MASTER OF ARTS IN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT DISSERTATION

Y
are they different?

An exploratory study of Generation Y in the professional services sector utilising the Resource Based View of the Firm

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Abstract

Y - are they different? An exploratory study of Generation Y in the professional services sector utilising the Resource Based View of the firm – by Suzanne Reidy

It has been widely documented that Generation Y (GenY) is different to previous generations but little on how to manage them (Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman and Lance, 2010). This research considers GenY using the Resource Based View of the Firm (RBV) (Wright, Dunford and Snell, 2001). This view has been commended for recognising the value employees bring to organisations (Farnham, 2010). Employees are particularly important in professional service firms as their knowledge and skills are what the company is providing to clients (Hein, 2013).

The aim and objectives of this research were attained using a literature review of previously conducted research in this field and qualitative, semi-structured interviews with GenY and their managers. This research sought to increase the understanding of GenY as they are substantially different from GenX to warrant further unique research (Smola and Sutton, 2002). This study conducted interviews with two samples; GenY, and their managers. Key findings uncovered a sense of entitlement they are bringing to the workforce. GenY only want to stay in a role as long as they are developing professionally and view their managers as mentors. If not, they will use it as a springboard.

This research ascertained how managers currently attract, motivate and retain GenY and makes recommendations for improvements. There are similarities and differences in what GenY want versus what managers think they want. This primary and secondary research allowed the researcher to conclude that the RBV model is no longer the most suitable framework. GenY don't want to be perceived as a resource a company holds. They seek customization and managers must recognize that GenY expects more personal gain in return for the value they bring.

It is suggested that further quantitative research should be conducted across a wider sample, ensuring external validity (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). Recommendations could then be generalized across organisations and allow for the creation of a new framework for managers to follow.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The term *generation* categorises different age groups and how they are influenced by their environment and society at the time (Manheim, 1952). Those in the same age group typically share attitudes, values and behaviours as they grow up surrounded by the same influences (Strauss and Howe, 1991). Traits and characteristics of different generations have become more important in analysing individual and organisational behaviour (Ng, Schweitzer and Lyons, 2010). More attention is paid to generations rather than gender, ethnicity or class in understanding society (Gilliard and Higgs, 2007). There is a minority view which considers differences amongst employees to be age, not generation, focussed (Wong, Gardiner, Lang and Coulon, 2008). However the majority of leading academics recognise the value society attributes to the concept of generations over maturity or age (Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman and Lance, 2010; Smola and Sutton, 2002).

Generation Y (GenY) is the latest generation to make an impact at work. It is the largest in US history and has very different expectations to previous generations (Ng et al, 2010). It is making a significant impact in the workforce with their increased education levels, entrepreneurship and creativity (Nikravan, 2014). Employers must understand how to realise the potential of this highly educated and talented workforce (Sheahan, 2005).

1.2 Context and rationale

This research examines the impact GenY is making on the professional service sector in Ireland utilising the resource based view of the firm (RBV). This view considers employees as resources which must be tapped into for organisations to be successful (Farnham, 2010). Resources are all assets a firm holds that contribute to the strategy being created and implemented (Barney, 2001).

There has been little empirical examination on managing GenY, the youngest and fastest growing generation in the workforce (Martin, 2005). It is recognised that they are different and organisations should treat them differently, but very little published on how to do it (Twenge et al, 2010). Westerman and Yamamura (2007) recognised that GenY employees are sufficiently different from GenX employees to warrant further unique research into what drives them to perform. Significant research has been compiled on the differences between GenX, Baby Boomers and previous generations (Smola and Sutton, 2002). More research is

needed to fully understand GenY so their managers can attract and retain them (Twenge et al, 2010).

An individual's manager has the biggest influence on why people leave a job (Branham, 2005). 43% of those surveyed left because of a lack of recognition and 31% cited a lack of empowerment from their manager (Hall, 2013). It is important for managers to understand their employees and build relationships. Demographic changes in different generations have a bigger impact on business than technology (McCrindle, 2006). Managers must therefore understand GenY and untap their potential.

GenY have been researched previously to learn what they want at work, such as flexibility and innovative perks. There has been less research on what managers can, and are willing to, give them (Tungan, 2009; Trunk, 2007). Some quantitative research has been published on attracting, motivating and retaining workers in professional services. It is recommended that further qualitative research be completed to gain a deeper insight (Martin, 2005). It is also acknowledged that much of the research in this area has a geographic focus, with samples mainly in the US and the UK. No research has been found to date, focussing on GenY in professional services in Ireland. This particular sample is chosen for several reasons. Ireland has produced some of the brightest minds in history, such as Heaney, Beckett, Yeats, Joyce, Shaw, O'Connell, Parnell, Boyle, Parsons, Walton and Hamilton. Today's brightest minds, GenY, are using innovative and creative means to rebuild our economy (Hodgson, 2013). Wright et al's 2001 article is highly regarded for its understanding of human capital and how to ensure employees are engaged and utilising their talents (Reed, Lubatkin and Srinivasan, 2006). It sees employees as resources a company can use to create and grow competitive advantage, along with other resources a firm holds, such as finance, product offerings, and manufacturing processes. It equally has critics such as Priem and Butler (2001) for not clearly defining competitive advantage and the resources a company needs to achieve competitive advantage. Nevertheless it is still widely cited and further analysed (Colbert, 2004). Thirteen years after Wright et al's article was published, the workforce is different with the arrival of GenY. Further research is required to understand how GenY affects the RBV model; whether it can still be applied unilaterally or if it requires customisation to remain relevant in the current environment.

> *"I am convinced that nothing we do is more important than hiring and developing people. At the end of the day you bet on people, not on strategies."*
>
> **Lawrence Bossidy, former CEO of GE**

1.3 Research question: aims and objectives

It has been recognised that GenY is different from previous generations (Alch, 2000). Their impact in the workplace is already substantial and they will continue to influence and impact it for the next 40 years at least (Phillipson, 2007). It is important for managers to fully understand this cohort to allow businesses gain as much as possible from GenY to maintain and grow competitive advantage. The main aim of this research is to:

Explore managers' understanding of GenY and to investigate how to maximise GenY employees' performance.

This research will be completed through a number of objectives:

- Increase understanding of GenY

  As is analysed in the literature review, generational differences are recognised above age, gender and ethnicity as influential factors. GenY must be understood and further explored to improve workplace relations.

- Examine the impact GenY is having on organisations (specifically professional service firms)

  Professional services are different. They trade in their unique knowledge, skills and people and their potential is what will drive growth (von Nordenflycht, 2010). The RBV framework demonstrates that a firm's assets are more important than the products it sells to drive competitive advantage (Priem and Butler, 2001). This study will research if managers need to adapt their approach for this segment of the workforce.

- Gain insight into how managers are currently attracting, motivating and retaining GenY through the RBV.

  It will be assessed using qualitative primary research with GenY and their managers if new techniques are in place and whether they are required to attract potential employees and engage them in organisational citizenship.

- Identify changes managers can make to attracti, motivate and retain GenY.

  GenY is a highly talented cohort. They are the most highly educated generation to date with parents and others acting as lifelong mentors. In order to make the most of this generation, it will be considered if any other techniques are better suited to them.

This will be done by interviewing GenY employees in professional services in Ireland to add to quantitative research completed by other academics. These findings will feed into questions for GenY's managers to further explore the managers' understanding. Findings from GenY and their managers' interviews will be analysed to further understand how GenY and their managers do and should work together.

1.4 Conclusion

A literature review will be completed in chapter 2 in order to understand the differences between GenY and previous generations. Their impact will be evaluated as will the appropriateness of current recruitment and retention policies .

Chapter 3 will exhibit the research methodology. This will demonstrate how insight into GenY and their managers was gained through interviews over other methods and how this data was analysed to create findings.

An analysis of these findings is in chapter 4. This research demonstrates the approaches managers are currently taking with this cohort and how it compares to what GenY want from their careers.

Chapter 5 provides a discussion on these findings. By combining a literature review and qualitative interviews with both GenY and their managers, the researcher tested previous research and added new insights. Recommendations are made to further align these two cohorts and maximise GenY's contribution.

Chapter 6 provides a conclusion of this research and recommendations for further studies. It will be noted how a bespoke approach is required to manage this generation, rather than a one-size fits all approach which managers have used in the past. This generation expects a lot more handholding and support than previous generations. They should be regarded above other resources such as finance and product/ service offering as they have more potential than previous generations and are recognised as "worth it" (Skelton, 2012). It is hoped that, when implemented in professional service companies, the research will help organisations understand this generation and make the most of their talents and skills.

2 Literature review

2.1 Overview of generations in the workforce

The workforce today is made up of three main generations – Baby Boomers, GenX and GenY. Baby Boomers are the oldest of these. They are so-called because of the significant increase in birth rates at the end of the Second World War, born 1945-1965. This was the largest generation for some time and made an impact on society (Phillipson, 2007). Generations are defined by their environment; Baby Boomers grew up surrounded by the Vietnam War, the civil rights movement and the assassination of J.F. Kennedy (Twenge et al, 2010). People moved to cities for work and resources, causing a significant growth in consumerism (Gilliard and Higgs, 2007). Baby Boomers made up over 50% of the labour force in the US in the 1960s.

Industrial changes and working efficiencies affected this generation, with fierce competition for jobs and promotions. They were known for having strong basic values and defining for themselves what success means. They did not conform to career progression and hierarchy as the only form of success and had high expectations for reward and recognition (Clarke, 2001). They were much more likely than previous generations to do things in line with their values and not follow management orders unquestionably. They were considered to be results-driven, creative and gave maximum effort at work. They were long-term committed to their work and more focussed on parenting and a work-life balance than previous generations (Burke 2004; Hall and Richter, 1990). They are now retiring from the workplace (Phillipson, 2007).

Generation X (GenX) followed Baby Boomers, born 1966-1979 and are characterised by their technological capabilities and quick rewards (Twenge et al, 2010). The workforce became more diverse for GenX with equal numbers of women in the workforce and more ethnic diversity (Clarke, 2001). They value status and financial reward and are more self-interested (Twenge et al, 2010; Sessa, Kabacoff, Deal and Brown, 2007). They witnessed the Aids epidemic and were the first generation to experience their parents' divorce. Because of this and downsizing due to economic circumstances, they are independent and less committed to their organisation (Glass, 2007).

There is much debate about what defines GenY but it is accepted that it covers those born 1980-1995 (Ng et al., 2010, Twenge et al, 2010). These are the children of Baby Boomers and number 76 million in the US (Trunk, 2007). By 2011, they comprised just over 25% of

the population (Camp, 2014). Also labelled Millennials, the Net Generation and Echo Boomers, they are as influential in the market as Baby Boomers were in the 1960s (Langford, 2011; Alch, 2000). They grew up with the internet and saw many major companies, such as Anderson, Enron and Lehman Brothers collapse due to unethical management (Twenge et al, 2010). They consider themselves to be unique (Wong et al, 2008), looking to stand out in the biggest generation in US history (Alch, 2000).

Generation C (GenC), otherwise known as GenZ, is the generation to emerge after GenY. The C stands for "connected" as these adolescents are always online and connected to each other, the news and the world generally. They were born 1995 – 2010 and are therefore still developing characteristics (Gibson, 2013). The internet is a huge influence in their lives and they are more digitally and technologically literate than GenY. GenC feel comfortable expressing themselves on social media platforms and interact with friends and family digitally more than they do in person (Friedrich, Peterson and Koster, 2011). So far, they have been influenced by Harry Potter, Barrack Obama and Apple (iPod, iPhone, iPad) growing up. Just as GenY took on characteristics of their Boomer parents, GenC are taking on characteristics of their GenX parents and are influenced by their GenY older siblings. Random shootings and terrorist attacks occurring around them is likely to influence a need for security in their work. They will stay in education even longer than GenY and with their parents' confrontational attitudes influencing them, they will look to progress faster in their careers than GenY (Gibson, 2013). By the year 2020, GenC will make up 20% of the western world (Friedrich et al, 2011) and will be a smaller generation than GenY's 25% but has similar characteristics (Gibson, 2013).

2.2 What makes GenY different and how does this affect organisations?

GenY have high expectations of the work environment (Earle, 2003). This stems from their boomer parents raising them to believe their opinions are important and they should be involved in decisions (Asghar, 2014). They entered the workforce approximately five years later than previous generations due to further studies and expect this investment to be recognised. They want to quickly move up the career ladder, earn more money but not necessarily work harder (Tulgan, 2009; Twenge et al, 2010). In the past, a career equated to steady promotions and increases in responsibility over time. Now it is more about self-

> *"GenY is the most high maintenance workforce in history but has the potential to be the most high-performing workforce in history"*
>   **Bruce Tulgan, author of Not Everyone Gets a Trophy: how to manage GenY**

fulfilment and what the individual finds rewarding, not secure roles with consistent salary increases (Garletts, 2002). This is significant for organisations as they must find creative ways of keeping this highly educated, quick learning generation motivated and engaged. Managers must try to keep GenY challenged and support them to achieve (Sheahan, 2005).

Organisations are recognising the significant differences between GenY and previous generations. Many are adapting their offerings with in-house gyms, on-site massages, extended holidays, supported career breaks and paid time off for volunteering and charity work (Twenge et al, 2010; Needleman, 2008). Leisure and work-life balance are very important for GenY (Smola and Sutton, 2002). Autonomy is a key motivator for these employees. They are available 24/7 but expect this to be balanced with long lunches or breaks mid-afternoon (Asghar, 2014). They have seen Baby Boomers and GenX work hard their entire careers only to be made redundant or lose out on pension funds. They want to learn from the mistakes of previous generations (Trunk, 2007). Employers must appreciate this to attract and retain GenY.

GenY employees have skills that older generations do not. They have had access to the internet since a young age and are typically technologically literate. They know how to use their networks (social and professional) to get things done (Nayar, 2009). Some organisations have tapped into this knowledge with reverse mentoring; new GenY employees mentoring older staff on technologies that can help the business profit and grow (Langford, 2011).

As mentioned by Holley (2008: p1) "our world is changing but we are about to experience change like never before". The sheer size of GenY warrants the attention it receives by academics, marketers and workplaces. GenY is one of the biggest generations to date and will be bigger than the following generation (Phillipson, 2007). One of the largest consulting companies, PwC, has a workforce made up of 66% GenY employees. By 2016, up to 80% will be GenY (Weinczner, 2013). GenY are having a bigger impact on society than previous generations In the US they spend $172 billion annually (Holley, 2008). More research needs to be done to understand GenY to avoid workplace conflict between generations and maintain or even improve productivity (Glass, 2007).

2.3 What are the implications in professional services?

The focus of this research is on consulting companies in the professional services sector. Aspects that are important in motivating and retaining workers in this sector specifically are:

autonomy; a sense of direction and purpose to the work; and celebrating succes (Horwitz, et al 2003). This is very similar to what GenY employees look for in their work, especially those in this sector (Twenge et al, 2010).

Organisations must, in return for this new form of motivation, provide support such as up-to-date technology and invest in their development. GenY want to both complete their role successfully and build up their employability. They want to gain personally from developments that will also benefit the company. This is demonstrated through the most successful retention methods: increased compensation - as they understand their value to the company; challenging work environment; support from senior leadership and the opportunity to develop skills in a specialist area (Horwitz et al, 2003).

Many GenY graduate employees in this sector are client-facing. Employees in such roles must be connected with the company's strategy and mission to feel engaged. It is important for them to understand the organisational impact of their work (Hein, 2013). They can then use their initiative and make decisions relevant for their role. This results in higher engagement in their roles and in the organization (Nayar, 2009).

In the professional services sector, demand for highly skilled employees outweighs supply (O'Flaherty, 2013). Organisations try to retain their GenY workers as long as possible with creative and attractive perks. These are important. If GenY don't find a role or the company's aims interesting, they will move on to their next challenge (Twenge et al, 2010). These highly skilled, mobile employees understand their value. As they are interested in leisure as well as work, travel appeals to them. Over 70% of GenY plan to work abroad at some stage in their careers (Asghar, 2014). This opens up international opportunities and more competition for current employers (Sheahan, 2005).

The tacit knowledge employees hold about their products and services is another form of competitive advantage as it is unique and difficult to imitate. This is, in its nature, difficult to capture and firms must try to hold onto this knowledge as people progress into different roles. The relationship between managers and employees with this tacit knowledge is crucial (Collins and Hitt, 2006).This relationship between the employee and the firm is social capital; the oil of the organisation's engine (Prusak and Cohen, 2001). Healthy relationships in an organisation help it succeed but parties must understand each other in order to build these relationships. GenY in this sector have high expectations and low retention rates, proving to be more difficult to manage than previous generations (Twenge et al, 2010; Sheahan, 2005).

2.4 What are the recruitment and retention implications?

Organisations' recruitment and retention policies must be relevant and attractive in the marketplace, taking guidance from the motivators of GenY. Only 32% of HR Managers considered traditional recruitment methods to be sufficient to attract GenY yet less than 50% of those surveyed had updated their recruiting practices in the three years prior to the survey (Recruiter, 2011).

Recruiters need to target new GenY candidates where they are likely to see the vacancy, namely social media (Twenge et al, 2010). 80% of the UK population who use social media are aged 20-35, which correlates very closely to the age span of GenY (Econsultancy, 2013). Many companies recruit through social media e.g. Facebook and LinkedIn both to advertise positions and learn more about candidates. This is done to complete background checks and assess fit through researching online and mutual connections (Athavaley, 2007). GenY candidates also use social media to learn more about the culture of prospective employers (Budden and Budden, 2009). A social media presence is therefore extremely important in targeting GenY candidates as they expect this information to be shared online. They expect to have a two-way interaction when searching for a role (Fauer and Heinze, 2013) as 75% of GenY consider social media to bring them closer to people and organisations (Weisskirch and Murphy, 2004). This will increase in importance as GenC is even more digitally literate and is online 24/7. Company websites, search engines and social media are where they will expect to find information about potential employers (Skelton, 2012).

GenY are used to challenges. If they are not challenged, or are not progressing, they will look elsewhere (Sheahan, 2005; Smola and Sutton, 2002). They typically stay between 1½-2 years in a role. The average for all generations is 4·4 years (Hein, 2013). They also have different expectations, considering long term to be one year in a role (Martin, 2005). They don't consider loyalty to an employer as an important attribute (Smola and Sutton, 2002).

Accepted turnover levels vary across industries, for example nightclubs and gyms want their employees to have a young image and 71% of McDonalds employees globally are under 20. Most organisations, especially in the professional services sector, look for higher returns from employees after the investment in recruitment and training. Employee replacement is

> *"The big mistakes in business are made at recruitment".*
> **Conor Hannaway CEO SHR Consultants**

expensive with separation costs including paying out unused holidays, carrying out exit interviews, recruitment costs, etc. (DeNicco, 2011).

Increased turnover levels have a negative influence on organisational performance with separation costs and effects on organisational citizenship (Khalid, Nor, Ismail and Razali, 2013). Organisational citizenship is behaviours employees bring to the role in addition to formal requirements. Compassion for those they work with, helpfulness and kindness are important attributes in employees working together but not things that are usually formally rewarded. This includes equality and diversity which is important for GenY (Faour and Heinze, 2013). This reduced organisational citizenship in turn has a negative effect on turnover. GenY employees expect a work life balance to blend work and personal life. They want to enjoy the work they do. An environment with uncaring colleagues is not attractive for GenY employees and they may look to leave it. (Khalid et al, 2009).

In a 2013 survey conducted on GenY employees in an Asian multinational, those who experienced low levels of organisational citizenship were much more likely to leave their roles. GenY who attended non-compulsory (social) events were also much more engaged in their role and less likely to leave (Khalid et al, 2013). For this reason, consultancy companies such as Ernst and Young and Bain & Co. are now rewarding helpfulness and sharing knowledge (Horwitz et al, 2003). This has many benefits: the company retains more tacit knowledge; teams are more productive; and employees want to stay where they find positive organisational citizenship being recognised.

GenY is known to be harder to recruit and retain, but for organisations who know how to manage them, they have potential. "They need you to guide, direct and support them every step of the way. In return you will get the highest performing workforce in history" (Tulgan, 2009: p17).

2.5 RBV and the human capital pool providing a competitive advantage for a firm
Considering a firm's resources as a form of competitive advantage helps to link HR with the company's strategy for profit (Wright et al, 2001). RBV is a popular approach to HR strategy.

High levels of human capital with high productivity and significant ability to adapt to change are inherent in the resource based view. It has an inside-out approach, which is a comprehensive model, looking at the resources the firm holds and how it can exploit them to succeed. Companies that successfully control their resources, especially people which are

considered the most valued and unique resource, hold competitive advantage (Hitt and Ireland, 2002; Farnham, 2010). Organisations are essentially a process with inputs, constraints and outputs. People are the most expensive and biggest resource in an organisation's inputs (Kew and Stredwick, 2012). They are also the most important in creating sustainable competitive advantage as they are rare, valuable, not easily substitutable and difficult to imitate (Farnham, 2010). This is especially true for the value professional service companies look to bring to their clients. It is therefore important for organisations to make the most of each generation or aspect of their workforce.

Human capital is an intangible collection of knowledge and skills (Hitt and Ireland, 2002). The organisation's stock of employee skills and expertise at any time is its human capital pool. Different employees have different skills and some are more valuable to an organisation than others (Wright et al, 2001). GenY are aware of their education levels and skills and their importance to organisations, particularly in industries such as professional services (Sheahan, 2005). Organisations must also appreciate employees' free will (Wright et al, 2001). Employees make decisions about their behaviours and they own them, not the company. This discretionary behaviour – the employees choosing to act in the interest of the firm is what really drives competitive advantage. Freedom to bring personality and ideas to the team increases employee engagement and adds to organisational citizenship. This in turn drives success and competitive advantage in many cases. Some employers encourage this with a variety of avenues for new, young employees to express their thoughts and opinions to bring real value (Birkinshaw and Crainer, 2008).

Having skilled workers has become more and more important over time for an organisation's success, especially in knowledge-services or professional services industries where employees are by far the company's most valuable asset (Youndt and Snell, 2004). These skilled workers are aware of this and are becoming more demanding. A living wage is no longer sufficient. Employees want to be motivated by their environments and have an interest in the company's objectives. Companies that recognise the need to keep their employees engaged are thriving (Earle, 2003). Employees are also recognising the war for talent and their increased choice of employer. Market leaders who develop their employees with a unique culture and good benefits are very attractive to talented GenY candidates (Clarke, 2001). These firms will continue to be market leaders as they are leveraging their resources, especially their human capital pool to create and maintain this competitive advantage (Hitt and Ireland, 2002).

In order to make the most of this resource, organisations must align the interests of the employees and the firm (Boxall, 1996). Youndt and Snell (2004) found that competitive pay, training and promotion from within encouraged higher human capital performance. This is particularly important for GenY employees. They need a higher level of connection with the organisation and its values in order to be engaged in their roles and remain with the company than previous generations (Curtis and Wright, 2001).

2.6 Implications of GenY on the traditional human capital pool model

As noted by W. Edwards Deming the environment is what's important, *bringing out* peoples talent, not *having* the best talent (Pfeffer, 2001). Strategically managing a firm's resources is what makes them profitable, not simply having them. Managers need to understand their resources, in this instance GenY employees to make full use of them (Hitt and Ireland, 2002). As GenY are considered to be different to previous generations, leaders must make a conscious effort to learn how to manage these people for profit. It must also be noted how GenY work with other generations. They work well with Boomers as they are similar to their parents but conflict and competition can arise with GenX (Langford, 2011).

In 2007 managers of different generations and levels in organisations were surveyed to determine what they considered to be important leadership attributes and values. GenX and Boomers had 6 of the same top 12 attributes such as: *optimistic*; *farsighted*; *focussed.* GenY conversely had attributes the other generations didn't consider; with *dedicated* very important, but not *credible.* They want their managers to be committed to their roles and want to look up to them but don't expect them to know everything already. GenY are more interested in focussed managers looking at their personal development seeking attributes such as *encouraging* and *supportive* (Sessa et al, 2007). Managers must be aware of these differences to enable generations to work together to achieve organisational goals.

According to a 2013 UK survey, average employee turnover in private sector services is 16.3% with 11.8% of that voluntary, and further growth expected in 2014 (Carty, 2013). SAS Institute, the largest privately owned software company in the world has an impressive employee turnover level of less than 4%. This is because they treat their people the best, not because they pay the most (Pfeffer, 2001). They do this through building personal relationships: with an SAS choir; sports facilities; a food plan encouraging employees to break for lunch and eat together; and many others (Prusak and Cohen, 2001). Treating people "the best" depends on their perception of the best. This varies across generations and research

must be completed whether this traditional model works with GenY employees to ensure organisations can get the best from their people to make them happy and be profitable (Gummer, 2002).

A significant amount of a person's talent is their ability or potential for further learning and growth. Employees need guidance and support to achieve their full potential (Earle, 2003). GenY employees are in the early stages of their careers. A manager's support and guidance can tap into this potential to take full advantage of their employees' talents (Nayar, 2009). Frequent feedback, encouragement and support from managers are very important for GenY. They desire a strong relationship with their managers where they can have honest conversations about their careers and have a connection on a personal level (Faour and Heinze, 2013)

Multiple generations in the workplace bring an added depth of diversity and are hugely beneficial to organisations. However 58% of HR professionals have noticed generational conflict in the workplace (Burke, 2004). It is important to consider issues which may arise in managing across generations. Hill (2002) conducted research on GenY as they were beginning their university education. Lecturers, mainly Baby Boomers noticed new trends emerging. Growing up, GenY experienced the most equal society in history. Everyone was part of the sports team and participation was celebrated, not victory. This leads to a mentality that trying is enough and these young professionals expect their managers to reward this instead of rare, significant achievements. GenY's parents are still very hands-on. *Helicopter parenting* is a term used as boomers are still heavily involved in their children's lives throughout adulthood. GenY parents have been known to ask to sit in on interviews and call their child's manager to complain about performance reviews. This has positive and negative effects on the work environment. GenY have access to wisdom and experience so they don't have to learn from their own mistakes as they go along. Conversely the constant mentoring and parents running to assist with a moment's notice can lead to a lack of confidence in autonomy in work (Camp, 2014).

As their parents celebrated attempts, they also gave freedom to their children to set their own targets. GenY brought much more passion and enthusiasm to tasks when they were involved

> *"In the end, all business operations can be reduced to three words: people products and profits. Unless you've got a good team, you can't do much with the other two"*
> **Lee Iacocca President and CEO of Chrysler**

in setting them (Hill, 2002). Some organisations, such as Microsoft, are using this in their favour. They are giving employees free rein to develop new ideas and build them. Incentives are required to maintain competitiveness, with challenges and games set with awards for the winner. This is working very well for Microsoft, they are tapping into the uniqueness of GenY and what they can bring to the workforce and encouraging them to step away from their comfort zone in interesting ways that allow the employees to excel (Birkinshaw and Crainer, 2008). This is a big shift in traditional management and would significantly affect how an organisation views this resource to achieve competitive advantage.

2.7 Conclusions

As the biggest generation in US history, GenY is making a significant impact, especially in professional services. They are better educated than previous generations and expect companies to appreciate that with flexibility, interesting work and benefits/ perks (Twenge et al, 2010).

Using the RBV of the firm, managers in professional service companies recognise the importance of their GenY employees. They are seen as an important resource the company holds but need to be challenged and encouraged to continue to perform and remain with the company (Horwitz et al, 2003). Managers in this sector are beginning to adapt their attraction motivation and retention policies and practices to further understand GenY and use this resource to grow profits. Organisational citizenship is important for GenY. They want to enjoy the time they spend at work and for managers to care about them personally as well as professionally (Khalid et al, 2013) This will be further developed and analysed using new primary research to ascertain whether more can be done to make this high maintenance generation more impactful and powerful in achieving profits in professional service companies.

3 Methodology

This chapter outlines the research method and approaches adopted to realise the aim of the research. An inductive approach to research is taken where data will be observed and theories developed. GenY employees in professional services and their managers will be interviewed to explore managers' understanding of their needs and wants (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). Analysis is then completed to ascertain whether changes should be made to how managers attract, motivate and retain GenY employees to achieve organisational profits.

3.1 Introduction

The aim of this research is to: *explore managers' understanding of GenY and to investigate how to maximise GenY employees' performance.*

An exploratory, qualitative approach was considered most suitable to achieve this aim by asking questions and assessing the RBV in a new light (Saunders et al, 2012). The objectives of this research were achieved through this primary research.

- Increase understanding of GenY and its relevance in relation to other generations.

  This objective is explored in question 1 and 3 for GenY and question 2 for managers.

- Examine the impact GenY is having on organisations (specifically professional service firms)

  Questions 8 and 9 for GenY and 7 and 8 for managers cover this objective.

- Gain insight into how managers are currently attracting, motivating and retaining GenY through the RBV

  This objective is explored in detail in interviews. GenY questions 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7 and manager questions 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6 ask about this

- Identify changes these managers can make to their attraction, motivation and retention of GenY.

  This objective will be achieved in chapter 5, discussion.

3.2 Research design

A qualitative, exploratory approach was used. This allows the researcher to gain a deeper insight into managers of GenY and how GenY are influencing their organisations (Saunders

et al, 2012). Qualitative research such as interviews allow analysis of the 'why' questions – why certain things are better motivators for GenY, rather than the 'how' focus of quantitative approaches such as surveys (Biggam, 2011). A quantitative approach was not deemed appropriate for this research as true motivators of GenY had to be explored and managers' thoughts on their current style uncovered (Dawson, 2009). Inductive research allows for exploration and further understanding of a topic, which is required in this piece of research (Saunders et al, 2012)

Horwitz et al (2003) noted that much quantitative research has been completed on GenY but that more qualitative research is required to further explore this generation. The research strategy taken here is interviews, to probe into what GenY wants and why, why this is important for managers and what managers can do with this information. This sentiment was echoed by Snell (2014), a leading GenY academic.

Snell (2014) considered the human capital pool as an investment and the payback period of getting the most out of GenY employees as the human capital challenge. The balance between investing in GenY employees who have more boundary-less careers and are less committed to the one company must be weighed up against the need to tap into their talent for organisational gain. The timespan employers want from employees and how long employees want to focus on this role often don't correlate. There is much flux in the professional service sector at present with some leading consulting companies opting to teach young GenY employees for a few years and let them leave on a positive note, perhaps becoming clients in their next roles. Many others are taking on a new approach by removing their 2 year graduate programme and providing GenY employees with permanent contracts initially to demonstrate their long term investment in them. Interviews were recommended to explore this flux and needs of both GenY and their managers.

3.3 Research method

The interviews were semi-structured, with the same questions asked of all interviewees. Questions were open-ended to allow people to elaborate as much as they were comfortable with. This ensured consistency but also flexibility to seek clarification or elaboration where possible to ensure understanding (Rugg and Petre, 2010). Semi-structured interviews suit an exploratory study well as the focus of the research is flexible depending on the outcome of interviews (Saunders et al, 2012).

Interview questions were created based on research previously compiled and analysed through a literature review. It was noted that the majority of researchers in the area used surveys and also some cases on particular topics in individual companies. Some researchers recognised an unbalanced amount of quantitative research in the area and recommended further research such as interviews to be completed using a qualitative approach (Howe, 2003). A qualitative researcher, Martin (2005), recommended further qualitative research to be completed a few years later as GenY really begin to make an impact on the workforce.

Strong themes emerged in the research, which were further explored to assess consistency with this sample. New research from interviews with GenY employees was also explored in interviews with managers. Each of these themes was explored in questions created for both GenY employees and their managers. Themes that were uncovered were:

- GenY employees' engagement in their role within professional service firms
  This theme is important for objectives 1 and 2: increasing understanding of GenY and understanding their impact in professional service companies

- Organisational Citizenship Behaviour
  This theme was important for GenY and their managers and warrants its own section. It is an important aspect of the influence GenY is having on these companies (objective 2)

- Motivation and retention techniques relevant for GenY employees using the RBV of the firm
  This is an aspect of objective 3; how managers attract, retain and motivate their employees

- The importance of the relationship between GenY employees and their managers
  This is another important aspect of objective 3. The relationship GenY expect to have with their managers featured prominently and was further explored in manager interviews.

One-to-one interviews were most appropriate in this instance. Group interviews or focus groups, although quicker to complete, were not suitable as they do not allow for confidentiality among interviewees (Saunders et al, 2012). Some questions, e.g. people's personal motivators and relationships with their teams and managers were not appropriate in a group setting. The researcher didn't consider that interviewees would give an honest account of their experience if they weren't relaxed in the environment.

3.4 Research procedure

As managers' understanding of GenY was assessed in this research, GenY employees in professional service firms were interviewed first in order to be aware of what GenY want and expect from their work environment. GenY interview questions were created based on a literature review in chapter 2.

After speaking with fourteen GenY employees, interviews were transcribed and analysed. Manager interview questions were drafted based on important themes from the literature review and initial findings of important themes from GenY interviews. Below are the themes which formed the basis of interview questions. These strongly align with the aim and objectives of this research.

- GenY employees' engagement in their role within professional service firms;
- Organisational citizenship behaviour;
- Motivation and retention techniques relevant for GenY employees using the RBV model;
- The importance of the relationship between GenY employees and their managers.

Face-to-face interviews were conducted with nine managers and subsequently transcribed. Interview transcripts for both GenY and managers were then analysed to produce findings.

3.5 Pilot study

A pilot of interview questions was completed with a member of GenY working in the target sector. This person was asked to read the interview questions intended for GenY employees and assess whether they fully understood the questions. One change was made to a question after this individual's feedback. Specifically, question 8 initially mentioned organisational citizenship but that was considered to be unnecessary jargon. Instead it was replaced with 'compassion, helpfulness and kindness' which are important components of organisational citizenship as defined by Khalid et al (2009).

A further pilot of questions for GenY was conducted with a manager of GenY employees in a company where GenY interviews would be carried out. This was a screening to ensure approval to request volunteers in this company for GenY interviews. One further change was suggested. Question 3 initially asked how long the interviewee expects to stay in their current role. This was updated to 'how long do you think is the norm to stay at a role in this level in your career'. It was perceived that such a direct question by an external person might not make the interviewee feel comfortable and provide an honest answer. See appendix 2 for this

email thread. This was clarified when speaking with interviewees to cover promotion, career change, quit to travel, or any other reason to leave their current role. The conversational nature of semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to add this where the interviewee wasn't sure of the meaning of the question. No other issues arose during the GenY interviews.

A pilot of questions was again completed of questions for managers before commencing the interviews. The same manager was asked to review the manager interview questions for consistency. This was to ensure understanding and flow of questions from her point of view as a manager of GenY herself and also to approve the questions before they were asked of other GenY managers in the organisation. There were no concerns on the questions for managers.

3.6 Sample

As both GenY and people who manage GenY were interviewed for this research, two different samples are described. Initially, GenY were interviewed. 14 interviews were conducted in total from three different companies using non-probability convenience sampling. Interviewees were sourced through social media channels and approaching companies directly. See appendix 3 for the email sent to a company seeking GenY volunteers. No reminders were sent and all volunteers were interviewed to reduce bias. Strong themes emerged during these interviews and the researcher was confident that after 14 interviews, saturation point was reached and there was not a need for further interviews to be conducted (Saunders et al, 2012).

All interviewees were born 1980 – 1995 (GenY) and worked in professional service firms. Exactly 50% of GenY volunteers were male and female. See below Figure 1 a breakdown of GenY gender demographics.
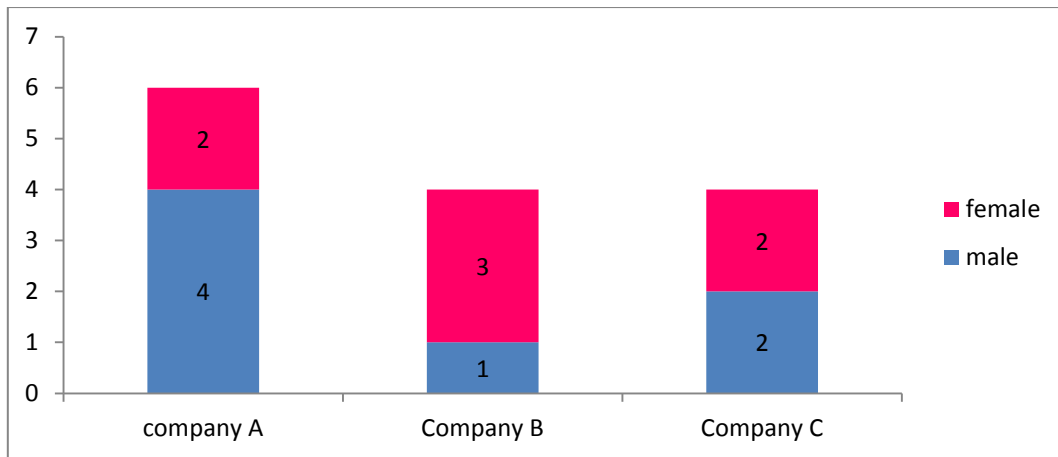
Figure 1 GenY sample demographics

The focus of this research is employees in Ireland but as we are in a multicultural environment and all employees interviewed worked in multinational companies, some international employees were interviewed. 64% of GenY employees were Irish nationals with 36% from other countries. See below Figure 2 a breakdown of nationalities.
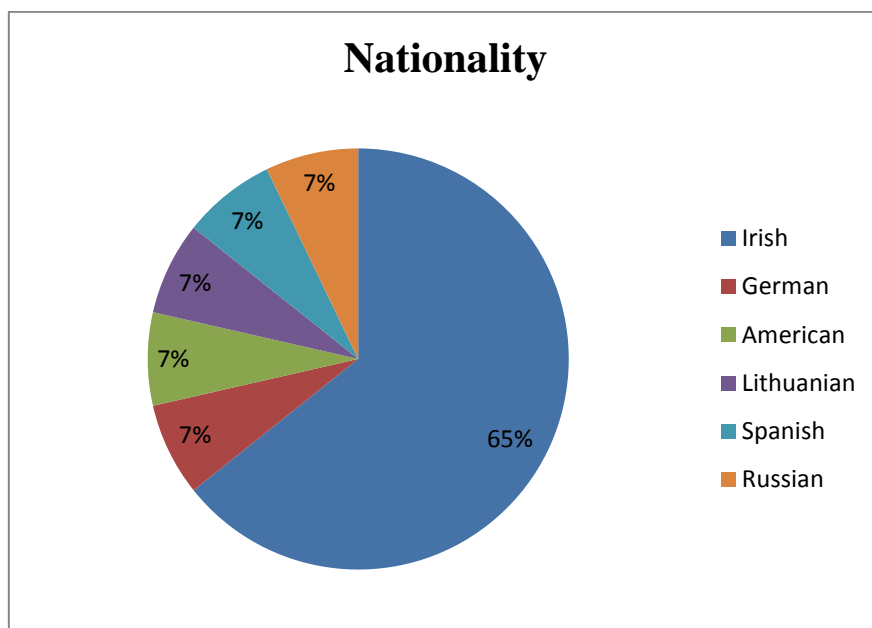
Figure 2 GenY nationalities

All employees interviewed had 3 years or less work experience and most were in their first role after university. See below Figure 3 a breakdown of total years' experience and amount of roles they have held post university.
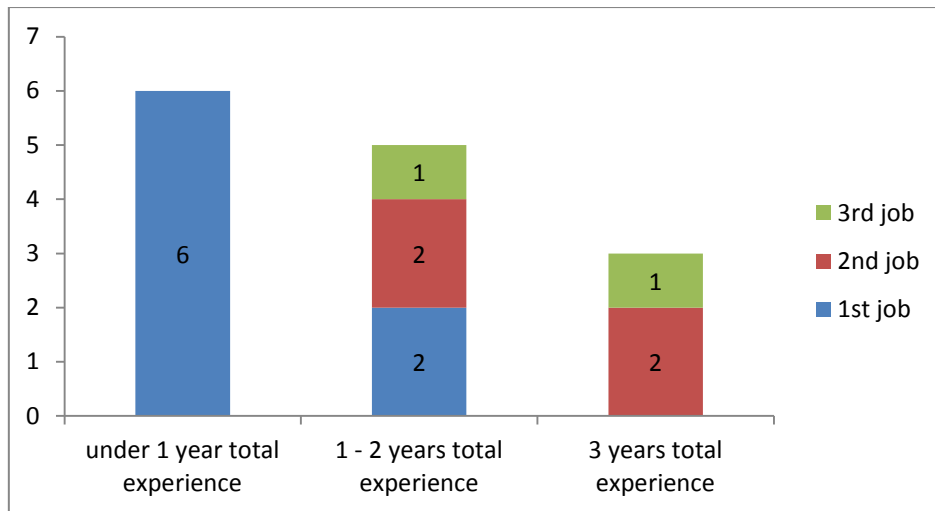
Figure 3 GenY amount of experience

Nine interviews were also conducted with managers. Many of the managers interviewed expressed an interest in participating directly from receiving an email from the researcher requesting GenY volunteers. Others heard about this research from their GenY employees, through non-probability snowball sampling. Individual face-to-face interviews were deemed to be the most appropriate approach as it is the most efficient for the managers. Managers' personal management style and issues arising in how they relate to their employees couldn't be deeply explored in a focus group. Face-to-face interviews also have the benefit of increasing confidentiality for managers, which was important, as many managers work in the same organisations.

Male and female managers in companies were given equal opportunities to be involved in this research but many more males volunteered. See below a breakdown of male and female managers in different companies.
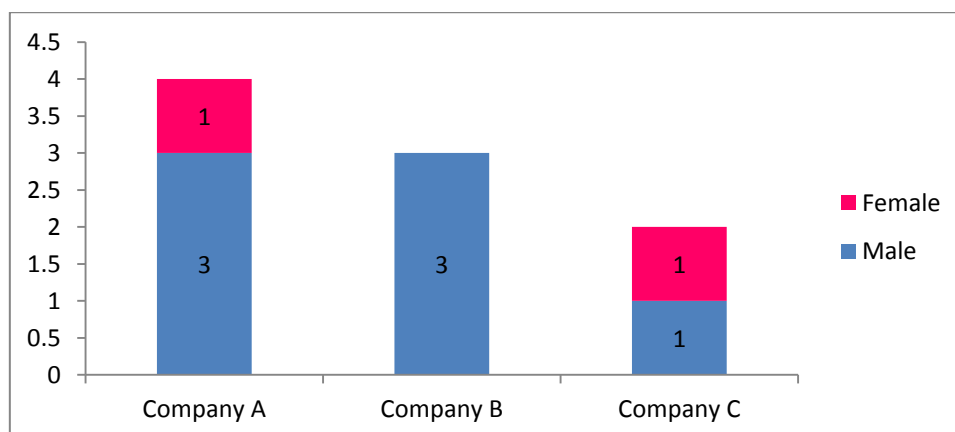
Figure 4 Manager sample demographics

Similarly to GenY employees, all of these managers are employed in global companies, and not all are Irish. Over 50% of managers interviewed were Irish with the others originating mainly from the United Kingdom. See below a breakdown of manager nationality.--
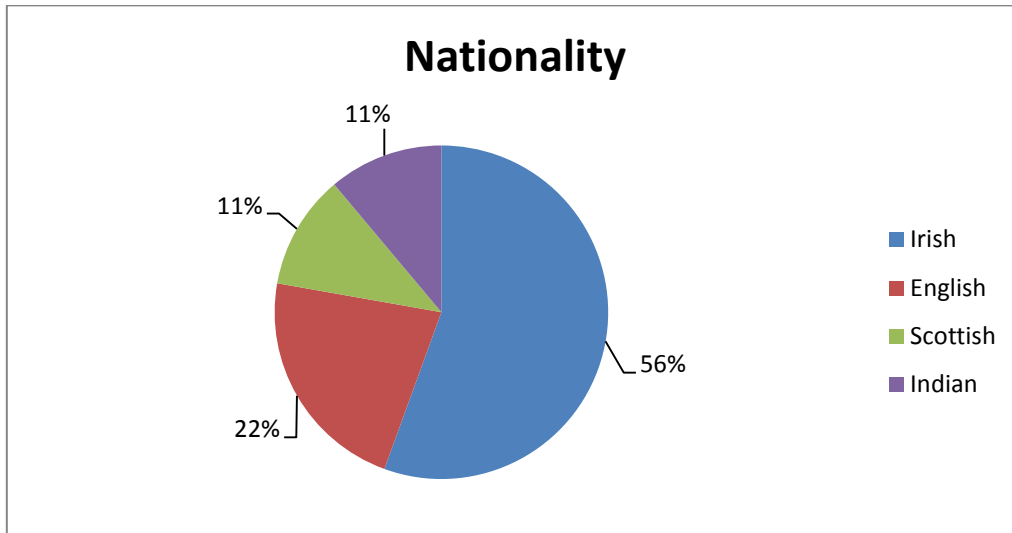
Figure 5 Manager nationality

All managers interviewed have significant experience managing GenY employees. See below Figure 6 a breakdown of how many years' experience each manager has in this regard and how many GenY employees each manager is responsible for.
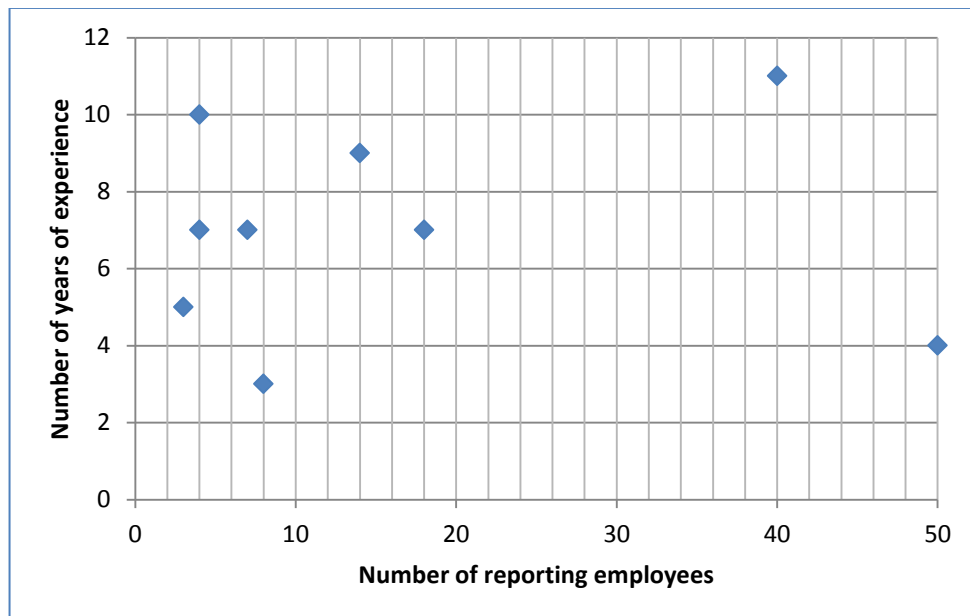
Figure 6 Manager experience relative to number of direct reports

3.7 Materials

All interviews were conducted in a private room during the interviewee's lunch break or after work. The researcher was flexible to accommodate the interviewee's availability to increase participation and attention during the interviews. This resulted in no obvious distractions the researcher could account for. GenY interviews lasted between 4 and 16 minutes with most lasting 8-9 minutes. Manager interviews lasted a little longer, approximately 10-12 minutes each. Interviews were all recorded using a Dictaphone and the researcher made notes on the interviewee's reaction, time spent thinking about answers and any emphasis or gesture they made. See appendix 4 for GenY interview schedule and appendix 5 for manager interview schedule.

At the outset of each interview, all participants were given a brief overview of the aim of this research and advised how their information would be used. All interviewees agreed for their interview to be recorded for clearer analysis. 2 -3 GenY interviews were conducted each day so that they could easily be transcribed the same day while interviews were still fresh in the researcher's mind. The recordings were deleted once transcribed to ensure confidentiality of interviewees. As the manager interviews lasted longer and managers weren't as easily available, one manager interview was conducted each day and the recording was again transcribed and deleted that same day. When interviewees gave short or closed answers, they were asked if they were comfortable elaborating. Interviewees were not encouraged to cover topics they were not at ease discussing.

3.8 Data analysis

An initial analysis of GenY interviews was conducted to ensure the correct themes were focussed on during manager interviews, linking to what GenY find important for them to succeed in their roles. There were a lot of consistencies in the GenY interviews, with many words the researcher didn't use repeated by different interviewees. Wanting *variety* in their work, finding *the business model interesting,* considering their current role as a *springboard* and wanting their manager to be a *role model* were very frequent answers. The researcher bore these in mind while conducting manager interviews, without allowing them to create researcher bias (Saunders et al, 2012).

A thematic analysis was conducted using Excel. Thematic analysis is a popular approach for categorising qualitative data (Boyatzis, 1998). It is very useful for uncovering themes in interviews. It also allows for organising and interpreting of the data (Braun and Clarke,

2006), which in this case was required of the GenY interviews to create questions for the manager interviews. A full thematic analysis was later conducted on GenY and manager interview data as it is considered the most useful approach to contextualising the meaning of these interviews (Guest, MacQueen and Namey, 2012). With a focus on exploratory, inductive analysis, there will also be elements of deductive analysis. Deductive analysis enables the researcher to link new research to theories previously developed (Saunders et al, 2012).

3.9 Ethical considerations

There were no ethical issues to overcome in the questions asked of these interviewees. All were over the age of consent and no personal or overly-sensitive issues were covered. All interviewees volunteered to take part and were informed that the interviews would be voice recorded. They were advised in advance that the researcher would know who they were from speaking with them but otherwise they would not be identified by name, company or any other identifier. Once the interview was transcribed the voice recording was deleted. The transcribed data is stored on the researcher's personal laptop which is password protected. Managers were advised that their transcribed interviews may be available to examiners if requested, without name or company identifier.

3.10 Limitations

Non-probability convenience and snowball sampling was used to conduct this research. These approaches, although the best suited for this research, have limitations. As it is not random, the results risk not being representative of a larger sample (Saunders et al, 2012). The researcher attempted to overcome the limitations of this form of sampling through using 3 companies and looking for volunteers instead of selecting participants. All volunteers were interviewed, again to ensure no bias. Qualitative research, by its nature is not designed to be representative of a larger sample. It is exploratory in researching further into GenY employees in these professional service companies in Ireland.

Internal validity is ensured through achieving each objective set out. However external validity cannot be guaranteed in qualitative research. This is a limitation of qualitative research which the researcher is aware of. The learnings from this dissertation cannot be

> "If your goal is anything but profitability – if it's to be big, or to grow fast, or to become a technology leader – you'll hit problems" **Michael Porter**

applied directly to another area but it does give a deeper understanding of the companies and area researched (Saunders et al, 2012).

Strong consistent themes emerged across those in similar roles in different organisations and among those in different roles in the same organisation. When this theoretical saturation point was reached the researcher did not seek more volunteers. Therefore the researcher was confident that this limitation was sufficiently overcome in qualitative research. This dissertation, along with many other pieces of qualitative research does not claim to be representative of a larger population, but exploratory in this area (Biggam, 2011).

Reliability was maintained as much as possible through this research. Participant error and bias was reduced by flexibility in timing and location. Participants were put at ease as much as possible through ensuring a relaxed, private setting. The participants were eased into the interview by asking a few basic questions to start so they felt comfortable for the more probing questions. The researcher fully understood the area before interviewing to eliminate error and did not let personal views influence interviewees to eliminate researcher bias (Saunders et al, 2012).

4 Analysis and Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter reveals the analysis and findings of semi-structured interviews conducted with GenY employees and their managers across three companies in the professional services sector in Ireland. A description of how this research was carried out is in chapter 3.

GenY and manager interviews were both analysed by objective and themes of this research under the aim of exploring managers' understanding of GenY and investigating how to maximise GenY's performance. A comparative thematic analysis was subsequently completed to understand if GenY and their managers had the same expectations from their relationship (Biggam, 2011). This section also considers the RBV and how managers perceive their human resources. This chapter therefore demonstrates the meaning of the data (Guest et al, 2012).

4.2 Empirical findings – GenY

4.2.1 Engagement

GenY employees' engagement in their roles is an important aspect of the first two objectives of this research: understanding GenY and examining their impact on professional service organisations. This engagement is assessed by asking what attracted them to their roles and how long they will remain in them.

In order to be attracted to a role, it must first be highlighted to them. GenY employees sourced their current roles through a variety of channels: online advertisement; referred by a friend; or through a recruitment agency. Responding to an online advertisement was the most popular method with 46%. See below a breakdown of how GenY employees sourced their current role.
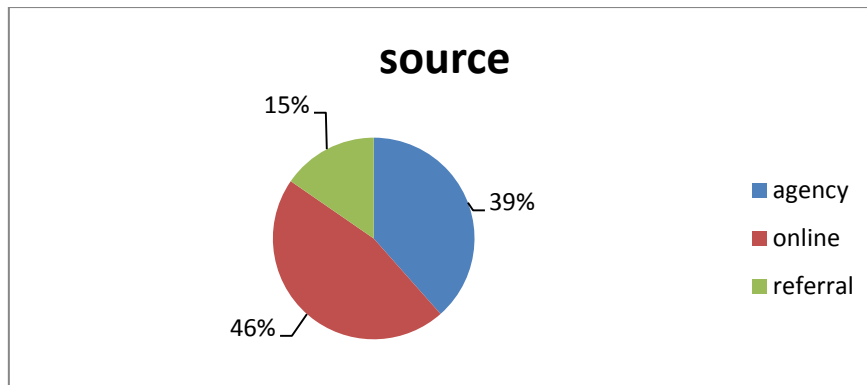
Figure 7 GenY current role source

A lot of consistency was demonstrated in what attracted GenY to their current roles, with the business model and culture of the organisation as strong emerging themes "I really liked the business model". The culture of the organisation was also an important consideration for them: "I thought it bridged the gap well between a corporate job and also like a more relaxed atmosphere job"; "I saw the office was so young and had a great vibe and I thought this seems a really cool place to work".

The environment is not enough for the latest generation however, almost all GenY interviewees mentioned they anticipated the work to be compelling. "It seemed I would continuously learn"; "I liked that it would be lots of different skillsets" and "I think the diversity and the types of projects (were what attracted me)" were interesting comments made. All 8 GenY who held previous roles since university moved to this position for a better career opportunity. "Work not interesting" and "limited career progression" were sighted as reasons for leaving their previous roles. "Better opportunity" and "wanted career change" were sighted as appealing aspects of their roles.

Almost every GenY employee thinks 2 years is the right amount of time to spend in the same role. Some wanted to progress quicker but did accept the average is 2 years. "No one wants to do the same thing for more than a couple of years". One clarified however that "I don't think you should change your company every 2 years. I'd say more just change your role. I think it's great if people manage to stay in the company for 30 years".

When asked why they are staying in their roles, two themes emerged; interesting work and career development. It is important for these GenY employees that they enjoy their work; "it's the perfect balance between a professional, productive working relationship and a social,

one". "I think it's difficult to get stable job opportunities that are enjoyable in Dublin and secondly I just really liked the job".

4.2.2 Organisational citizenship behaviour

The second objective of this research is to examine the impact GenY is having on professional service firms in Ireland. OCB, or compassion, helpfulness and kindness as it was explained to interviewees is considered to be particularly important for GenY employees (Khalid et al, 2009).

GenY employees noted that these attributes were a reason they accepted their current roles and a reason they remain in them. "(In the interview, I got) a good feel in the office that made me think, yeah I'd definitely take this, I'd be happy here". An interviewee noted the importance of this: "I think one of the questions I had here just before I started was what's the office like, what is the vibe of the office, what is the culture, what is the sort of atmosphere, and it was very positive".

They also noted its importance in maintaining positive working relationships:

> "In this type of job you can't just put your head down, do your work and go home, there's a wider team you have to look out for, there are new people coming in who look up to you, so compassion and treating people fairly".

Others noted its impact on themselves: "it's definitely a motivating factor it's a great impression if people are cheery and laughing and working well together".

When asked if these behaviours were prevalent in their companies, the vast majority of GenY interviewees confirmed this; "oh yeah, big time". "They have this infectious ability to make you love your job and want to do it better" and "definitely, I think it creates a better work environment". One was even surprised at the question as it was so obvious to them "you're supposed to have it, it's just normal manners". Only one interviewee didn't fully agree that these attributes were prevalent in their company but it was improving "there's a lot of potential here for it, it's there, but we need to tap into it a lot more".

4.2.3 Motivation and retention techniques

The third objective of this research is to gain insight into how managers are currently attracting, retaining and motivating GenY employees using the RBV model. In order to gain

insight into this it is important to understand what is encouraging GenY employees to stay in their roles and work hard from their own perspective.

These employees are looking to continuously learn and develop in their roles; "there's nothing worse than hitting a flat curve but as long as there are opportunities for me, as long as I have that I think I am quite happy". Another also mentioned that "if I ever get to the stage (where) I can do something as well as I can and it's the same thing day in and day out, I would get very bored very quickly". The term *springboard* was not used by the researcher but was mentioned by several interviewees, one considering their role as "a springboard for my next position".

Lack of development was subsequently a strong theme in why these employees think they would look for a new role at some stage. Not seeing their manager as a role model and external factors were other emerging themes here. "Not being able to progress is something for me that is a massive, massive, massive thing". Others mentioned that they would lose interest if they are "kind of hitting a level where I'm starting to plateau".

An interviewee mentioned that they would leave if "I don't want to do the job that people higher up in the company than me do". Others would leave if they felt unappreciated or were no longer getting support from "my main manager".

5 of the 14 GenY employees interviewed commented, unprompted that they might be tempted by an external factor such as "something outside you might miss" or "an offer I couldn't refuse".

When asked what they want from this job, career progression was the most common theme; "career, more than anything, career progression is the most important thing". The term springboard was again used here to progress their career "I want it to be a springboard to build my professional profile" and "the experience I have to springboard on".

This was followed by money and a social interaction. Many acknowledged money as a driving force for them "it is a well-paid job, , which is always an important factor to work hard" and "if the pay increases keep coming every so often, that's always a bonus as well". Many others had strongly opposing views on money; "money is just an existence for me", "everything except the salary" and "it's nothing to do with money, it's the contacts and networking and development".

Some also acknowledged that they wanted to enjoy the social aspects of their roles; "a younger crowd is always great to be around". Another commented that "it has a nice social aspect but I wouldn't stay in a job that I didn't like just because the people were nice, that's the lazy option".

4.2.4 Relationship between GenY employees and their managers

The main themes in what GenY want from their managers are support, freedom and trust. They want them to be "somebody I want to be – a role model I can look up to". Many see their managers as mentors: "I would think in an interview, is this the sort of person I aspire to after 10 years" and "if the person didn't reach further in their career they wouldn't have the ability to bring me further". They appreciate the support their managers give them "If you know they value your work and if they back you when you are doing well, then you try your best to do well for this company". "Support is a big thing for me, not just on a professional level but also on a personal level" Some want their managers to guide them, but not hold their hands too much:

> "the best people I have worked for are the ones that can see your potential and that can give you a nudge but won't hold your hand too much so I want support to overcome things I struggle with but at the same time, I want them to go with me as I progress, I don't want them to hold me back".

Freedom and trust came across as important themes: "a lot of free reign and being given opportunities"; "I expect transparency and a certain amount of responsibility", "trust is the main thing for me, if you have that, you're going places".

4.3 Empirical findings – managers

4.3.1 Engagement

When asked what attracted their GenY employees to their role, many managers had to pause to think about the answer. One even admitted "I never really thought about it to be honest". Those who had thought about it, considered the reasons to be finding the company interesting, the job itself and the benefits. One mentioned "it's primarily the company" and another "exciting, American and shiney". An alternative view on this was "one theme is I don't think they want to forge a career in this sector. They don't say I graduated and want to work in X sector so I think that's a negative theme".

Other managers considered the job itself to be attractive for new GenY employees; "initially they see it as a great platform to gain professional exposure" the see it as an "opportunity for advancement" and "experience and avenues to explore their potential".

Benefits were also raised, with mixed responses. One manager mentioned that it's "not necessarily the money" with others noting "prestige and money", "clearly cash is a very important incentive" and "money and exposure in the role" as attractive elements.

Managers were then asked how long they think GenY employees want to stay in the role and noted "more and more they expect promotion a lot faster so they like to see progression and if they don't see it they are happy to jump ship". "Max 2 years" was quoted as how long they are willing to stay in the role with many others mentioning 1-2 years. "It's at the stage, it is almost 12 months and they are looking for opportunity to move on or there is much more a mind-set, keeping up with the joneses'. There is lot more entitlement I'm seeing basically". Another pointed out that "there's a good element that they are actually worth it, higher education than their parents, so they are actually able to do it, but definitely, how long they want to stay with the company I see that dropping all the time".

When asked whether this amount of time matched with how long managers want them in the role there were mixed responses. One manager noted that "well, I as a manager expect them to want some sort of progression after that time as well, yeah". Many others however had situations where there was a difference of opinion. Some tried to set expectations and targets with their employees to help them move on to the next role: "usually the conversation I have with them is that it is in everyone's interest to move that individual along and to further develop them but it is not in everyone's interest to promote them early because they are then actually vulnerable to not performing".

Another manager acknowledged that "sometimes it clashes but I try to head it off as quickly as possible throughout the year so at pre-planning stage before the end of year process so they're not suddenly hit with oh my God, I'm not getting promoted, (I) try to give them quite a clear path to get to the next level, with varying success, I have to admit on that side."

It was also acknowledged that sometimes expectations for the person's career don't match: "there is always the fear that they will want to leave, because, that they are not moved on quick enough but I think as a business we have to get comfortable with that because I think

> *"You will either step forward into growth or will step back into safety"*   **Abraham Maslow**

the alternative is that we end up having people that are being promoted inappropriately because we have a fear of them leaving"

4.3.2 Organisational citizenship behaviour

It was very clear that managers recognise the importance of OCB for their GenY employees. When asked if they consider it important, one manager responded enthusiastically "yes absolutely, absolutely, absolutely." Managers considered GenY employees to want to gain from the time they spend at work "the Y generation is much more, what is this company doing for me, how is it helping me?" and "for this generation, it's not just a job, it's something that thrills them and they like to come to work every day". Another also mentioned "the younger crowd want an environment they are comfortable with, they don't want to work in silos, they want to be exposed to cultures, work styles, attributes and people in the office". A few managers commented on this being a change in recent years, one noted "a flexible culture and what's in it for me is important for GenY. Before, it was more of a balance".

Managers try to further develop OCB in their organisations by "hiring from within often, I think this helps create a culture of helpfulness since many times the manager has been in the employees' shoes". One manager noted that "I especially think a Gen Y employee will be more inclined to be engaged and motivated if they are in an environment they feel supported" with another noting similarly "the majority of their waking hours is spent at the company so I think they want to enjoy that as much as possible". After all, "If people feel wanted and needed, they will do a better job. If we don't have our psychological needs met on a daily basis, by the business, people will leave."

4.3.3 Motivation and retention techniques

When asked why they think these employees stay in the role, development was by far the strongest theme. "They get a lot of exposure to different parts of the business and I think in the age that they are, that they are looking towards any kind of move they can make or any kind of experience they can glean so I think exposure to this is important and visibility around the firm so they can spread their wings a bit". Some also mentioned that the cohort of GenY employees encourage and develop each other:

> "I think the group is smart driven people and I think it's a challenging environment so I think that keeps people on their toes, which is hard initially, but it keeps them here

because they feel it's a constant challenge, it's not the same every day. When you come into the office it's something new."

The social element of the role came into consideration too. "Young people in this generation especially, like to have a lot of fun. Back in the day you had to put on a new face at the workplace. I see them the same way they are with their parents or how they act with their friends. They are far more casual and natural in the office environment. They want to be left alone. We're not taking people away from their natural environment, we are bringing that into the office."

Some managers also recognised the challenge in keeping these employees in their roles and keeping them engaged. "I think that, the younger they are, the more eager they are to progress and I think my impression is that they see so many successful people at a young age that they expect success a lot quicker than before, everything is immediate gratification, with regards of work, with regards of pay, with regards of keeping yourself occupied with the types of jobs as well." They recognised the need to keep them stimulated "I think the key thing is to keep them engaged and variety to keep them challenged in their work". Another noted that "they are less willing to do more monotonous work so its giving them the variety and challenges and if you don't that's when they are happy to leave".

Some managers felt quite strongly about the benefits "for some people, yes I would say cash is the biggest motivator". Another even more so: "Cash – very simple. There is nothing else. You're 24/25 years old you're doing a job to get experience to do something else and yes I'm sure there are motivators about doing a good job etc, but all they really want is cash, they don't really care what clients think of them". Managers considered that most see it as an opportunity to develop into "really well rounded professionals . . . to apply the skill they learned in pretty much every role".

4.3.4 Relationship between GenY and their managers

It was very clear that these employees are important to all managers interviewed. Considering the RBV of the firm, GenY are more valued than finance and other resources a firm holds. The concept that these employees are worth the attention and support they need came across in many interviews.

When asked what managers think their employees want from them as managers, three themes emerged: support; mentoring; and clarity. One manager noted that "they're (GenY) more

interested in the softer stuff. They want to feel appreciated, that's a basic motivator, they want to feel a part of a team and looked after". Many others made similar comments "they want empathy, direction and a sounding board" and "having their backs if something goes wrong despite their best efforts". "That is something unique for that generation, the level of entitlement, what can I do for me versus how can I get to the next level, how can I prove myself and that plays into what they want from their manager. It's a lot more cuddling than I got". This sense of entitlement was a re-iteration of a previous managers' impression from employees wanting to progress quicker than average in their careers.

Mentoring was another important theme. These managers considered that GenY want their managers to "get their hands dirty and lead by example" and "someone they can look to emulate their behaviour and sort of trust that's the way to go". Another mentioned that they want "someone they can look up to and emulate in a way, so my manager has got to that level, what do I need to do to get to that level. They expect a certain level of performance".

Managers also noted that they expect GenY employees to want a sense of clarity from them. The employees want to know what it takes to do the job well and develop. They want "honesty, to be clear and direct to them". Another noted that they want "clarity – of business and of their career is progressing upwards, at 6 months, and 1 year and end goal. When things go well they want feedback and honest feedback of how to get there if not. Be clear of where you want them to be but no firing squad if things didn't work out for them".

When asked how they motivate their employees, there were similarities and differences in what they mentioned GenY employees expect from them. Themes which emerged in this area were reward, support and providing challenges. Reward varied significantly from a bottle of wine for the best employee each month and sweets to recognition from peers and senior managers.

Support for these managers meant mistakes are ok in a "culture of not necessarily no blame but mistakes will happen and that's ok". It is important for managers to "find out what motivates them if an employee trusts that I have their best interests in heart, they will collaborate with me and we will be more aligned on their motivation".

Challenges come in the form of hard goals as there is a clear target. It was considered to be

> *"No organisation is ever better than the sum of its people"*
> **Kaywin Feldman, Director and President, Minneapolis Institute of Arts**

"one of the best because they are irrefutable". As so much work is team based now, it is important for GenY employees to know "we are only as strong as our weakest link and . . . keep the collective reputation and standard of the team high and that's easy to do once you set the standard and knowing I'm in this with them keeps them, and is a safe haven where they feel motivated and challenge each other". Another manager also provided challenges as a reward, allowing employees a chance to learn something new and "to push them into the spotlight and challenge them".

4.4 Comparative analysis

Comparison is considered to be fundamental in fully analysing and presenting research findings. In qualitative research, it is only possible to analyse and compare trends in the data and not generalise these trends. Therefore analysis in Table 1 below compares trends in manager and GenY interviews (Guest et al, 2012).

Table 1 overview of comparative analysis

Themes	GenY	Managers
Engagement and attraction	Business model, culture, interesting work, development	Unsure, company, work, benefits
OCB	Important for attraction and motivation	Important for GenY. Sense of entitlement and what they can gain from company
Motivation	Development (springboard), money, social aspect	Development, money, social aspect
Retention – why staying	Interesting work, career development	Career development
Retention – reasons might leave	No development, not seeing manager as role model, external factors	Not promoted or progressed as quickly as anticipated, entitlement
Relationship between GenY and their managers	Want support, freedom, trust, role model.	Think GenY want support, mentoring, clarity. Provides reward, support, challenges.

4.4.1 Engagement

There was overlap in what attracts GenY employees to their roles and what managers think attracts them. GenY were more certain about the reasons, noting mainly an interesting business model, the company culture and finding the work interesting. Managers had to reflect more on this answer with some admitting they never thought of it before. Managers considered the company itself, interesting work and benefits to be pull factors for GenY employees. Interestingly no GenY employee mentioned that money, or benefits of any kind attracted them to the role.

Managers agreed with GenY that 2 years is the longest these employees want to stay in the same role. They want to see their employees developing but want to help them in their careers and not push them into new roles before they are ready. Most managers acknowledged that employees want to learn and grow in their roles, not using the term *springboard* but resonating with it by using terms such as "development" "exposure" and "challenging environment". A different term was recurring in manager interviews – *entitlement*. Some managers believe that this latest generation has a sense of entitlement; that they feel above the work they are asked to complete at the beginning of their careers and are entitled to a promotion.

4.4.2 Organisational citizenship behaviour

OCB was important for all interviewees. GenY interviewees commented that the friendly atmosphere was a reason many accepted this role with many others mentioning that the positive environment was a motivating factor for them. They stay in this role because they like the people they work with.

Managers responded very strongly that this is important for their GenY employees, with many noting that this is a new phenomenon for this generation. In the past it was more of a balance, what can I do for the company that has given me a job and helping me develop but now it is seen that GenY want much more from their companies. One manager summarised this issue well: "if people feel wanted and needed, they will do a better job. If we don't have our psychological needs met on a daily basis, by the business, people will leave".

4.4.3 Motivation and retention techniques

Again, as with attraction, money was a theme for managers in terms of retention but not employees. Many managers believe that money is a very important aspect of their role, possibly even more so than development but for GenY, money doesn't come into why they

stay. Reasons they would leave are mainly that they don't see their manager as a role model and someone they want to become, or they are drawn to a more interesting opportunity externally.

GenY employees look for as much variety in their roles as possible. Hitting a "flat curve", "same thing day-in day-out" and "getting bored" are reasons they would no longer be happy in their roles. Many used the term "springboard", seeing this role as a development opportunity to get into what they really want to be doing. They also want to enjoy their work environment and social aspects are important.

4.4.4 Relationship between GenY and their managers

The relationship with their manager is a strong motivating factor for GenY. They want their managers to almost act as personal and professional mentors, not help them complete this task today to the required standard.

Managers recognise this to an extent, with support, clarity and mentoring to be what they understand their GenY employees to want from them. Some see support as a motivator, getting to know their employees and being a sounding board for them is important. How most motivate their employees varies however. Some use reward such as wine and sweets to keep their team going but others use development as a motivator, either offering new challenges as an incentive or providing them with hard goalsr.

5 Discussion

This chapter demonstrates the implications of findings in chapter 4 and its setting in the research (Saunders et al, 2012). Similarities and differences with previous research will be discussed along with demonstrating new information created as part of this study.

5.1 Discussion on findings

Three of the objectives for this research were illustrated in chapter 4: to increase understanding of GenY; to examine the impact GenY is having on professional service firms; and to gain insight into how managers are currently attracting, motivating and retaining genY through the RBV. The fourth objective, to identify changes managers can make to their attraction, motivation and retention of GenY is discussed below. As demonstrated in table 1, managers are not always aware of GenY's impact, attraction, retention and motivation factors.

5.1.1 Engagement

46% of GenY in this study sourced their role online. This supports the growing trend of people sourcing their roles online, especially using social media (Twenge et al, 2010).

Managers interviewed in this research were not all sure what attracted their GenY employees to their current roles. This is important. If they don't know that their employees want to be connected to the business model and be given interesting, developing work, they can't give it to their GenY employees to keep them engaged and motivated.

The managers in this research who did consider what attracted their employees to the role considered it to be benefits, interesting work and the company. Researchers in this area however note that autonomy, focus and purpose to their work and celebrating successes are important to GenY (Horwitz et al 2003; Twenge et al, 2010). Feeling connected to the company's mission is also important (Nayar, 2009). In order to keep attracting the best talent, managers need to be aware what GenY look for in their roles.

Hein (2013) recognised that the average length in a role for GenY is 1.5 − 2. This connects very strongly with how long GenY interviewed here want to stay and how long their managers expect them to stay. Both agreed on a maximum of 2 years in the one role. Twenge et al (2010) highlighted that GenY are happy to leave if the work or company no longer interests them. Managers interviewed here noticed a similar trend in Ireland "more and more

they expect promotion a lot faster so they like to see progression and if they don't see it they are happy to jump ship".

5.1.2 Organisational citizenship behaviour

OCB is important for GenY employees globally and for those in the professional services sector in Ireland. Managers in this research recognised the importance of OCB for their employees. They demonstrate this by hiring from within and creating a culture of helpfulness. The manager has experienced the GenY employee's role and can provide help and guidance in completing it.

This correlates with Khalid et al's 2009 findings that GenY want to enjoy their work. A caring environment was considered to be very important. If they don't have this, they will be happy to search for new jobs. GenY want to enjoy the work they do; "the younger crowd want an environment they are comfortable with". An environment with uncaring colleagues is not attractive for GenY employees and they may look to leave it. (Khalid et al, 2009).

Earle (2003) established that GenY have high expectations of what this caring environment looks like. They want to enjoy work and for their managers to care about them as individuals (Khalid et al, 2013). There is a strong connection between this high expectation and the entitlement that managers interviewed in this research noted. Managers in this research commented on the shift in this recently "a flexible culture and what's in it for me is important for GenY, before it was more of a balance". This demonstrates a shift away from the RBV, where employees were considered similar to other resources an organisation held. GenY expect more; to be treated well in a caring, positive environment.

5.1.3 Motivation and retention techniques

For previous generations, career progression was incremental increases in compensation and responsibility. Expectations are changing now with GenY looking for self-fulfilment and work they find interesting (Garletts, 2002). This resonates strongly with findings from this research. GenY consider a lack of development as the biggest reason they would look to move on from their role. This is followed by not seeing their manager as a role model or other attractive external factors. Managers recognised this need for development and interesting work, noting that not being promoted as quickly as expected is a reason many people lose interest in the role.

> *"The essence of strategy is choosing what not to do"*　　　　　　**Michael Porter**

Twenge et al (2010) mentioned that GenY want to quickly move up the career ladder, earn more money but not necessarily work harder. This is exactly what came across in GenY interviews. Themes which emerged were: development; wanting this role to be a springboard for their next; money; and the social aspect to work. Managers interviewed in this research again considered the same attributes important.

Asghar (2014) elaborated more on the development GenY typically look for. They want to be involved in decision making and given freedom to be creative in their roles. Horwitz et al (2003) came to consistent conclusions that increased compensation is important and that GenY want to develop as well as help the company to grow.

Companies that successfully control their resources, especially people, which are considered the most valued and unique resource, hold competitive advantage (Farnham, 2010).

5.1.4 Relationship between GenY and their manager

Youndt and Snell (2004) established that competitive pay, training and promotion from within encouraged higher human capital performance. Managers in this study were aware of what GenY employees want from them. Managers cited support, mentoring and clarity, where GenY themselves cited support, a role model, freedom and trust.

How managers were actually supporting their employees and developing this relationship varied somewhat with reward, support and challenges. This correlates with Sheahan's (2005) argument that challenge and support are critical to a manager's relationship with GenY. It is also acknowledged that employees need support and guidance to achieve their full potential (Earle, 2003).

The relationship with their manager is important for GenY. They look for a strong bond where they can have honest conversations about their careers and connect on a personal level (Faour and Heinze, 2013). As GenY are in the early stage of their careers, they want their managers to be supportive and encouraging (Sessa et al, 2007).

Using the RBV of the firm, managers in this research do recognise the value their GenY employees bring. This is supported by Horwitz et al's (2003) argument that they are an important resource for the company but they need to be challenged and encouraged to remain engaged and motivated. GenY in this research and in previous literature have huge potential but need mentoring and manager's support to truly flourish (Nayar, 2009).

5.2 Discussion on changes managers can make

Objective 4 of this research is to identify changes these managers can make to their attraction, motivation and retention of GenY. Some managers interviewed didn't know what attracted their employees to their roles. GenY are demanding and are known to want a lot from their roles and managers. If Managers don't know what they expect, it is a lot more difficult for managers to provide it.

In terms of motivations, managers seem more aware of their employees' expectations and research in the area to date. Managers recognise that their GenY employees want development, money and a social aspect to their roles to remain interested. This supports Twenge et al (2010)'s findings that money is important and Asghar's (2014) findings that autonomy and development are important.

An important finding in this research that hadn't been mentioned by managers or seen in previous research is that GenY see their current role as a springboard for their next. They want to develop, to do a good job in order to further their careers, not simply to do this job well. GenY are very willing to work to benefit the company as long as it benefits them too. If managers can have frank conversations with their employees about what GenY's end goal is, or what they want this role to be a springboard for, they will achieve more. If the managers can see what the employee wants to do next they can provide them with some work in that area to keep GenY engaged and focussed. Managers should clarify for these employees how the task they are currently doing will benefit their development. Managers and GenY will then have better relationships and achieve more with engaged, productive employees.

GenY want their managers to act as role models. Langford (2011) recognised this, using the term *mentors* however this concept is not widely researched. GenY in this study believe that once they no longer see their manager as a role model they disengage and seek a new opportunity. Managers recognise that GenY want to be "lead by example" and have someone "they can emulate" but none mentioned mentoring as a tool they use to motivate. Instead they opted for new challenges, reward and only one mentioned support.

In order to increase engagement, retention and motivation, managers need to connect with their employees more on a personal level. They recognise that GenY look for "the softer stuff" but managers need to build stronger relationships with their GenY employees and act as career mentors or role models to ensure these employees remain engaged and want to grow in their roles.

The RBV of the firm does still apply to GenY in certain aspects. These employees are important for competitive advantage as they are, unique and difficult to imitate (Farnham, 2010). However, as they are proven to have huge potential (Hein, 2013) managers need to see them as more than another resource the company holds. Instead they should see them as the key to growth and profits.

5.3 Limitations

This qualitative research was conducted with a small number of GenYs and their managers across three companies in the professional services sector. It is not possible to generalise these findings across other companies, industries or geographies. Instead this research is relating to research previously conducted in the area incrementally adding to the research on managing GenY through the RBV of the firm (Biggam, 2011).

In this research male and female managers were given equal opportunity to participate but only 22% of managers interviewed were female. If this study were to be completed again, an attempt would be made to source more female managers. The relationship employees have with male and female managers could then be further explored.

While it is established that the RBV of the firm needs to be updated for this high potential but demanding generation, a new framework has not yet been created for companies and managers to understand how they should adapt the approach to their GenY employees. This is mainly due to a time and resource constraint on this research.

5.4 Further research

Further research should be completed to confirm external validity of this research, using a qualitative approach. New concepts in this research such as using their current role as a springboard for the next should be further examined using a larger sample. This would also increase the reliability of the study (Saunders et al, 2010).

To increase reliability even further, the sample could extend past more GenY employees in this sector to all client-facing GenY or all GenY in services industries across different regions. As this study focussed on GenY, it did not have capacity to consider how GenY employees interact with GenY managers or managers of different generations. It would be interesting to research whether generational differences between employees and managers affect GenY's performance and connection with their roles.

This study was influenced by further research recommended by Snell (2014) see appendix 1. A comparative study of what GenY look for and what managers look for in employees influenced objective 3; gaining insight into how managers are attracting, retaining and motivating GenY. A deeper, quantitative comparison could now be done to gain a greater insight into the needs and expectations of both parties.

It has been recognised that the RBV to the GenY cohort of the human capital pool is no longer the most suitable tool for managers to use. GenY have higher expectations and expect to be appreciated and treated above other resources in the company. Further research is required to provide managers with a new framework they can refer to in managing GenY as they continue to make an impact..

6 Recommendations and Conclusions

6.1 Recommendations

It is recognised that GenY don't want to be treated like a cohort. They want to stand out, to create a personal impact on the world and be treated as individuals (Wong et al, 2008). These young people are accustomed to instant gratification. Almost 80% of all social media users are GenY (Econsultancy). Camp (2014) also noted that they grew up with participation being rewarded and huge amounts of recognition from their parents. As they grow up, this generation expect to be treated in the same way. They want to be recognised and praised.

It has been established that the RBV requires adaptation to remain relevant for this latest generation to impact the workforce. A more individual, personal approach is required for GenY. Managers in this study noted that GenY are worth the entitlement and additional expectations they have but more research is required in this area, to educate managers on the importance of building this personal relationship.

6.2 Conclusions

The aim for this research was to explore managers' understanding of GenY and to investigate how to maximise GenY's performance within organisations using the framework of the RBV of the firm. This aim has been achieved through a number of objectives, using a literature review of previous research in the area and adding new qualitative research by conducting semi-structured interviews with managers and GenY employees.

The first objective of this research was to increase understanding of GenY and its importance over previous generations. Managers are recognising that GenY are the highest educated generation in history and have the most potential (Asghar, 2014). They want to connect with their businesses and help them succeed but only where it also helps them grow (Hein, 2013).

The second objective was to examine the impact GenY is having on organisations (specifically professional service firms). The human aspect of the RBV is especially critical for such firms as it is their employees' skills and knowledge which they provide to their clients (von Nordenflycht, 2010). GenY expect something different from the workplace, require more cuddling and want to be more involved in decision-making. They also want to spend less time in each role in their careers. Two years was the accepted average duration in a role and GenY are happy to "*jump ship*" if the job or career prospects are no longer

appealing. Managers must adapt to this increased need for guidance to avoid higher employee turnover rates.

The third objective was to gain insight into how managers are currently attracting, motivating and retaining GenY through the resource based view of the firm. This view considers the people in an organisation to be the most important resource and essential to competitive advantage. Researchers have recognised the increased impact employees are having on an organisations' success over time (Twenge et al, 2010). GenY want a personal touch, from recruitment to managers acting as life-mentors helping them source their next role. GenY are sourcing their roles increasingly though social media, where they are directly targeted. They are staying in their roles because their managers are creating a personal connection with the business model and involving GenY in decision-making. They are motivated in their roles because managers are helping them use this job as a "*springboard*" for their next.

The final objective was to identify any changes managers should make to attract, motivate and retain GenY. Managers in this research recognised GenY's desire for a role model or mentor. But very few provided mentoring to motivate and retain their employees. Instead of thinking of these employees as another, albeit critical, resource a company holds, managers should focus on developing these people, in order to maximise their performance and achieve organisational profits.

Therefore GenY are different and need to be treated differently for organisations to really benefit from their input. If managers can connect the tasks required today with GenY's career goals, in return they will get high performing, engaged employees.

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Appendix 1 - Interview with Professor Snell

14 January 2014

Suzanne Reidy (SR) started off the phone conversation with a brief overview of understanding of Snell's 2001 article and the human capital pool.

Professor Snell's (SS) comments on the human capital pool: agreed with Suzanne's understanding and summarised the importance of the human capital pool as an investment and the return you get on it.

SR: What do GenY want from work? How will they contribute in return?

SS: Younger GenY employees want more boundary-less careers with more lateral movement. That's good because there are more lateral than vertical opportunities. Will companies recoup the investment they put into GenY employees? Will employees stay with them long enough – that is yet to be determined.

Companies need to invest in their human capital pool, especially in professional services firms. These companies need to grow their own timber, as they can't buy the skills they require. How does an organisation ensure they get return on this investment? The payback period. There is a balance between firm specific training and general training. Firms must evaluate whether they should invest in transferrable skills to make their employees feel valued and stay, or whether this supports employees reaching for their next challenge. This is considered the human capital challenge. The risk of employees moving on to their next challenge is greater for GenY.

Specific training is most relevant to this company, developing skills specifically for this role and company. It is better for the company to develop employees' specific skills. General skills, which are more transferable, are what the employee wants, to add to their CV and make themselves more marketable. Sometimes these general skills are needed for the company too, e.g. time management, organisation, and project management. In order to ensure companies get value out of employees developing these skills, typically a payback period is agreed, whereby if the employee leaves within a certain time frame of completing the course, they must reimburse the company.

Competition in this sector is seen by employers funding MBAs and then the employees being poached by new companies. This new company is happy to find an employee with these skills and will reimburse the previous employer for the training. Recommended further reading: Mike Holt's article on human capital leverage.

But, we don't always want employees to stay as long as possible. A manager said to SS that the truth is, we don't want employees to stay. We only want them to stay so long. It is easier to buy the skills, keep the employees for a while and then let them go. Is this true for all employers? There is a matching process between how long people want to stay and how long the organisations want them to stay. More often than not, this is mismatched more than matched.

Consulting and investment firms are notorious for bringing people in for a few years knowing they will leave. Employees gain a lot of experience and exposure and leave once they feel they have learned enough.

Case studies were then discussed. McKinseys are known for letting a certain percentage of employees go at each level. Not everyone can progress up but they value the experience McKinseys provide and they remain in touch, often becoming a client a few years later. Another approach is being considered by PWC and Deloitte (senior managers spoke with SS at a recent conference). They actually want their employees to stay. There needs to be a shift in the employment model for people to stay. Goldmann Sachs are starting to change this. They did away with their two year associate programme for recent graduates as they want them to stay more than two years. This is considered the new matching, or does GenY want the lateral movement that comes with 2 years in a role and then moving on? Is that a better match? This could be assessed through primary research such as interviews and surveys.

Senior executives who have lots of experience (rainmakers/ partners in the firms) are sharing their knowledge with GenY. The more junior people below them with less industry and firm-specific experience can work with the partners and gain leverage. They feed off the experience of the partners in a form of mentoring. This makes them seem smarter to the client and gain a lot of experience.

GenY care about the world, so companies must too. This is more difficult for some over others, for example the needs of the military and the wants of GenY are very different.

Suggestions for further study:

- Comparative study on what Gen Y look for in jobs and what managers look for in employees;

- Interview/survey the things people look for in their careers;

- Ask people in companies what they think GenY are interested in.

SR: How should this primary research be completed to gain the managers' perspective?

SS: Interview others in the industry asking the same questions he was asked. How is the human capital pool different for GenY? Is it different, should it be treated differently? Are you changing what you offer? How? This is a better way to draft questions for surveys than consulting literature. Answers will feed into surveys.

From: Deborah

Sent: Friday, May 02, 2014 2:22 PM

To: Suzanne Reidy

Subject: RE: dissertation questions

Hi Suzanne-

I don't have an issue with you doing it as long as you emphasize that it's for your personal dissertation and none of the information is being used for {company}. That said, some people might be suspicious of a HR person asking these questions since they seem to be assessing for job satisfaction. For instance, question 3 seems particularly direct and someone may feel uncomfortable being completely honest. Do you have the flexibility to edit the questions? Maybe you can ask "How long do you think is the norm to stay in a role at this level in your career."

 Deb

From: Suzanne Reidy

Sent: Friday, May 02, 2014 6:54 AM

To: Deborah

Subject: dissertation questions

Hi Deb,

As part of my masters dissertation I need to do some primary research. I plan on interviewing GenY employees and then use that to create questions for interviews with GenY's managers. The employees and managers don't have to be connected.

I have drafted the below questions for GenY themselves. It would be really helpful if I could ask employees here to be interviewees. I wouldn't require people to do it, but send an email to everyone in that category in the office looking for volunteers.

If you have any issue with this, or with any of the questions, please let me know. I'll be asking shortly about draft manager questions too if that's ok

Thanks,

Suzanne

<u>Interview questions</u>

screening Qs:

Do you work in a professional service firm?   Were you born 1980 – 1995?

1. Is this your first role after university? Why did you leave last role

2. How did you find this role, what attracted you to it?

3. How long in total do you expect to stay in this role?

4. What is making you stay in this role/ what do you think will be the factor to leave your current role?

5. What is it you want from this job?(money, social, experience, foot on ladder…)

6. What do you expect from your manager in this role?

7. Does your manager affect your motivation to your current role? How?

8. Do you think compassion, helpfulness and kindness - attributes beyond formal job requirements are prevalent in your company?

9. Is that something you consider in looking for new roles and in staying in your role?

Appendix 3 – Sample email requesting GenY interview volunteers

From: Suzanne Reidy

Sent: Friday, May 02, 2014 5:29 PM

To: X

Cc: Deborah

Subject: dissertation research assistance?

Hi –

You may already know that I am completing my masters at the moment. I am in the middle of writing my dissertation and I am looking for volunteers for 20 minute interviews. The theme of my masters is GenY so people born 1980-1995, and if/ how the workplace in general should adapt to them. To do that I need to complete a few interviews with GenY people in the workplace (i.e. most of you guys) to make sure your needs/ expectations are understood. I don't need to complete 30+interviews so if you don't feel comfortable or aren't interested, that's totally fine. This is completely for my own personal research. No data will be stored on {company name}'s computers or shared with management.

I will know who you are as I would be speaking with you for the brief interview, but I won't be publishing names/ companies anything like that in the final report.

To clarify – this is 100% voluntary, if anyone wants to see the questions before you confirm if you are interested, just let me know. If you are interested, please let me know and we will find a time that suits over the next week.

Thanks!
Suzanne

Appendix 4 - GenY interview schedule

Screening questions:

    i)   Do you work in a professional service company?

    ii)   Were you born 1980 – 1995?

1) Is this your first role after university? If no – why did you leave your last role
2) How did you source this role? What attracted you to it?
3) How long do you think is the norm to stay in a role at this level in your career?
4) What is making you stay in this role? What do you think will be the factor(s) to leave your current role?
5) What is it you want from this job? (money, social, experience, foot on ladder…)
6) What do you expect from your manager in this role?
7) Does your manager affect your motivation to your current role? How?
8) Do you think compassion, helpfulness and kindness – attributes beyond the formal job requirements are prevalent in your company?
9) Is that something you consider in looking for new roles or in staying in your current role?

Appendix 4 - GenY interview schedule

Appendix 5 - Manager interview schedule

Screening Questions:

    i)   How long have you been a manager of GenY employees?

    ii)   How many GenY employees do you manage?

1) What do you think is making their jobs seem interesting and attractive to apply and accept the job offer?

2) We know these younger employees want to spend less time in each role but how long do you need them to stay in the same role in your organisation? Do issues arise if employees want to progress quicker?

3) What do you think is making them stay in this role?

4) What do you think these employees want from work? Is it money/ social interaction/ experience/ development up the career ladder?

5) What do you think your GenY employees want from their manager? Do you do this? How?

6) How do you motivate your employees?

7) Do you think helpfulness, compassion and kindness; attributes beyond the formal job requirement are prevalent in your company?

8) Do you think these attributes are important for attraction and retention?