obtain employment in this role	less easy
515	can work from home	organisation based
516	ability to do the role part-time	less chance to work part time
517	entrepreneurial	just a job

Number	Ideal about the job	Less ideal about the job
518	specialized skills	run of the mill
519	autonomy	allocated work
520	self employed	employee positions
521	less risk	high risk
522	can make decisions for the company	following the leader
523	opportunity for professional development	little opportunity for development
524	opportunity to help people	service people
525	power	no power
526	strategic (setting direction)	operational
527	flexible work hours	set hours (i.e., 9-5)
528	pleasant physical environment	unpleasant e.g., factory
529	high salary	low salary
530	unlimited earning potential	fixed salary (earning potential)
531	I am the manager	non management position
532	exciting	mundane
533	allows creativity	uncreative
534	enjoy the job content	boring
535	office based	transient (involves travel)
536	status	plebescant
537	allows continual learning	constrained
538	good rapport with colleagues	difficult relationships
539	ability to influence management	cow towing
540	stress free	stressful
541	mostly unilateral decision making	consensual decision making
542	opportunity to work with figures	report writing
543	managing a team	team player
544	career progression opportunity	doesn't provide as good a career progression platform
545	job fulfilment	boring
546	good pay	poorly paid
547	greater responsibility	less responsibility
548	better scope for learning	too routine
549	believe in the organisation and what it does	not passionate about what the organisation does
550	interesting	boring
551	opportunity to be strategic	working purely at operational level
552	project management	mundane small tasks
553	more consistent hours	less convenient hours
554	better recognition	unimportant job
555	pleasant physical environment	uncomfortable physical environment
556	organising	being organised
557	clear objectives	less clear objectives
558	autonomy	less autonomy
559	personal challenge	less challenge
560	ability to influence	less ability to influence
561	personal satisfaction	less satisfaction
562	teamwork	individual contact
563	caring	less personal
564	passionate about the job	less passionate about the job
565	can make a difference	make less of a difference

Number	Ideal about the job	Less ideal about the job
566	enjoyable	less enjoyable
567	uses my skills and experience	doesn't use my experience/skills
568	allows creativity	allows less creativity
569	comfortable with role	less comfortable
570	respect for role/proud to say I do it	less respect/less proud
571	interest in the area	less interest in the area
572	get to see the end result	only see a piece of the puzzle
573	uses my skills and education	nothing to do with my skills/education
574	dealing with people	dealing with facts
575	provide career opportunities	limited career opportunities
576	flexible hours	set hours
577	challenging	less challenging
578	Strategic	Operational
579	provides transferable skills	less transferrable skills
580	uses my specialised skills	generic knowledge
581	more career opportunity	less career opportunity
582	generates more income	less income
583	white-collar	blue-collar
584	allows creativity	less creative scope
585	opportunity to network	limited opportunity to network
586	interesting	boring
587	dealing with people who have a common interest	limited people contact
588	passionate about it	working just for the money
589	enjoyable	boring
590	instant recognition	don't see the results
591	helping/teaching people	providing a service
592	opportunity to travel	no opportunity to travel
593	fun	average - not so enjoyable
594	enjoyable physical environment	stale environment
595	challenging	less challenging
596	unlimited earning potential	limited earning potential
597	control over the job	lack of control
598	flexibility of location and time	rigid location/hours
599	work allows freedom of lifestyle	work controls lifestyle
600	creative	monotonous/routine
601	opportunity to add value	number crunching (less opportunity to add value)
602	opportunity to help people	less opportunity to proactively help people
603	future focussed	retrospective
604	making a difference	makes less of a difference
605	uses my strengths	doesn't use my best abilities
606	opportunity to learn	less new things to come up with
607	broad variety	not much variety
608	in control	part of a process
609	more aligned to my expertise	just a job (paid time)
610	passionate about it	less interested
611	enjoyable	more constrained
612	intellectually stimulating	less challenging

Number	Ideal about the job	Less ideal about the job
613	variety	no variety
614	people interaction	less people interaction
615	an area of interest	done them before
616	lively industry environment	less lively office environment
617	change in career direction	more of the same
618	own boss	working for someone else for wages
619	enjoyable people interaction (relationships)	customer transactions
620	challenging	less challenging
621	feel I can make a difference	less rewarding and less chance to make a difference
622	more level of responsibility	less responsibility
623	provides opportunity for career development	less opportunity for career development
624	a total change	same old same old
625	better money	less money
626	challenging	less challenging
627	rewarding	less rewarding
628	more exciting	not exciting
629	enables work/life balance	no work/life balance
630	the boss (in control of what happens)	being controlled
631	stimulates my brain	doesn't stimulate my brain
632	opportunity to travel	no opportunity to travel
633	varied people interaction	not so varied people interaction
634	feel like accomplished something	less feeling of accomplishment
635	flexibility in work hours	set hours
636	people contact	less people contact
637	own boss	being managed
638	get to use my brain	menial task
639	can work from home	office based
640	interesting	boring
641	good pay	not so good pay
642	uses my skills/education	doesn't require my skills
643	I'm my own boss	working for someone else
644	ability to pass on knowledge	little opportunity to pass on knowledge
645	passionate about it	just a job rather than a passion
646	opportunity to make a difference	less chance to make a difference
647	fulfil a dream	just a job
648	opportunity to manage people	being managed
649	immediate feedback	little/no feedback

Appendix 8: Repertory Grid Interview Constructs That Were Either Reworded Or Broken Down For Use In The Questionnaire

Construct No	Split or Reworded?	Positive Pole	Negative Pole
11	Reworded	Opportunity to work with stimulating people	Work with non stimulating people
44	Reworded	Broad generalist knowledge required	Specialist knowledge required
48	Reworded	Provides opportunity for professional development	Little opportunity for professional development
54	Reworded	Ability to assist others to achieve	No ability to assist others to achieve
74	Reworded	Face to face contact with people	Little face to face contact with people
89	Reworded	Salary	Hourly wage
107	Reworded	Makes best use of my skill set	Limited use of my skill set
157	Reworded	Job is not tied to an office	Office bound
167	Split into 2	Requires professional qualifications	No professional qualifications required
167	Split into 2	High status job	Lower status job
176	Reworded	Allows strategic planning and input	Follow someone else's strategic plan
181	Reworded	Flexible hours of work	Rigid hours of work
182	Reworded	Opportunity for overseas travel	No opportunity for overseas travel
201	Reworded	Supportive team	Unsupportive team
204	Reworded	Enjoy the people I work with	Less social environment
210	Reworded	Opportunities to learn	Limited opportunities to learn
311	Reworded	Clear career pathway	No clear career pathway
321	Reworded	Financial decisions	No financial decisions
345	Split into 2	Related to my area of interest	Limited relationship to my area of interest
345	Split into 2	Related to my education/qualifications	Limited relationship to my education
359	Reworded	Sincere relationships with people	Insincere people relationships
384	Reworded	Gives me job satisfaction	Gives me no job satisfaction
392	Split into 2	Intellectually stimulating	Little intellectual stimulation
392	Split into 2	Challenging	Very routine
393	Reworded	Authority for decision making	No authority
402	Reworded	Not demanding	Demanding
423	Reworded	Allows quality of life	Does not allow quality of life
429	Reworded	Good pay	Low pay
466	Reworded	Multifaceted role	Role has narrow scope
513	Reworded	Ability to influence	Limited ability to influence
515	Reworded	Relevant to my recent experience	Need to retrain
546	Split into 2	Managing a team	Not managing a team
546	Split into 2	Part of a team	Not part of a team
548	Reworded	Provides job fulfilment	Doesn't provide job fulfilment
623	Reworded	Meaningful customer interactions	Customer transactions
652	Reworded	Provides opportunity for management experience	Little opportunity for management experience

Appendix 9: Questionnaire

Massey University
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS
Kaupapa Whai Pakihi

WHAT IS IT THAT YOU VALUE IN YOUR IDEAL JOB

May 2006

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS QUESTIONNAIRE?

The objective of this study is to investigate what people value in a job. The purpose of this questionnaire is therefore, to find out what <u>you</u> value in a job.

The results of this questionnaire will be used to:
- Identify what it is that people value in a job
- To determine if there are differences between the different generational cohorts (Veterans, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y).

The data collected during the course of this research will be used by the researcher in partial fulfilment of a PhD in Human Resource Management at Massey University and may be used for writing an article or articles. The information will not be disseminated in a format that exposes the identity of any individual participant or lead to any harm.

HOW WE GOT YOUR NAME

We are aiming to determine what different generational cohort's (Veterans, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y) value in a job. To do this we have obtained permission from your employer to approach employees to participate in this study. You are one of the employees that have been selected from your organization to take part in this study. Your organization has agreed that you may fill in this questionnaire during work time.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The confidentiality of all data will be upheld by ensuring that all copies of this questionnaire will be stored securely within the principal researcher's office. The data once entered into a data base will have no personal identification on it and will be labeled using only a code number that identifies participants by industry group. All data will be stored for a period of at least five years, after which hard copies of all data will be shredded and computer files will be deleted.

YOUR RIGHT TO DECLINE TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH

In this research you have the right to:
- Decline to participate;
- Decline to answer any particular question;
- Withdraw from the research at any time;
- Ask any questions about the research at any time during participation;
- To provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher
- To be given access to a summary of the findings of the research when it is concluded. If you wish to receive a copy of the summary of results please indicate this at the end of the questionnaire

WHO DO I RETURN THE QUESTIONNAIRE TO?

Please return the questionnaire to Kristin Lyon either via email to kristinlyon@gmail.com or via post to Kristin Lyon, C/- PO Box 5474, Wellington by 30th May 2006.

IMPORTANT POINTS ABOUT THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire will take about 30 minutes to complete. I appreciate the time you are investing.

Please note that completion and return of this questionnaire implies consent.

If you have any queries about the purpose of the questionnaire or any items in the questionnaire itself, please do not hesitate to contact Kristin Lyon by email at kristinlyon@gmail.com

Thank you for your participation

Kind Regards
Kristin Lyon

HOW TO COMPLETE THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Please take some time to familiarise yourself with these instructions. The questionnaire is easy to complete but it may appear quite different to other questionnaires that you have completed.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:
Please think of your ideal job. Whilst no job is perfect, the job you select will be one **you** consider to be ideal for you. The job should be one that you have either done in the past or might realistically do in the future and know quite a bit about. Use this job as a reference point when completing the entire questionnaire.

There are no right or wrong answers so please answer as truthfully as possible

EXAMPLE
Look at the example below. You can see that each item in the questionnaire contains a pair of statements, with a seven point scale between them. For each item, think about which statement best describes the ideal job you have in mind and then put a cross in the appropriate box.

For example:

	Extremely important	Important	Somewhat important	No Preference	Somewhat important	Important	Extremely important	
High pay	X							Low pay
High level of responsibility						X		Little responsibility

This would indicate that you think it is "Extremely important" that your ideal job has high pay and it is "Important" to you that your ideal job has little responsibility.

A COUPLE OF POINTERS

- For each item, think about which statement best describes the ideal job you have in mind and then put a cross in the appropriate box.

- Every job has its good and bad points. It is unlikely that the job you have in mind will receive similar ratings on all of the items

- You may notice that there are a number of questions in the questionnaire that seem similar. These have been included to ensure all "shades" of meaning are represented

- If a statement doesn't apply to the job you are using as a reference – please leave it blank

When completing this questionnaire please think about how important each of the following is for you in your ideal job.

		Extremely important	Important	Somewhat important	No preference	Somewhat important	Important	Extremely important	
1	Flexible hours of work								Rigid set hours of work
2	Ability to do the role part time								Less chance to work part time
3	Work allows freedom of lifestyle								Work controls lifestyle
4	Enables work/life balance								No work/life balance
5	Allows quality of life								Does not allow quality of life
6	In control of work/life balance								Slave to the job
7	Direct influence on income								Fixed income
8	Good Pay								Low pay
9	Guaranteed income								At risk income
10	Salary								Hourly wage
11	Opportunity for creativity								No opportunity for creativity
12	Allows innovative thinking								Structured process driven thinking
13	Opportunity to use my skills								Little opportunity to use my skills
14	Broad generalist knowledge required								Specialist knowledge required
15	Makes the best of my skill set								Limited use of my skill set
16	Requires professional qualifications								No professional qualifications required
17	Transferable skills								Industry specific skills
18	Related to my area of interest								Limited relationship to my area of interest
19	Related to my education/qualifications								Limited relationship to my education
20	Multifaceted role								Role has narrow scope
21	Relevant to my recent experience								Need to retrain

Please think about how important each of the following is for you in your ideal job.

#		Extremely important	Important	Somewhat important	No preference	Somewhat important	Important	Extremely important	
22	Provides opportunity for personal development								Little opportunity for personal development
23	Provides opportunity for professional development								Little opportunity for professional development
24	Good chance for promotion								No potential for promotion
25	Opportunities to learn								Limited opportunities to learn
26	Opportunity for career progression								No opportunity for career progression
27	Provides opportunity for management experience								Little opportunity for management experience
28	Aligned with career aspiration								Not aligned with career aspiration
29	Clear career pathway								No clear career pathway
30	Opens up future job prospects								Limited job prospects for the future
31	Change in career direction								More of the same
32	Opportunity to work with stimulating people								Work with non stimulating people
33	Ability to assist others to achieve								No ability to assist others to achieve
34	Face to face contact with people								Little face to face contact with people
35	Working with people								Working with things/facts
36	Enjoy the people I work with								Less social workplace
37	Sincere relationships with people								Insincere people relationships
38	Meaningful customer interactions								Customer transactions
39	Opportunity to help people								Less opportunity to help people
40	Supportive team								Unsupportive team
41	Working in a caring environment (care about colleagues)								Not caring about colleagues
42	Good rapport with colleagues								Difficult relationships
43	Opportunity to network								Limited opportunity to network
44	Passionate about the job								Its just a job
45	Ability to influence the direction of the organisation								Indirect impact on the direction of the organisation
46	Ability to be a leader								Follower
47	High level of responsibility								Little responsibility
48	Good supportive manager								Useless Manager
49	Input into decision making								Being told what to do
50	Financial decisions								No financial decisions

Please think about how important each of the following is for you in your ideal job.

		Extremely important	Important	Somewhat important	No preference	Somewhat important	Important	Extremely important	
51	Authority for decision making								No authority
52	Opportunity to be self employed								Working for an organisation
53	Ability to influence								Limited ability to influence
54	Managing a team								Not managing a team
55	Being the CEO								Not being the CEO
56	Part of a team								Not part of a team
57	Total autonomy								No autonomy
58	Job is seen as prestigious								Job not seen as prestigious
59	High status job								Lower status job
60	Job is not tied to an office								Office bound
61	Opportunity for overseas travel								No opportunity for overseas travel
62	Gives me job satisfaction								Gives me no job satisfaction
63	Provides job fulfilment								Doesn't provide job fulfilment
64	Low stress								High stress
65	Not demanding								Demanding
66	Allows strategic planning and input								Follow someone else's strategic plan
67	Strategic								Operational
68	Intellectually stimulating								Little intellectual stimulation
69	Challenging								Very routine

Please now take a moment to check through the questionnaire to ensure you have not inadvertently forgotten to answer any questions.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

This information will be used to identify what generational cohort you belong to.

Year of Birth: [ ]

Please indicate which industry grouping you are currently employed in.

Industry Grouping

Wholesale & Retail Trade (includes shops, cafes, etc..)	[ ]
Transport, Storage & Communication	[ ]
Business & Finance Services	[ ]
Education	[ ]
Health & Community Services	[ ]
Other *(Please specify)* _____	[ ]

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In addition, please identify which of the following groupings apply by marking a cross in the appropriate boxes.

Ethnicity: NZ European or Pākehā ☐   NZ Māori ☐   Pacific Islander ☐
    Other European ☐   Asian ☐   Other ☐

Gender   Male ☐   Female ☐

Would you like to receive a copy of the summary of results?   Yes ☐   No ☐

If Yes please provide a contact email address for these to be sent to: _____

Once again can you please return this completed questionnaire to Kristin Lyon by 30th May 2006 either via email to kristinlyon@gmail.com or via post to Kristin Lyon, C/- PO Box 5474, Wellington

Thank you for your help. It is much appreciated.

Appendix 10: Letter to organisations seeking permission to access participants to complete the questionnaire

Massey University

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS
Kaupapa Whai Pakihi

[insert date]

[name of organisation]
[address]
WELLINGTON

Dear [insert name]

Re: Study on Diversity Management – A Generational Cohort Perspective

I recently met with you to discuss the involvement of [insert name of organisation] in a research project on diversity management with respect to generational cohort differences. At this meeting you indicated that this would be acceptable. I am therefore seeking your formal permission for the research to proceed. I have included a detailed overview of the research procedure. Please note that this project has already been approved by the Massey University Ethics Committee.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of the research or require clarification of any matter then please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

Kristin Lyon

Procedure for the Diversity Management – A Generational Cohort Perspective Study

Securing Participants:

1. The organisation nominates a staff member to act as coordinator with the researcher.

2. I aim to secure approximately 48 participants. Where possible I would like to obtain 12 participants from each of the four generational cohorts (preferably 6 male and 6 female). It is important that I retain as far as possible an equal balance of numbers from each generational cohort as well as by gender.

3. The coordinator will provide the researcher with the email addresses of 12 employees in each of the four generational cohorts (Veteran's, Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y).

4. The selected participants will then be sent a copy of the questionnaire by the researcher.

5. It is anticipated that participants will fill in the questionnaire during work time

Note: It is anticipated that in some organisations over-sampling will occur in some categories due to the nature of their workforce.

Collecting Data:

The study will involve the completion of a questionnaire. See attached. This involves asking participants questions about what they value in a job and will take approximately 30-40 minutes to complete.

The information supplied by participants will be completely confidential and a numbering system will be used to ensure confidentiality. Your organization will not be identified (other than by an industry code) unless you give the researcher permission to do so.

A summary of the results of this study will be made available to participants and the participating organisations. In addition, the data collected during the course of this research will be used by the researcher in partial fulfilment of a PhD in Human Resource Management at Massey University and may be used for writing an article or articles.

Appendix 11 Full list of importance ratings (mean and SD)

Question	Veteran	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y
1	2.63 (1.21)	2.43 (1.14)	2.39 (1.07)	3.24 (1.38)
2	3.25 (1.70)	3.36 (1.51)	3.75 (1.51)	3.96 (1.51)
3	2.00 (0.77)	2.06 (0.79)	1.95 (0.80)	2.17 (0.97)
4	2.03 (1.36)	1.79 (0.83)	1.64 (0.70)	1.86 (0.83)
5	2.00 (2.84)	1.60 (0.68)	1.54 (0.63)	1.69 (0.76)
6	1.77 (0.68)	1.72 (0.71)	1.88 (1.01)	1.82 (0.86)
7	3.03 (1.93)	2.94 (1.54)	3.21 (1.69)	3.48 1.77)
8	1.91 (0.93)	1.92 (0.65)	1.89 (0.87)	1.83 (0.81)
9	1.94 (1.16)	1.72 (0.90)	1.86 (0.88)	1.59 (0.78)
10	3.22 (1.36)	2.72 (1.38)	2.43 (1.08)	3.24 (1.66)
11	2.44 (1.18)	2.13 (0.85)	2.23 (0.93)	2.10 (0.82)
12	2.53 (1.39)	2.11 (0.84)	2.20 (0.88)	2.10 (0.86)
13	1.75 (1.08)	1.66 (0.73)	1.63 (0.93)	1.55 (0.68)
14	2.88 (1.74)	3.15 (1.81)	3.66 (1.69)	3.24 (1.55)
15	2.06 (1.13)	1.89 (0.87)	1.96 (1.03)	1.97 (0.94)
16	3.00 (1.27)	3.13 (1.21)	3.07 (1.46)	3.07 (1.30)
17	2.34 (0.84)	2.26 (0.94)	2.70 (1.40)	2.61 (0.99)
18	2.25 (1.19)	2.11 (0.94)	1.96 (0.87)	1.83 (0.80)
19	2.31 (0.95)	2.85 (1.12)	2.75 (1.34)	2.45 (1.12)
20	2.47 (1.06)	2.04 (0.93)	2.21 (1.04)	2.48 (1.02)
21	2.66 (1.39)	2.81 (1.22)	2.46 (1.01)	3.10 (1.21)
22	1.94 (0.56)	2.38 (0.78)	1.71 (0.65)	1.69 (0.81)
23	2.31 (1.00)	2.43 (0.71)	1.80 (0.81)	1.62 (0.78)
24	2.44 (0.91)	2.62 (0.97)	2.14 (0.96)	1.90 (0.90)
25	1.91 (0.64)	1.89 (0.73)	1.61 (0.65)	1.41 (0.63)

Question	Veteran	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y
26	2.48 (0.98)	2.45 (0.90)	1.86 (0.98)	1.59 (0.73)
27	3.06 (1.34)	2.74 (1.33)	2.45 (1.03)	2.34 (1.08)
28	2.47 (1.23)	2.62 (0.95)	2.13 (1.08)	2.04 (1.0)
29	2.65 (1.05)	2.87 (1.19)	2.36 (1.23)	2.38 (1.0)
30	2.77 (1.06)	2.55 (1.04)	2.04 (1.01)	1.83 (0.80)
31	3.19 (1.17)	3.23 (1.07)	3.38 (1.24)	3.21 (1.22)
32	2.06 (1.11)	1.68 (0.69)	1.71 (0.76)	1.79 (0.73)
33	2.19 (1.07)	2.64 (0.84)	2.16 (0.80)	2.10 (0.86)
34	2.13 (1.24)	2.28 (1.23)	2.00 (0.89)	2.24 (1.27)
35	2.00 (0.84)	2.23 (1.34)	2.07 (0.95)	2.31 (1.51)
36	1.84 (0.83)	1.57 (0.62)	2.18 (0.60)	1.66 (0.90)
37	1.66 (0.94)	1.83 (0.79)	1.89 (0.80)	1.79 (0.82)
38	1.54 (0.77)	2.20 (1.14)	2.20 (1.05)	1.90 (1.26)
39	1.94 (0.62)	1.79 (0.72)	2.04 (0.79)	2.03 (1.30)
40	1.53 (0.62)	1.57 (0.68)	1.68 (0.72)	1.50 (1.07)
41	1.53 (0.57)	1.64 (0.71)	1.84 (0.85)	1.59 (1.07)
42	1.63 (0.71)	1.62 (0.61)	1.57 (0.60)	1.66 (0.94)
43	2.16 (0.88)	2.36 (0.99)	2.36 (1.00)	2.21 (0.98)
44	2.06 (0.72)	1.72 (0.79)	1.68 (0.74)	1.69 (0.97)
45	2.28 (1.11)	2.40 (0.88)	2.39 (0.89)	2.62 (0.86)
46	2.53 (1.31)	2.64 (1.24)	2.32 (1.03)	2.48 (0.91)
47	2.53 (1.19)	2.57 (1.19)	2.39 (0.89)	2.55 (1.12)
48	1.45 (0.68)	1.68 (0.89)	1.54 (0.71)	1.69 (1.26)
49	1.97 (0.75)	1.98 (0.77)	1.96 (0.76)	2.10 (0.80)
50	3.06 (1.44)	2.83 (1.31)	2.98 (1.23)	3.10 (0.96)
51	2.44 (1.06)	2.30 (0.83)	2.21 (0.82)	2.62 (0.86)
52	3.97 (1.49)	4.00 (1.47)	3.82 (1.22)	3.69 (1.54)

Question	Veteran	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y
53	2.50 (1.24)	2.43 (0.80)	2.21 (0.75)	2.45 (0.87)
54	3.03 (1.41)	3.09 (1.21)	3.14 (1.31)	3.34 (1.17)
55	4.31 (1.80)	4.00 (1.28)	4.23 (1.49)	4.14 (1.38)
56	1.88 (0.61)	2.09 (1.02)	2.18 (0.90)	1.97 (0.91)
57	2.97 (1.34)	2.68 (0.96)	2.98 (0.86)	3.00 (1.34)
58	3.00 (1.19)	3.23 (0.89)	3.11 (1.00)	2.62 (0.85)
59	3.06 (0.98)	3.11 (0.95)	3.09 (1.03)	2.90 (0.88)
60	3.00 (1.12)	2.87 (1.39)	3.25 (1.08)	3.00 (1.16)
61	3.25 (1.31)	3.11 (0.91)	3.11 (1.27)	2.86 (1.25)
62	1.47 (0.57)	1.40 (0.54)	1.36 (0.62)	1.55 (0.63)
63	1.53 (0.51)	1.57 (0.58)	1.52 (0.69)	1.76 (0.83)
64	2.47 (1.21)	2.79 (1.35)	3.46 (1.35)	2.45 (1.35)
65	3.25 (1.28)	3.96 (1.49)	4.32 (1.51)	4.00 (1.31)
66	2.71 (1.37)	2.70 (1.21)	2.79 (0.99)	2.69 (0.89)
67	3.31 (1.41)	2.94 (1.34)	2.39 (1.53)	2.90 (1.22)
68	2.00 (0.50)	1.87 (0.82)	1.79 (0.62)	1.86 (0.77)
69	2.06 (0.76)	2.19 (1.10)	1.91 (0.72)	1.90 (0.94)

Appendix 12: Linear Discriminant Analysis Summary of Classification for the various levels of discrimination

Linear Discriminant Analysis Summary Classification for Questions with Discrimination greater than 1

Put into group	True Group			
	Veteran	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y
Veteran	28	0	1	0
Baby Boomer	1	37	7	2
Generation X	0	3	42	2
Generation Y	0	0	0	19
Total N	29	40	50	23
N correct	28	37	42	19
Proportion	0.966	0.925	0.840	0.826

N=142. N correct =126. Proportion correct = 0.887

Linear Discriminant Analysis Summary Classification for Questions with Discrimination greater than 2

Put into group	True Group			
	Veteran	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y
Veteran	19	5	7	2
Baby Boomer	4	26	11	2
Generation X	4	9	29	4
Generation Y	2	4	8	17
Total N	29	44	55	25
N correct	19	26	29	17
Proportion	0.655	0.591	0.527	0.680

N=153. N correct =91. Proportion correct = 0.595

Linear Discriminant Analysis Summary Classification for Questions with Discrimination greater than 3

| | True Group | | | |
Put into group	**Veteran**	**Baby Boomer**	**Generation X**	**Generation Y**
Veteran	17	9	11	2
Baby Boomer	7	20	13	1
Generation X	5	9	21	6
Generation Y	2	7	11	17
Total N	31	45	56	26
N correct	17	20	21	17
Proportion	0.548	0.444	0.375	0.654

N=158. N correct =75. Proportion correct = 0.475

Linear Discriminant Analysis Summary Classification for Questions with Discrimination greater than 3.5

| | True Group | | | |
Put into group	**Veteran**	**Baby Boomer**	**Generation X**	**Generation Y**
Veteran	14	11	9	6
Baby Boomer	7	18	11	1
Generation X	5	9	20	6
Generation Y	5	8	16	14
Total N	31	46	56	27
N correct	14	18	20	14
Proportion	0.452	0.391	0.357	0.519

N=160 N correct =66. Proportion correct = 0.412

Linear Discriminant Analysis Summary Classification for Questions with Discrimination greater than 4

| Put into group | True Group | | | |
	Veteran	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y
Veteran	3	4	6	4
Baby Boomer	9	15	17	6
Generation X	2	16	22	7
Generation Y	16	12	11	10
Total N	30	47	56	27
N correct	3	15	22	10
Proportion	0.100	0.319	0.393	0.370

N=160. N correct =50. Proportion correct = 0.313

Appendix 13: Linear Discriminant Analysis Summary of Classification with Cross Validation for the various levels of discrimination

Linear Discriminant Analysis Summary Classification for Questions with Discrimination greater than 1.0

| Put into group | True Group | | | |
	Veteran	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y
Veteran	14	5	6	3
Baby Boomer	3	17	14	5
Generation X	5	9	21	6
Generation Y	7	9	9	9
Total N	29	40	50	23
N correct	14	17	21	9
Proportion	0.483	0.425	0.420	0.391

N=142. N correct =61. Proportion correct = 0.430

Linear Discriminant Analysis Summary Classification for Questions with Discrimination greater than 2.0

| Put into group | True Group | | | |
	Veteran	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y
Veteran	9	10	11	2
Baby Boomer	9	13	14	4
Generation X	6	16	17	7
Generation Y	5	5	13	12
Total N	29	44	55	25
N correct	9	13	17	12
Proportion	0.310	0.295	0.309	0.480

N=153. N correct =51. Proportion correct = 0.333

Linear Discriminant Analysis Summary Classification for Questions with Discrimination greater than 3.0

| Put into group | True Group | | | |
	Veteran	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y
Veteran	7	14	12	3
Baby Boomer	13	12	13	3
Generation X	7	11	19	9
Generation Y	4	8	12	11
Total N	31	45	56	26
N correct	7	12	19	11
Proportion	0.226	0.267	0.339	0.423

N=158. N correct =49. Proportion correct = 0.310

Linear Discriminant Analysis Summary Classification for Questions with Discrimination greater than 3.5

| Put into group | True Group | | | |
	Veteran	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y
Veteran	11	14	9	7
Baby Boomer	7	13	12	2
Generation X	7	11	18	10
Generation Y	6	8	17	8
Total N	31	46	56	27
N correct	11	13	18	8
Proportion	0.353	0.283	0.321	0.296

N=160. N correct =50. Proportion correct = 0.313

Linear Discriminant Analysis Summary Classification for Questions with Discrimination greater than 4.0

	True Group			
Put into group	**Veteran**	**Baby Boomer**	**Generation X**	**Generation Y**
Veteran	0	5	10	12
Baby Boomer	9	12	20	6
Generation X	2	18	15	7
Generation Y	19	12	11	2
Total N	30	47	56	27
N correct	0	12	15	2
Proportion	0.000	0.255	0.268	0.074

N=160. N correct =29. Proportion correct = 0181

Appendix 14: Full list of discrimination in responses

Question	Veteran	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y	Discrimination
1	0.27	1.13	1.04	1.33	1.06
2	0.55	0.37	1.15	0.10	1.04
3	7.12	6.67	6.49	6.70	0.63
4	-1.73	-2.10	-3.52	-2.98	1.79
5	-0.79	-0.88	-0.84	0.87	1.74
6	-0.71	1.09	1.31	0.06	1.80
7	0.65	0.45	0.35	1.03	0.68
8	-1.05	1.39	0.72	2.02	3.07
9	-2.70	-6.09	-5.04	-4.78	3.39
10	1.42	-0.45	-0.30	0.63	1.87
11	1.48	3.52	2.28	3.95	2.46
12	1.85	0.75	1.21	-0.23	2.08
13	-2.91	-3.50	-3.42	-1.79	1.72
14	0.02	0.29	0.78	-0.56	1.34
15	-0.24	-1.26	-0.28	-1.33	1.09
16	-0.63	1.17	0.70	0.96	1.80
17	2.60	3.27	3.20	4.01	1.41
18	1.06	-1.47	0.33	-1.95	3.00
19	2.03	3.63	3.79	1.47	2.32
20	1.84	0.94	0.85	2.26	1.41
21	0.63	0.56	-1.25	1.14	2.38
22	-5.01	-3.94	-3.65	-2.32	2.69
23	1.96	0.88	1.43	0.41	1.55
24	-4.29	-2.56	-3.52	-1.64	2.65
25	4.61	4.99	3.25	1.99	3.00
26	2.90	1.66	2.66	-0.60	3.51
27	0.78	-3.07	-2.69	-2.19	3.85
28	-0.29	0.96	1.15	0.23	1.45
29	-2.53	-1.27	-1.63	-0.55	1.98
30	3.96	3.52	2.79	2.07	1.88
31	3.06	-0.22	1.09	2.52	3.29
32	-3.73	-4.22	-3.50	-4.90	1.40
33	0.75	0.78	1.50	0.53	0.97
34	-0.63	2.89	1.14	1.15	3.52
35	-0.98	-1.98	-1.62	-0.72	1.26
36	1.40	-2.87	-1.09	-2.60	4.27
37	1.68	3.00	3.64	2.03	1.97
38	-3.12	-1.18	-3.01	-2.15	1.94
39	0.75	-2.73	-0.35	-0.49	3.48
40	2.72	3.70	4.33	2.25	2.08
41	-1.95	-3.26	-1.53	-4.81	2.87
42	1.90	4.33	0.59	6.51	5.92
43	0.05	1.12	0.72	1.63	1.57
44	0.74	-2.88	-1.38	-2.53	3.62
45	0.22	2.08	2.17	3.47	3.25
46	-1.31	-0.17	-0.95	0.49	1.81
47	0.37	0.81	1.08	-0.55	1.62

Question	Veteran	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y	Discrimination
48	-1.10	0.25	-0.64	-0.33	1.35
49	-0.36	-1.19	0.25	-2.29	2.54
50	1.33	1.12	1.25	1.89	0.78
51	0.97	-2.07	-2.00	0.42	2.98
52	0.17	1.57	0.63	0.74	1.41
53	1.42	0.57	-0.20	-1.21	2.63
54	-1.31	0.89	1.40	0.24	2.72
55	3.78	3.15	2.85	3.67	0.93
56	4.19	4.66	4.56	4.45	0.47
57	2.12	0.26	1.10	1.82	1.86
58	3.84	6.06	5.62	4.02	2.22
59	-2.50	-3.37	-3.77	-2.05	1.72
60	2.49	1.57	3.31	1.59	1.74
61	-3.98	-4.19	-4.27	-6.10	2.11
62	6.62	10.19	8.74	9.97	3.57
63	0.94	-1.44	-1.61	1.41	3.02
64	0.65	0.19	1.27	-0.21	1.48
65	1.51	3.27	2.47	3.20	1.76
66	-5.26	-1.74	-2.42	-2.59	3.52
67	2.34	0.68	1.51	0.80	1.66
68	0.26	-0.09	-0.31	3.98	4.29
69	-2.29	0.07	-1.42	-2.61	2.68