Do different generations have different reward preferences? A comparative study analysing the motivators and reward preferences of Gen Z in comparison to Gen Y

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Abstract

The subject of reward is a widely researched topic that is studied by many academics, Generation Z on the other hand, has not been researched in depth by academics. Reward focuses on motivating employees to perform well. Generation Z are a cohort that are born between 1996-2012. This research looks at the generational differences between motivators and reward preferences, focusing on a comparison between Generation Z and Generation Y. Generation Z are entering the labour market and differences in cultural values and characteristics are apparent in their choices in career and their reward preferences. There is little research surrounding Generation Z in the workplace, this research aims to fill that gap and identify the needs of this generation. The main goal of the research is to identify what motivates Generation Z, what their reward preferences are, and whether they are different to Generation Y. The research is qualitative and interviews were used as a research method in order to gather the relevant data. The findings of the research show that Generation Z value career progression and are motivated by the work itself, while Generation Y have more of a focus on financial compensation and benefits. The findings show that employees within the pet retail sector feel undervalued and unmotivated, they believe the level of work they provide is not reflected by the rewards that the organisation offer. The main recommendation for this organisation is to restructure their reward scheme in order to avoid a one-fits-all approach in order to motivate all employees.

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This research has a focus on Generation Z and how their preferences in regards to performance and reward differ from previous generations. The post millennium generation is now entering the labour market, and employers need to be ready for their arrival, as generational differences in characteristics occur due to differentiating cultural values and practices changing over time. This research takes place within the context of a retail group and the literature focuses on performance and reward while analysing the different preferences across generations. It is clear that Generation Z are making their mark in the workforce and are widely established in the employment sector. It is clear within the research that Generation Z look for different benefits and rewards in comparison to previous generations which highlights the importance for human resource practitioners to recognise the different rewards that motivate this generational cohort.

1.2 Background of the Study

Generation Z make up for 24% of the workforce, as they are a dominant group in the employment sector it is important to recognise their different needs. The difficulty is gaining an understanding as to what these different needs are in comparison to previous generations. Faurote (2018) argues that Generation Z's values lie within personal growth and career opportunities, this is in contrast to previous generations such as the millennials who place a greater emphasis on benefits and flexibility (Rampton, 2017). The differences between these generations show that a 'one size fits all' approach is not effective when rewarding employees. Therefore, it is crucial for organisations to focus on understanding the different generations reward preferences in order to motivate the entire workforce adequately (Sims & Sauser, 2011).

1.3 Purpose of the Study

This research aims to gain a deeper understanding and knowledge of the different perspectives Gen Z have on the idea of performance reward and how their perspectives differ from employees of different generations within the same industry. This research aims to answer the question as to whether there are generational differences in regard to reward systems within HR, and if so, how organisations will implement these rewards. We know that the values and expectations of Gen Z are different based on the literature but not what these values and expectations actually are, through my analysis I aim to find out. This research will aim to understand what changes HR will need to make to ensure this new era of employees feel rewarded in their careers in order to attract new talent and motivate the workforce. The author has developed two key questions to investigate throughout the research. The following questions will be further discusses in Chapter 3.

1. Do Generation Z have different motivators in comparison to Generation Y?

2. Do Generation Z have different reward preferences in comparison to Generation Y?

The outcome of the research aims to find a deeper understanding of what the different generational cohorts deem to be rewarding and to help human resource practitioners to implement approaches to the needs of the different generations, thus, increasing motivation.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This research will help future researchers to gain a deeper understanding of the desires of Generation Z in comparison to other generations in regards to reward in order to enhance motivation in the workplace. This study will help the retail sector to understand generational differences and recognise a need for change due to differentiating values of new generations entering the workforce. The research will also help management who have an interest in further understanding the topic.

1.5 Research Approach

The first task for the researcher is to acquire all of the relevant data required to fulfil to overall research objective in order to answer the main research questions. A qualitative approach will be utilised to gather the data. Primary data will be acquired through semi-structured interviews with six members of two different generational cohorts within the chosen retail group. The data from the interviews will be used to facilitate the research question. The research approach will be further discussed in Chapter Four.

1.6 Overview of Chapters

Chapter One: Introduction

This chapter introduces the area of research by presenting a background into Gen Z and the importance of recognising the differences between generational cohorts in regards of rewards. The chapter also highlights the purpose of the study, the research approach and the significance of the study

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This chapter looks it literature in areas such as Generation Z, performance management, reward management and motivation. All of these topics are interrelated and need to be understood in order to analyse the differing preferences of Generation Z and what affects these preferences.

Chapter Three: Research Objectives

This chapter outlines the research questions that have been derived from the literature, highlights a hypothesis and briefly discusses the measures used to test the hypothesis and the participants involved

Chapter Four: Methodology

This chapter discusses the research methodology and rationale for research method choice. It discusses in depth how the data was collected and analysed while outlining the limitations and ethical considerations.

Chapter Five: Findings

In chapter five, a thematic analysis was undertaken in order to organise the data into different themes that could be broken down and analysed in the following chapter

Chapter Six: Discussion and Analysis

In chapter six, the findings from the previous chapter are discussed in greater detail. This chapter also gives more information about the participants and how the themes and sub-themes were generated.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

The final chapter concludes the research and highlights the key findings of the study while making recommendations for future research.

Chapter Two : Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The key objective of this chapter is to give an in depth review of previously conducted literature and research in the areas of generational research, performance management, reward management and motivation. Although this is a broad range of topics, each field is interrelated; performance management must be conducted in order to reward individuals sufficiently, and motivation must be understood in order to reward individuals to their expectations. This research highlights the importance of studying Generation Z, their characteristics and their presence in the workplace. As baby-boomers begin to retire, Generation Z are becoming an important segment in the workplace. This literature looks at the different motivators for Generation Z in comparison to previous generations in order to gain an understanding as to what motivates them, what they value and what expectations they have for their career. It is important for organisations to understand how to manage this generation as they begin to dominate the workforce. This study aims to define and analyse the key concepts related to performance, reward and motivation, therefore, it is important to analyse past research and literature that has been carried out by academics in these areas.

2.2 Generational Cohorts

2.2.1 Generational Cohort Theory

This research will focus on Generation Z in the workplace, therefore, it is important to gain a deeper understanding in the field of generational cohort theory. Since this research compares Gen Z to other generations, the generation that will be used as a comparator is Gen Y. Generational cohort theory explains the changes across generations and believes that historical and social events in society affect the beliefs, values and attitudes of individuals. Events that happen during an individual's formative years are especially significant. The substitute for generational cohort theory is the assumption that values, beliefs and attitudes

are due to age and maturing instead of generation (Moss, 2010). Cohort can be defined as the aggregate of people who experiences the same events within the same period of time (Ryder, 1965). Generational cohort theory describes and expands on the differences and changes in generational perspectives and attitudes over time (Van der Walt et al., 2016). A generational cohort is made up of people who share the same values and beliefs, events and external environment or life experiences (Petroulas et al., 2010) which are believed to influence their attitudes, beliefs, preferences and behaviour (Bilgihan , 2016). There are noticeable differences across generations and how they connect events, people and experiences; people belonging to the same cohort experience historical, social and cultural events simultaneously which significantly influences the development of attitudes (Mahmoud et al., 2020).

2.2.2. Generations in the Workplace

The generational cohorts that predominantly make up the current workforce include; Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z. Baby Boomers are individuals born between 1946 and 1964, Generation X are those born between 1965 and 1980, Generation Y (also referred to as Millennials) are those born between 1981 and 1996 (Hoole & Bonnema, 2015). There are different opinions as to when Generation Z was formed. There are authors that believe Generation Z was formed from the year 2000 (Iorgulescu, 2016), while others such as Panwar and Mehta (2019) who suggest that 1995 was the starting point for Generation Z. For the purpose of this study, Generation Z will be described as those born from 1996. For the purpose of this study, Generation Y will be used as a comparator to Generation Y in relation to motivation and reward. Generation Y are attracted by a high base pay (Hassan & Govindhasamy, 2020) and their preferred form of reward is an increase in base pay (Connolly, 2017). Generation Y tend to be more financially orientated as they experienced the financial crash in 2008, while Gen Z were too young to fully understand it.

2.2.3 Criticisms of Generational Research

There have been criticisms of generational research due to the span of years that make up one generation. There have been issues with the large time spans that are linked to generational cohorts (Parry & Urwin, 2011). It has been found that although research has revealed generational differences in regards to career expectations, attitudes, and beliefs; some evidence for the variables are weak (Kuron, 2014). The arguments in favour of generational research focus on the findings that both employees and the workplace are changing (Rudolph & Zacher, 2018). Researches in support of generational research argue that categorising generations can be useful when aiming to understand how behaviours are influenced at a personal level at different ages (Rudolph & Zacher, 2018).

2.3 Generation Z

2.3.1 Generation Z Defined

Generation Z refers to people born between 1996 and 2012. When a new generation enters the workplace, organisations and managers need to prepare for new workers, their different expectations, characteristics and challenges (Lev, 2021). Although generation Z share some traits with the Millennials, they bring new patterns of behaviour (Schroth, 2019). The introduction of Generation Z into the workforce identifies the need for a change in how the organisation functions, communicates and how processes are implemented. Generation Z can potentially bring many new challenges and changes to organisations and how HR operates (Racolta-Paina & Irini 2021). As Generation Z enter the workplace they will have a different set of personal and professional expectations than previous generations, organisations will need to develop specific ways to attract this generation to work for them (Pauli et al., 2020). Generation Z refers to the generations that were born in the 1990's and raised in the early 2000's, during the most noticeable changes and developments in technology, the internet, smartphones and televisions. This generation was raised with free access to the social web,

they are centred around technology and can also be referred to as Gen Tech. The idea that this generation was raised in the digital world distinguishes them from other generations (Singh & Dangmei, 2016). Considering Generation Z have access to large quantities of information, they are more analytic about the decisions they make in comparison to previous generations, this is important to note for HR as they tailor practices in line with this generation joining the workforce (Francis & Hoefel, 2018). This generation values communication and the ability to be connected no matter where they are (McCrindle & Fell, 2019).

2.3.2 Characteristics of Generation Z

While discussing the characteristics of generation Z it is important to note that they were raised during the most substantial changes in the century who were brought up during the introduction of the web, internet, smart phones and laptops. Generation Z are able to live both virtually and in the real world. The representatives of Generation Z are able to share information freely, communicate continuously, and cross reference and check information. People within this generational cohort mainly use social media channels to communicate but also value personally meeting others. Generation Z comment on photos and videos online, share their values and beliefs on twitter and share photos; Generation Z don't only view and comment on the content of the internet, they create it (Dolot, 2018). The main characteristics of Gen Z include; they are the most ethnically diverse generation, they have a straightforward way of communicating, they use their initiative, they tend to be more entrepreneurial, they are realistic about work expectations, they are less likely to take part in voting within the community, they can be impatient, and they are very concerned with environmental issues (Gaidhani et al., 2019).

2.3.3 Generation Z in the workplace

Some authors argue that Generation Z will create the greatest generational shift in the workplace as they are unlike any generation before them, while others argue that Generation Z shares many characteristics with Generation Y, mainly due to the fact that both of these generations are easily adaptable to the changing world and increased use of technology (Iorgulescu, 2016). There is not a lot of research regarding what Generation Z values in the workplace, some research suggests that this generation is not engaged in the workplace, while contrasting researchers argue that Gen Z values autonomy more than past generations and wish to work for themselves. Although they value technology, they also value face-to-face interactions and are drawn to companies that have a positive social impact (Leslie et al., 2021). Generation Z has already entered the workforce but little is known about their needs, values, characteristics and work style; they have different attitudes and expectations that previous generations and it will be difficult to recruit and retain this segment of the workforce without a decent understanding of this generation (Gaidhani et al., 2019). Generation Z represents the youngest generation of individuals entering the workforce with increased numbers every year, their technological expertise and interest in flexible working hours are similar to that of employee belonging to Generation Y (Ryback, 2016). Generation Z have an understanding of financial stability and know the value of performing well at work, however, they are unwilling to sacrifice their lives in order to succeed in work (Flippin, 2017). When seeking a new job, Generation Z look for an organisation that values employee well-being, especially since the impact of Covid-19 (O'Boyle, 2021). It is already acknowledged that Generation Z are good at multitasking due to the large availability of information, research also shows that Generation Z have an optimistic view of their professional life and have entrepreneurial characteristics. Generation Z prefer independent work and are reluctant to working within a team. It can be argued that due to the high levels of communication in a

virtual environment using abbreviations, Generation Z have been negatively affected by the use of media shown through their inability to listen effectively, their writing skills and their socialization skills (Iorgulescu, 2016). There is an increasing awareness amongst employers of the significance of understanding the diverse characteristics and preferences of each generation. When employers have a deeper understanding of employees needs and respond adequately to each generations expectations, the organisations gain benefits such as increased productivity, morale and employee retention (Mahnoud et al., 2020).

2.3.4 What Motivates Generation Z in the workplace

Research has shown that Generation Z and intrinsically motivated in the workplace. According to studies, the three main things that motivate Gen Z are opportunities for advancement, meaningful work and money. Research on Gen Z students entering the workforce shows that they focus on work-life balance and the nature of the work (Kirchmayer & Fratričová, 2020). Generation Z are more likely to be motivated to work on tasks that bring them satisfaction (Mahmoud et al., 2020). This generation are highly motivated by job security as they have lived through times of financial recession (Patel, 2017). Although research has shown that this generation value a high salary the most when deciding on a career, some authors argue that Gen Z value financial incentives less than other generations. If there was a situation where a higher paid job with less challenging and interesting work was offered in comparison to a job with lower pay but more meaningful work was offered, this generation is divided (Gomez et al., 2019). In contrast to this, Iorgulescu (2016) found that Gen Z is strongly motivated by salary and other financial rewards. Generation Z look for more autonomy and responsibilities in the workplace (Patel, 2017), and care less about the working conditions (Baldonado, 2018). In order to motivate Generation Z, organisations should provide employees with opportunities for growth, increased responsibilities and recognition (Baldonado, 2018).

2.4 Performance Management

2.4.1 Performance Management Defined

The increased academic interest around performance management has reflected the increasing use of performance management systems (Thorpe & Beasley, 2004). For the purposes of this research, it is important to obtain an understanding of what performance management is as it closely relates to reward, which is being discussed throughout the research. Performance can be defined as carrying out, completing or accomplishing tasks, actions or functions (Brauns, 2013). When defining performance, there is a need to differentiate between an action (behavioural aspect) and an outcome aspect of performance. The behavioural aspect is associated with an individual's reaction to a work situation, while the outcome aspect refers to the result or consequences of the individuals behaviour (Sonnentag & Frese, 2002). Performance management can be described as an ongoing system of identifying, reviewing and increasing the performance of individuals and teams within the organisation in order to reach the goals of the business (Aguinis, 2013). Poorly implemented performance management systems can lead to turnover, lowered self-esteem, wasted money and time, burnout, job dissatisfaction and damaged relationships (Aguinis, 2019).

2.4.2 Aims of Performance Management

Almost every organisation has a performance management system that is aimed towards achieving a number of objectives in respect to workforce management (Lawler, 2003). It can be argued that by systematically linking rewards to the outcome of a performance management system, the performance management system can operate more effectively in relation to motivation. However, there is some research that suggests it makes it less effective in regards to development (Lawler, 2003). The overall aim of performance management is to establish a high performing culture within the organisation in which individuals and teams

can take responsibility of the overall improvement of the business and its processes but also for their individual skills that contributed to the improvements (Armstrong, 2006). Other aims of performance management systems include; strategic purpose, administrative purpose, informational purpose, informational purpose, developmental purpose and documentational purpose (Aguinis, 2019). It is important within this research to gain a deep understanding of performance management and its aims as performance management is closely linked with reward management and motivation, in order to analyse the different rewards that motivate Generation Z it is important to understand the performance that is being rewarded. Understanding performance management will help to answer the research question, which discusses how HR can effectively manage the performance of Generation Z.

2.4.3 Characteristics of Performance Management

Performance management is a planned process which involves agreement, measurement, feedback, positive reinforcement and dialogue. It focuses on performance measures, targets, indicators or standards and is based on agreements of role requirements and plans for personal development (Armstrong, 2006). Characteristics associated with a positive performance management system include; strategic congruence, context congruence, thoroughness, practicality, specificity, openness, reliability and validity (Aguinis, 2019).

2.4.4 Generation Z and Performance Management

It is important that managers understand the need for Generation Z to receive continuous feedback about their performance but to also make sure that micromanagement is avoided. Although this generation are good at multitasking, they can be easily distracted (Jones et al., 2019). Due to the use of technology and the access to instant information, Generation Z require immediate feedback (Miller, 2018). Agarwal & Vaghela (2018) argue that honesty and transparency is important to this generation. Research shows that sixty percent of Generation Z would prefer their managers to check in with them multiple times a week while

the other forty percent would like a daily interaction with their manager (The Centre for Generational Kinetics, 2018). Considering this generation have a shorter attention span, they need smaller and more frequent feedback from management. Challenges in relation to the appraisal of this generation include their own limits not being internally recognised and the idea that their self-image and values are malformed (Bencsik et al., 2016).

2.5 Reward

2.5.1 Reward Defined

Reward management can be defined as a set of policies and practices that are required in order to ensure that people are valued and that the contributions that they make to the overall success of the organisation is recognised. The design and implementation of reward systems is aimed to satisfy both the needs of the organisation and the stakeholders in order to operate efficiently (Armstrong, 2010). Reward has a different meaning for everyone; for some people, reward can be in the form of financial gain while for others, rewards are things such as a positive company to work for, a strong job title or even mental stimulation such as new challenges. A good example to differentiate between the types of reward is Maslow who pointed out the hierarchy of needs stating that higher-order needs become more important when lower-order needs have been met (Brauns, 2013). Employee reward is based around how people are rewarded according to their value to the organisation, it involves both financial and non-financial rewards and tries to embrace the strategies, policies and values of the organisation (Armstrong, 2002). Effective reward management recognises and rewards employees based on their value; it should be appropriate, fit for purpose and make a positive impact on performance (Armstrong, 2010).

2.5.2 Characteristics and aims of Reward Management

Reward management is about people, it is stakeholder orientated, evidence based, integrated and strategic. The stakeholder approach identifies the shared purpose between human

resource management and reward management, the purpose of meeting the needs of stakeholders such as employees, customers, and suppliers. This approach is about improving business performance, developing trust and changing the behaviour of the workforce. Integrated reward management is an approach that focuses on reward practices that are consistent and the different elements work simultaneously to ensure that the workforces contributions to achieving goals is rewarded. Strategic reward management focuses on planning ahead to create value and creates reward processes that are based on what people believe to be considered valuable to the organisation. Evidence-based reward management is based on fact rather than opinion, it ensures that information is attained through the evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of the reward practices that are already in place (Armstrong, 2010). The aims of reward systems include; to support the goals of the organisation by aligning employees goals, to be ethical, to be affordable, to increase performance and to motivate employees (Prabakaran et al., 2014).

2.5.3 Motivation Defined

As one of the main aims of reward systems is to be a motivator and an incentive for employees to increase their performance, it is important to define motivation. A motive is a reason to do something, motivation is based on the strength of the behaviour that influences an individual to behave a certain way. Motivation can refer to the goals of an individual, the way they choose their goals, and how others try to change their behaviour (Armstrong, 2009). Arnold (1991) argues that there are three main components of motivation; direction, effort and persistence. Direction refers to what the person is trying to achieve, effort is how hard the person is trying, and persistence is how long the person continues to try. Motivating other people focuses on trying to shape their behaviour in a direction that is needed in order to achieve a certain goal. Motivation can be seen as a goal directed behaviour as people are motivated when they expect an action to help achieve a goal and satisfies their wants

(Armstrong, 2009). Motivation can be seen as a driver to fulfil unsatisfied needs with the aim of achieving a goal that is derived from psychological or physiological needs that stimulate an individual to behave a certain way to achieve a goal (Dobre, 2013).

2.5.4 Types of Rewards

There is a broad range of which rewards can be identified; extrinsic and intrinsic, monetary and nonmonetary and individual versus collective. Intrinsic rewards are those that are experienced by an individual for performing exceptionally in their job, for example, feeling accomplished. Extrinsic rewards are provided by the organisation as a reward for good performance, for example, a bonus. Monetary and nonmonetary are the most blatantly distinguished, monetary involves pay rises, bonus and stock options; they involve rewards of financial value for high performers. Nonmonetary rewards are recognitions for good work, a day off work would be a reward of no monetary value but high symbolic value to the employee (Chen et al., 1999). Bonus pay is commonly offered in organisations and is any pay that needs to be earned, it is not related to base pay (Armstrong & Murlis, 2007). Pension schemes can help with recruitment and retention (Exley et al., 1997), and increases motivation and job satisfaction (Wanjohi et al., 2012). Shared rewards between a team can improve focus, increase prosocial motivation and increase interactions between team members; individual rewards result in higher employee satisfaction but limit the employees attention to working well within a team (Pearsall et al., 2010). Health insyrance is offered by many employers as a reward but there are limited variations available (Bundorf, 2002). Understanding what reward means and the different categories within reward systems, this research aims to understand the different reward systems favoured by Generation Z in comparison to Generation Y in order for HR personnel to have a deeper knowledge of how to motivate and reward this generation as they enter the workforce.

Figure 1 shows the different types of rewards that can be offered to employees and how they are interrelated.
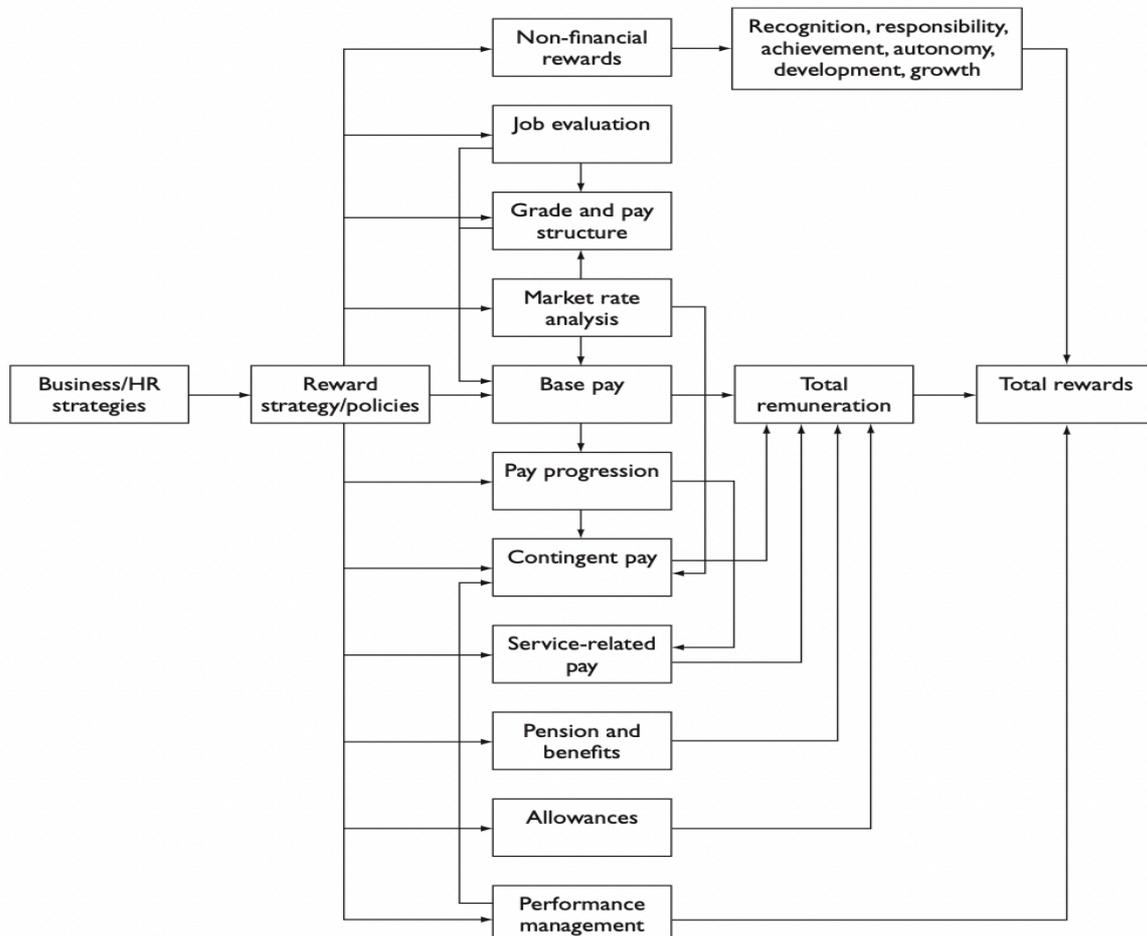
Figure 1. Reward System Components (Armstrong, 2010).

2.5.5 Total Reward

Organisations today are faced with increased competition, changing employee demographics and shifting markets. Due to these changes, organisations are using non-traditional reward systems in order to gain competitive advantage (Chen & Hsieh, 2006). The total reward approach to reward management shows the importance of considering every aspect of the work experience of employees, not just pay and benefits. It blends financial and non-financial parts of reward into a whole. This approach emphasises the importance to provide people with rewarding experiences that arise from their work and environment, but also recognises the need for an effective financial reward (Armstrong, 2011). Total reward strategy aligns the

business strategy with the people strategy, consisting of everything that employees value within their employment relationship. This approach acts in line with circumstances and has the ability to reduce costs, build the employment brand and bring maximum return on the reward strategy; all of these advantages provide short term and long term advantages for the organisation (Jiang et al., 2009).
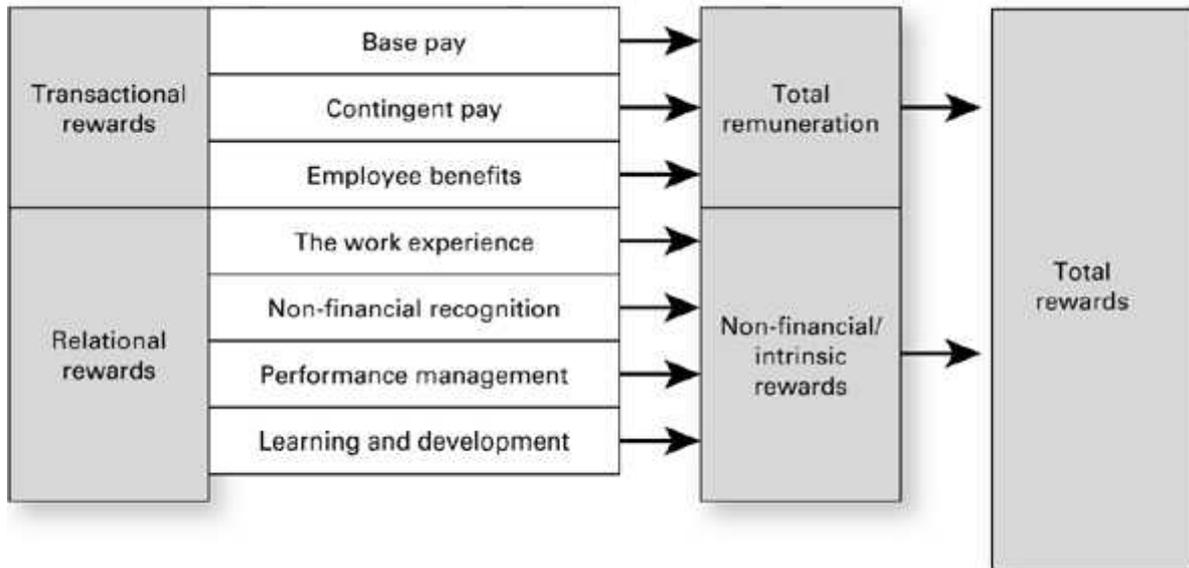
Figure 2. Total Reward Elements (Armstrong, 2011).

2.5.6 Generation Z and rewards

There are many extrinsic and intrinsic reward that Generation Z deem as important to them when selecting an organisation to work for, if employers have a better understanding of what this generation feel is important to them; it will be easier to reward, motivate and retain this generation. The extrinsic reward preferences of Gen Z include, a competitive salary, fringe benefits, work-life balance/flexible working, positive work environment, career advancement opportunities and job security. The preference of intrinsic rewards amongst Gen Z include, skills development opportunities, mentoring opportunities, nature of work content, employee autonomy, supervisor support and positive co-worker relationships (Acheampong, 2021). Training can increase motivation and organisational commitment (Bullut & Culha, 2010). Patel (2017) believes that autonomy and responsibility are important rewards for Gen Z. A

key reward for Gen Z is meaningful work, which makes the work itself worthwhile (Goh & Baum, 2021). Generation Z find it crucial to have needs such as social connection, experience, education, knowledge and environmental sustainability, met in the workplace. It is rewarding for this generational cohort for these needs to be met during their careers. Gen Z is not so much motivated by remuneration as they are by other benefits including flexibility, trust, creativity, engagement and the opportunity to express their individuality (Sidorcuka & Chesnovicka, 2017). Recognition is a key reward and motivator for Gen Z and it also helps the organisation to improve performance predictions (Chikungwa & Chamisa, 2013). Browne (2012) argues that for people aged thirty and below, compensation is not a high motivating factor, while for other Generations such as Gen Y, high income is a key motivator (Nnambooze & Parumasur, 2016). There is contradicting literature in regards to how high Gen Z regard money as a motivator with Stuckey (2016) believing that pay is important to Gen Z and (Mitchell, 2016) stating that other non-financial rewards are preferred by Gen Z.

2.5.7 Performance Management and Reward

Reward management practices focus on the performance and help to create a high performance culture (Armstrong, 2010). Performance and reward are closely linked concepts upon the fact that work has the potential to be more rewarding if it gives you what you want, employees are more likely to perform at higher levels if their work is rewarding (Brauns, 2013). Performance management plays an integral role in a total reward system in which all reward elements are linked together and treated as an integrated system. These elements include base pay, employee benefits, contingent pay and non-financial rewards. Performance management offers rewards in order to motivate employees, improve job engagement and promote organisational commitment (Armstrong, 2006). Rewards are a tool used to increase performance and change the behaviours of unsatisfied employees, a rewards system is not

just about salary and bonuses; it can also involve awards, recognition, promotions and reassignments (Mehmood et al., 2013).

2.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, Generation Z was defined, characterised and discussed in depth in relation to their presence in the workplace. Performance management was analysed through literature from academics, discussing its main aims and tying in Generation Z's requirements in order to successfully manage them. It is clear through defining reward and comparing Generation Z's preferences to that of previous generations that Generation Z prefer rewards such as flexibility and work-life balance rather than renumeration. After analysing literature in the field of motivation in section 2.3.4, it is evident that Generation Z are intrinsically motivated, linking back to reward and their desire for meaningful work, work-life balance and job security.

Chapter Three: Research Objectives

A research objective gives a degree of focus which helps to guide the design of the research and how it is to be achieved (Brotherton, 2008). The main objective of this research is to find out whether Generation Z have different rewards preferences in comparison to the previous generation, Generation Y. For the purpose of this research, a retail group who specialise in pet products was chosen as a case study to gather necessary information. The following questions are chosen in order to answer the research question:

3. Do Generation Z have different motivators in comparison to Generation Y?

4. Do Generation Z have different reward preferences in comparison to Generation Y?

A hypothesis is a logical supposition or a reasonable guess that provides a provisional explanation for a topic that is under investigation. It can direct your thinking to sources of information that will help to resolve the research problem (Creswell, 2017). The hypothesis that this research aims to test is; *Generation Z are motivated by different rewards in comparison to generation Y.* A research question focuses on a specific issue that will be focused on (Collins & Hussey, 2014). The proposed research objective for this study is: *"To explore generational differences between what is deemed to be rewarding within a retail group".* The measures that will be used to test this hypothesis will be interviews with six participants within two different generational cohorts who work in the retail sector. I will ask the participants a range of questions based on their preferences and utilise the answers in order to answer the research question.

Chapter Four: Methodology

4.1 Introduction

Methodology can be defined as a set of guidelines that are followed in order to conduct research (Saunders et al., 2015). Although research can be mistaken for merely gathering and documenting information, it is actually undertaken through collecting, analysing and interpreting data in order to understand certain phenomena. The three common approaches to research include quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods (Williams, 2007). This chapter will focus on how the research will be gathered, examined and observed and what research approach will be chosen in order to answer the research questions in Chapter 3. The research philosophy, research method, sampling, data collection methods, data analysis procedure and the pilot study will be detailed within this chapter as well as the limitations of the research and ethical considerations. This chapter will explain why a qualitative approach is the most effective research approach to answer the research questions and gather the necessary information. Primary and secondary resources were used to gather the necessary information. The primary aim of this research is to gain a deeper understanding of Generation Z and their expectations in regards to reward and performance management in their careers and focuses on employees in the retail sector. The study aims to identify the preferences of Generation Z in comparison to Generation Y.

4.2 Research Philosophy

Research philosophy can be described as an over-arching term that relates to the development of knowledge and the nature of said knowledge (Saunders et al., 2009). A research philosophy can also be described as a philosophical framework that impacts the way in which the research should be undertaken (Collins & Hussey, 2014). An individual's own research philosophy refers to the assumptions one makes about the way they view the world, what they deem to be acceptable knowledge and how that knowledge is acquired, and what the

individuals deems to be important in regards to the purposes of the research (Saunders et al., 2009). Burrell and Morgan (2016) believe that individuals make many types of assumptions at each stage of their research, these assumptions can be ontological or epistemological (Saunders et al., 2015).

4.2.1 Ontology

Ontology refers to the study of being and reality, it focuses on objectivism and subjectivism. Objectivism believes that any social phenomena and their meanings have and independent existence of social actors (Bryman, 2015). Objectivism is often related to quantitative research as it believes in causation in social processes. Objectivists view the social world as concrete and just as real as the natural world, they out an emphasis on researching the relationships among elements and their parts (Bahari, 2010). Subjectivism believes that social phenomena and their meanings are continuously accomplished by social actors (Bryman, 2015). Qualitative research is often associated with the view that social life is the product of social interactions. Subjectivism is a continual process and the process of social interactions and social phenomena are continuously being improved (Bahari, 2010).

4.2.2 Epistemology

Epistemology focuses on what is considered to be acceptable knowledge in a field of study, Bryman (2008) argues that epistemology is the question as to whether the social world should be studied according to the same principles as the natural sciences. Epistemology focuses on positivism and interpretivism. Positivism, a philosophical concept, refers to a set of assumptions about the world and the acceptable way to study it. Positivists generally see society as more important than the individual, they believe that people are the puppets of society. Positivists believe that research should be objective, neutral and not allow personal or political opinions have an effect on the research method or the interpretation of the data (McNeill, 2006). Interpretivism is an alternative to positivism, it believes that a strategy

should respect the differences between people and objects of natural sciences, and therefore, needs a social scientist to understand the subjective meaning of social action (Bryman, 2004). Interpretivist researchers argue that reality is created by the minds of people, not shaped by external objects (Hansen, 2014). Therefore, people cannot be studied in the same way as physical things.

4.3 Research Methodology

There are three key methods of research, qualitative, quantitative, and mixed. Qualitative research provides deeper insights into the research setting and focuses on understanding human behaviour, attitudes, and values through observation and interpretation using more descriptive data and smaller sample sizes (Ahmed et al., 2019). Interviews are the most commonly used method within the qualitative research method (Kvale, 2007). Qualitative research focuses on exploring and understanding the meaning individuals regard something as being due to a certain social or human issue. This method involved questions, procedures, data built from general themes, and making interpretations of the data. People who use this method generally write a report with a flexible structure, with an inductive style, and an emphasis on the importance of outlining the complexity of the topic (Creswell, 2009). An inductive approach to research moves from observations to theory, while a deductive approach moves from theory to observations (Bryman, 2004).

Deductive Approach

Theory

Observations/ Findings

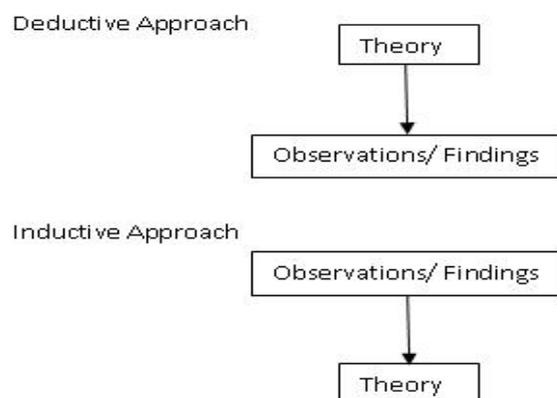Inductive Approach

Observations/ Findings

Theory

Figure 2. Deductive and inductive approaches to the relationship between theory and research (Bryman, 2004).

Quantitative research is an approach used to rest objective theories through the examination of relationships among variables. These variables can be measured in order for numerical data to be analysed using statistical processes. The final written report of quantitative research is generally a set structure. Those who engage in quantitative research have assumptions about testing theories deductively, build against bias, control alternate explanations, and are able to replicate the findings (Creswell, 2009). Quantitative research may use probability sampling techniques, uses clear questions and the researcher is seen as independent from those being researched (Saunders et al., 2012). Mixed methods research involves the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data, using distinct research design that involve philosophical assumptions as well as theoretical frameworks (Creswell, 2009).

4.4 Rationale for Qualitative

A qualitative research method was chosen for this study due to the required data being non-numerical, and an in-depth analysis was necessary to accomplish the research objective. The approach of this research is interpretivist, and the study aims to provide greater insights of the social context of Gen Z through analysing the differences between different generations within the retail sector. Qualitative research allows participants to be more thorough and open while answering interview questions, this helps the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the participants (Taylor et al., 2015). Qualitative research is a good methodology choice when researching a topic that little is known about in order to gain more information that is difficult to quantitate. Qualitative research provides more in-depth descriptions of particular phenomenon's (Hoepfl, 1997). The topic area that this research explores has very little existing literature and research available, therefore, qualitative is the most suitable research method. For this research, one-to-one semi-structured interviews were used in order to gather all relevant information. The interviews were carried out via Microsoft Teams in order to be

recorded and transcribed. The first stage of the interview process involved forming the interview questions that would provide information power and help the researcher to answer the research questions.

4.5 Secondary Data

Data collected by researchers can be primary or secondary; primary data is collected first-hand by the researcher using research methods, while secondary data is evidence used by researchers that has been produced already for another purpose (McNeill, 2006). Secondary data analysis is used to apply theoretical knowledge and utilize the existing data in order to answer the research questions (Johnston, 2017). Secondary data was used within this research and was obtained through journals, e-books and documents for the literature review. This allowed the researcher to gain all the relevant information and knowledge in the area of the study in order to interpret the information in order to answer the research questions, it also showed the author gaps in the research.

4.6 Qualitative Data Collection

Qualitative research refers to a group of methods to collect and analyse data in an explanatory and interpretative way that focus on meaning. Data collection can be undertaken in the natural setting, such as the place of work, as qualitative methods aim to describe and understand phenomena from the perspectives of the individual (Noble & Smith, 2014). Primary qualitative data can be obtained through interviews, surveys, questionnaires and observations with the aim of finding the answer to a specific question.

4.6.1 Pilot Study

Before conducting the interviews, a pilot study was undertaken to ensure that the questions were appropriate and covered all topics necessary to answer the research question. The individual who was interviewed for the pilot study was a past employee of the pet retailer being used in the study and is from Generation Y. Pilot studies are smaller in scale and have

the aim of improving the quality and efficiency of the main study, and also to help the researcher familiarise themselves with the process (In, 2017). Pilot studies test the feasibility of the research method, data analysis and the research objective (Hassan et al., 2006).

The participant was asked seven questions (Appendix A), in an attempt to ensure that the questions covered all of the relevant topics in order to answer the research question. The participant of the pilot study had the opportunity to give feedback in relation to the questions. Although the overall feedback was positive, it was clear that the participant was unsure of what generational cohort they were in which related to question one, therefore, during the interviews a diagram showing the different generational cohorts and the relative birth years will be shown in order for the participants to accurately answer what generational cohort they belong to. Following the pilot study, question 10 "From the diagram shown, what type of reward do you value most? (Compensation, work content, benefits, career)" was added in order to get a clear idea as to what reward each participant deemed the most valuable. During the pilot interview, the participant found it difficult to accurately choose what rewards they felt would be beneficial for the organisation to offer to improve motivation off the top of her head without seeing options.

4.6.2 Research Sampling

It is important for a researcher to consider whether they need one or more samples, no matter what the research objective is (Saunders et al., 2019). Sampling is a method of selecting constituents such as people or objects from a particular interest group in order to acquire the relevant data (Trochim, 2002).

As this research focuses on Generation Z's preferences in comparison to Generation Y's, people born within these two generational cohorts were chosen in order to gather all relevant information on the topic. The individuals chosen belong to either Gen Z or Gen Y and work within the retail sector in a particular store, the participants are colleagues of the researcher.

4.6.3 Sampling Method

There are many types of sampling methods, the most common being probability sampling and nonprobability sampling.

Nonprobability Sampling:

This type of sampling is when the researcher chooses a sample to represent the population (Saunders et al., 2019, however, this type of sampling does not give the researcher any certainty that the sample is a representative for the population (Wilson, 2014). Researchers that use this method choose the participants based on personal judgement, the population is not provided with equal chances of being chosen (Quinlan et al., 2019).

Probability Sampling:

Probability sampling is a type of sampling that gives each element of the population an equal chance of being chosen which gives a better representation of the population (Wilson, 2014). Probability sampling is most commonly associated with surveys and more useful with larger sample sizes (Saunders et al., 2009).

A non-probability sampling method was used for this research, the researcher made a judgement about who to include within the sample. Non-probability sampling was used to ensure the participants were members of the generational cohorts in question to ensure the questions were answered adequately in order to compare the reward preferences and motivators across Gen Z and Gen Y. The participants chosen for the study were key informants (Quinlan et al., 2019).

4.6.4 Sample Participants

The primary data required to complete this research was obtained through interviewing people that belong to generational cohorts Y and Z, and that are working in the retail pet care sector in a specific store, the participants are colleagues of the researcher. The participants were approached via WhatsApp to ask them whether they had any interest in being

interviewed for the study, which was followed by an email of participation (Appendix C) and a consent form (Appendix D). The email of participation explained the background of the research and what was required of the participant, including how long the interviews would take, how the data would be recorded and the terms of confidentiality. The participants were asked if they were willing to take part in the study, all six of them agreed and signed a completed consent form. There was no need for approval from the pet retailer as the name of the organisation was not used in the research. A breakdown of the profiles of each participant can be seen in the table below.

Participant	Gender	Generation	Full-time/Part-time	Length of Employment
1	Female	Gen Z	Full-Time	Four years
2	Male	Gen Y	Full-Time	Two years
3	Male	Gen Z	Full-Time	Two years
4	Male	Gen Y	Part-Time	Four months
5	Female	Gen Y	Part-Time	Five years
6	Male	Gen Z	Full-Time	Seven months

4.6.5 Research Method

Interviews were the primary method of qualitative research used for the purpose of this research, they were used to gather information from the participants in relation to the topic. Kvale (1996) describes an interview as a conversation with the purpose of gathering descriptions of the participants life, then interpreting the meanings of the phenomena.

Qualitative interviews allow for open ended questions that allow for individual variations. An interview is a list of questions or topics that the researcher wants to explore during each interview. An important decision when doing interviews is to decide on how the data is to be recorded (Hoepfl, 1997). Interviews can be structured, semi-structured, or unstructured (Quinlan et al., 2019).

Six people were interviewed, three from Generation Z and three from Generation Y. Each interview lasted between 8-10 minutes depending on how detailed the participants answers were for each question. All questions were asked and answered, there was also opportunities for more input from the participants through the use of open ended questions, if they had any more information that they felt was necessary to include. The interview consisted of eleven questions in total (Appendix B). The interviewer used a script with the eleven questions to maintain a structure and to ensure that all points and questions were covered.

4.6.6 Semi-structure Interviews

Semi-structured interviews have become a popular data collection method due to their flexibility and versatility. One of the main advantages of this data collection method is the fact that it gives the researcher the ability to improvise follow up questions based on the participants answers in order to gain all of the necessary information (Kallio et al., 2016). In semi-structured interviews, the interviewer is free to explore and probe within predetermined areas of inquiry (Hoepfl, 1997). These types of interviews provide more detailed information that may not be achievable through the use of quantitative research methods such as surveys or questionnaires that limit the answers to questions (Awasthy & Gupta, 2015). Semi-structured interviews can change between participants substantially due to the fact that questions are open-ended and the researcher can ask follow-up questions, where structured interviews have a set of predetermined questions that are strictly covered by each participant. Fylan (2005) argues that in order to successfully undertake semi-structured interviews there

are a few simple steps to follow; keep it brief, differentiate the processes you have an interest in, ensure the order of the questions is logical, develop prompts, and know the schedule.

4.6.7 Process

The six participants were provided with information about the research study, such as the purpose of the study, how long the interview will take, how the data will be recorded and stored, and information related to anonymity and confidentiality. Before the interviews were conducted, each candidate gave consent to participation. The interviews were carried out using Microsoft Teams, and were recorded and transcribed in order for the data to be analysed efficiently. The interviews took place between the 11th-28th of June. Although the interviews took place in person, Microsoft Teams was running in the background in order for the interview to be recorded and transcribed, the camera was turned off. The data was stored on iCloud and Microsoft OneDrive in order for it to be accessible on the researchers iPhone, iPad and MacBook. The data was also saved to memory card as a backup. The data has been stored solely for the purpose of this research and will be destroyed when the dissertation has been graded. The participants interviews have been saved anonymously in chronological order and saved using code names to ensure confidentiality.

4.7 Qualitative Data Analysis

Thematic analysis is a widely used method of qualitative data analysis. It is a method of systematically identifying and organising patterns of meanings across a data set. Thematic analysis helps the researcher to see collective meaning and shared experiences in order to identify the commonalities within a certain topic (Braun & Clarke, 2012). Transcription can be defined as a method of reproducing spoken words from recorded data into a written form in order for the data to be analysed (McGrath et al., 2019). Transcriptions are a system for a computer assisted analysis and graphic representation of spoken language (Kowal & O'Connell, 2014).

In order to analyse the data, the researcher followed Braun and Clarkes (2006) framework for thematic analysis. The six phases include; Familiarisation with the data, coding, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes and writing up. The researcher familiarised with the data through printing out the transcriptions and highlighting important notes, extracting words or topics that are repeated by multiple participants, and generating themes through topics that were consistent across all participants. The themes were then named and defined after they were reviewed. Writing up was the final step for the researcher. Transcribing data can be very time consuming (McGrath et al., 2019), for the purpose of this research, Microsoft Teams was used so that the data could be recorded and transcribed simultaneously in order to make the best use of time. In order to analyse the data efficiently, the transcriptions from each interview were printed and each document was divided into each of the questions in order to identify themes. The recordings were also closely listened to in order to ensure the transcriptions were accurate, notes were added to the transcriptions were there were any errors. These transcriptions were compiled with the notes taken down by the researcher during the interviews. When all of the data was organised, the researcher conducted a thematic analysis to organise the data into specific themes by cross referencing the transcriptions from each interview and observing them for any repeated topics and phrases.

4.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethics can be defined as a standard of behaviour that guides an individual's conduct in relation to the rights of a subject to your work or those that are affected by your work (Saunders et al., 2019). Ethical considerations and the protection of human participants in any research study is of utmost importance. Due to the in depth nature of qualitative research, ethical considerations have a substantial resonance. When conducting face-to-face interviews, participants can get emotional especially if they are considered vulnerable. Existing ethical

guidance for research provides general guidelines when conducting qualitative research. Consent and voluntary participation must be obtained before conducting any interviews through consent forms which should explain the purpose of the research and all other relevant information (Arifin, 2018). The researcher provided all participants with a consent form and an email of participation before any interviews were conducted (Appendix). An ethics form will also be filled out and submitted alongside the dissertation.

4.9 Limitations

Every researcher will be met with limitations when conducting research no matter how prepared they are. The main limitation associated with this study was the transcription, as Microsoft Teams was running in the background only on the researchers account, the transcription could not distinguish between who was speaking. Therefore, the researcher had to organise the transcription into the questions asked and answers given between the researcher and the participants so the transcription could be easily analysed. As the interviews were held face to face in the workplace, there was some disturbances such as loud machinery and people talking outside of the room which caused the researcher and participants to get distracted.

As the researcher is employed by the pet retailer in question, the researcher already knew of the monetary and non-monetary benefits offered to its employees, therefore, some assumptions were attained before conducting the interviews. Furthermore, not all of the participants were sure of what rewards they receive either because the rewards are not well established or due to the fact that some employees don't make use of certain rewards.

For some participants, this role is their first job and this had an impact when answering questions in relation to motivators and being happy in the organisation as they may not have lots of experience in regards to what other companies have to offer. Although the researcher tried to stick to the topic, some participants discussed more detailed issues within the

company that are not in relation to reward or motivation, these points will not be included in the research due to lack of relevance.

Conclusion

This chapter provided an in depth account of the research methodology that was chosen in order to complete the study. The researcher found that a qualitative research approach was the most appropriate in order to gather and analyse the data to answer the research question, the data was collected through six semi-structured interviews consisting of eleven questions. The way in which the research was collected and analysed was discussed as well as the sampling techniques used to choose participants. This chapter also considered the limitations of the study and any ethical considerations that needed to be addressed. The following chapter will outline the findings of the research.

Chapter Five: Findings

5.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to outline the findings of the research study. As mentioned previously, six participants were interviewed, three from Generation Y, and three from Generation Z. The participants were from a particular store within a large pet retailer franchise, and are colleagues of the researcher. The ages of the participants ranged from 19-35 and consisted of two females and four males. The participant there for the shortest amount of time was four months, and the participant there for the longest amount of time was five years. Interviews were used as a primary data collection method, involving 11 questions. Four themes were identified within the qualitative data, including subthemes, to answer the research questions. The themes were generated using the diagram from question 10 (Appendix E) and the sub-themes were generated by comparing all of the transcription notes from the interviews and identifying topics that were brought up by multiple participants and spoken about in detail. The themes emerged from specific questions in the interview such as, 'what are the most important motivators for you?' and 'What additional rewards would you like the organisation to offer you to improve your motivation?. Each theme will be analysed in order to gain a deeper understanding into the topics and to fulfil the research objective. The four themes that will be analysed are; work content, compensation, benefits and career.

5.2 Theme 1: Work Content

This section focuses on the research objective "do different generations have different motivators?". It is clear from the data that has been collected that Gen Z care more about non-financial elements of their careers rather than financial. All three of the participants from Generation Z described meaningful work as a motivator in the workplace, while only one participant from Generation Y discussed meaningful work.

5.2.1 Working within a team

All six participants mentioned working within a team as being a motivator and something that made them feel happy in their current role, with participant three (Gen Z) saying "My main motivator is my team and how the work we do benefits each other". Participant six said "What motivates me in my current role is my team and how well everyone gets along". Although both participants from Generation Z and from Generation Y mentioned teamwork, it is evident that teamwork is more important to Generation Z. Each participant from Generation Z spent a notable amount of time talking about their team, referring to them as friends, and outlining the importance of having friends in the workplace to make the job more meaningful and fulfilling.

5.2.2 The work itself

All three participants from Generation Z described the work itself as being a motivator for them in their current role, with one participant stating that it feels good knowing that you are helping customers to better understand how to take adequate care of their pets in relation to nutrition. Another participant from Generation Z described being motivated by seeing his work complete in relation to stocking the shelves and organising the store room, he stated that "I like to see my work progressing and being completed". Participant one stated that doing work that she believes is having a positive impact on people and their pets lives, makes her happy. One member of Generation Y mentioned being motivated by the work itself , she said that "One of my priorities is being happy in my job, if I am happy with the work that I am doing, then I am happy". It is clear that the work itself has a bigger impact on the motivation of Generation Z.

5.2.3 The work environment

The working environment is a key motivator for each member of Generation Z, participant six stated that the working environment and the structure it provides helps with his mental health, "Having structure in my day is a motivator, when I am sitting around doing nothing

my mental health is not great, so coming to work helps". With another participant from Generation Z stating that there is a learning culture which enhances the knowledge of all employees as there is always something new to learn in relation to animal welfare. Participant three stated that "We often take turns buying everyone coffees which keeps everyone happy", which creates a positive working environment.

5.3 Theme 2: Compensation

This section aims to answer the research question "do Generation Z have different reward preferences in comparison to Generation Y?". It is clear that the needs of both generations are not met with regards to rewards offered to them in their current roles. The data shows that Generation Z lean towards non-financial rewards, while Generation Z have a preference towards financial rewards.

5.3.1 Base pay

It is clear that Generation Y are more financially motivated by money in comparison to Generation Z. Participant five believes that, "A decent living wage would be great, once you pass your probation you should also get a yearly increase". Participant three believes that all employees should be paid adequately due to the increasing cost of living. All three members of Generation Y mentioned financial incentives as a key motivator and reward preference, with only one member of Generation Z mentioning increased pay.

5.3.2 Bonus Pay

Participant four, who stated that he is financially driven in order to support his family, believes that the bonus scheme should be restructured in order to reward employees adequately. Participant five believes that the bonus pay does not align with the level of work expected of the employees and believes that employees would be more motivated if the monthly bonus reflected the hard work done by employees, "I do not think we get enough for all of the work that is expected of us".

5.4 Theme 3: Benefits

This section looks at the rewards preferred by Generation Z in comparison to Generation Y, with one members of Gen Z and one member of Gen Y choosing benefits as a reward that they deem to be the most valuable.

5.4.1 Benefits

Participant two (Gen Y) deems benefits to be an important reward that he believes should be offered to all employees. He is originally from the United States of America and mentioned that "I know in the US it is quite common to get some kind of health insurance, especially in management roles", Another member of Gen Y mentioned pension schemes as a reward that they value. When asked to pick a category of rewards in question 10, two members of Generation Y and one member from Generation Z chose benefits.

5.4.2 Recognition

Each member of Generation Z that participated in this research mentioned recognition as a reward that they value. Participant one explained that the employees do not get enough for all of the work that is expected of them, she believes that people do not want to be only financially compensated but also recognised and appreciated for the work that they do. When participant three was asked whether he was happy working for this organisation, he said that although he loves working with his team and is fulfilled by the work he does, recognition from head office would be rewarding and motivating. Participant five, from Generation Y, feels as though feedback from head office should be more frequent.

5.5 Theme 4: Career

This section looks at another category of rewards in order to establish any differences between the rewards favoured by Gen Z and Gen Y. Two members of Generation Z mentioned the importance of career progression opportunities and training as a reward that they deem to be important.

5.5.1 Career Progression

Two participants from Generation Z mentioned career progression, as well as two participants from Generation Y. Participant three (Gen Z) stated that employees should not all be labelled as sales assistants when they all play a different role within the team, for example, stockroom manager; he also believes that there should be a better structure for career advancement; he states that " I feel as though some people should be able to move into different positions that they are better at". Participant 2, stated that he is working in the organisation in order to gain management experience, but does not see any career advancement opportunities within the organisation. Although career progression is a reward that is not met in this organisation, it is something that these participants value and look for.

5.5.2 Training

Participant six (Gen Z) mentioned training as something that motivates him, being adequately trained means that you can excel in your job which can be rewarding, "helping customers and learning about animal welfare is very interesting and rewarding". This participant stated that learning new things motivates him and he finds learning and training very interesting. Participant five said that training was a motivator as it aids personal and professional growth.

5.6 Conclusion

After analysing the data, it is clear that this retail group do not adequately motivate and reward their employees and do not realise that different generations have different reward preferences. The retailer in question provides minimal rewards and progression opportunities, therefore, neither of the generations being researched are happy. The organisation does not offer any clear career advancement opportunities, which is a key motivator for Gen Z, it is clear from the literature that Generation Z will soon dominate the workforce which highlights the importance of appropriately rewarding and motivating them. The data shows that although both Generation Z and Generation Y share some reward preferences; it is clear that

Generation Z value work content and career progression more than Generation Z. While Generation Y lean towards benefits and financial compensation.

Chapter Six: Discussion and Analysis

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the findings from Chapter Five: Findings, will be discussed in greater depth.' The findings will be compared to existing literature in order to identify the different needs of Generation Z in the workplace. The main objective of this research is to identify whether Gen Z have different motivation and reward preferences in comparison to Gen Y. This chapter will consist of an in depth discussion of the four themes identified in chapter five. The four themes to be discussed include: Work content, compensation, benefits and career.

6.2 Theme One: Work Content

The findings of the study show that Gen Z are motivated and rewarded by work content, including; the work itself, working within a team and the work environment. Studies show that work content is a key motivator for every age group, but particularly Gen Z (Baldonado, 2018).

6.2.1 Working within a team

Working within a team is a key motivator for Gen Z, they have a preference for face-to-face communication and want their ideas to be taken seriously. Open communication is important to this generation, honesty and transparency is a key value and they believe their age should not mean that they are left out of important discussions (Agarwal & Vaghela, 2018). Iorgulescu (2016) undertook a study that showed that the satisfactory workplace for Generation Z is an open office with an emphasis on teamwork, as they look for strong working relationships in their careers. Due to Gen Z's easy access to technology and virtual communication, this generation is significantly connected to their peers. This generation have

access to many social media platforms that broaden their network and give them the opportunity to be connected at all times. Gen Z value communication and the ability to be connected whether that be in the workplace or in their own free time, therefore, working within a team and connecting with co-workers is vital (McCrindle & Fell, 2019).

6.2.2 The work itself

Meaningful work can be described as work that has a significant meaning for individuals. Meaningful work makes a job worthwhile for individuals and provides positive associations with the workplace. Meaningful work is very powerful as it has the ability to motivate employees and positively influence employee behaviour (Goh & Baum, 2021). The findings from chapter five show that all three members of Gen Z that were interviewed mentioned the significance of meaningful work as a key motivator for them in their jobs while only one member of Gen Y mentioned meaningful work. Literature suggests that some members of Generation Z feel as though their work tasks are repetitive instead of challenging, this can lead to burnout and have a negative impact on motivation. It is important for Gen Z to be given challenging and exciting work in order to increase engagement and motivation (Scroth, 2019).

6.2.3 The work environment

Studies show that the work environment is an important factor for Generation Z in their careers, this generation prefers a working environment where learning and mentoring are valued and implemented throughout the organisation in order to develop skills. A work environment that is friendly, flexible and open are all factors that are considered when a member of Gen Z is looking for a job (Agarwal & Vaghela, 2018). Due to the unprecedented impact of Covid-19, employee well-being became an important topic in the workplace. Employee well-being and a positive working environment has become an important topic that Generation Z consider when choosing an employer (O'Boyle, 2021).

6.3 Theme Two: Compensation

Compensation refers to all of the money that employees receive for their performance and work. Studies show that people ages thirty and below, hold compensation as a minimal motivating factor; while those aged between 31-60 believe that compensation is one of the most important motivators (Browne, 2012). The findings of this research show that Generation Y have a preference for financial rewards, and believe that compensation is an important motivator. Existing literature and research shows that 60% of Gen Y (millennials) mention high income and benefits as a high motivational factor (Nnambooze & Parumasur, 2016).

6.3.1 Base Pay

Many employees believe that a good base pay is a dominant factor when searching for a job due to the increasing cost of living, this is the case for both Generation Z and Generation Y. A research study involving members of Generation Y showed that extrinsic reward had a high correlation with retention, in order to attract and retain Gen Y employees an attractive base pay should be offered (Hassan & Govindhasamy, 2020). There is contrasting literature discussing the importance of pay in the minds of Gen Z with Stuckey (2016) stating that base pay is the most important motivational factor for Gen Z, while Mitchell (2016) argues that other rewards such as career progression is more important to this generation rather than financial compensation. The research used as the basis for the statement made by Mitchell (2016) shows that only 26% of Generation Z listed base pay as an important reward. A previous study aimed at determining the preferred rewards for Gen Y showed that 35% of millennials would like to be rewarded with an increase in their base pay (Connolly, 2017).

6.3.2 Bonus Pay

The participants in this research who are Gen Y, all mentioned bonus pay as an important motivator and believe that bonuses should be aligned with the levels of work provided by the

employees. Bonus pay is additional financial income based on an individual's performance, it is not related to base pay and needs to be earned (Armstrong & Murlis, 2007). Financial rewards are more important to Generation Y as they experienced the financial crash in 2008, when Generation Z were too young to fully understand the severity of the situation (Egerova et al., 2021). Although there is lots of literature surrounding bonus pay schemes, there is limited literature in regards to bonus pay as a motivator for the different generations.

6.4 Theme Three: Benefits

Employee benefits are arrangements made by the employer with the aim of improving the well-being of employees, these benefits are in addition to pay and can include pension schemes, recognition, holidays, leave and different types of insurance (Armstrong, 2011). Benefits are of average importance to employees of Generation Z and Generation Y (Browne, 2012).

6.4.1 Benefits

The findings from chapter five show that one member from Generation Y and one member of Generation Z mentioned that benefits were a key motivator. The participant from Generation Y would like the organisation to offer health insurance to employee as a reward. Although many employers offer health insurance, there are many variations in the types insurance plans and the premium contributions (Bundorf, 2002). Although the pet retailer that the participants work for offer an Employee Assistance Programme via Laya Healthcare, the participants from this research study do not find this benefit accessible. Research shows that offering pension schemes helps with recruitment and retention and it is rewarding for particular groups of employees (Exley et al., 1997). One member of Generation Y mentioned pension schemes as a reward that they values. Pension schemes can help organisations to attract and retain employees due to the attractiveness of this benefit, it also motivates employees and increases job satisfaction (Wanjohi et al., 2012).

6.4.2 Recognition

All three participants from Generation Z and one member of Generation Y mentioned recognition as a reward and motivator. Recognition has been defined in previous literature as the appropriate acknowledgement of employee performance that had a positive impact on the fulfilment of the organisations goals. Recognition has been identified as a key motivator that contributes to the retention of staff. Recognising employees performance is a powerful tool that motivates employees and encourages other employees to work hard, it also helps to improve performance predictions (Chikungwa & Chamisa, 2013).

6.5 Theme Four: Career

The findings show that two participants from Generation Z value career advancement as a key motivator. This theme relates to the long-term opportunities for advancement and development. Existing research shows that 81% of workers ages 30 and below believe that career elements are substantially important motivators while individuals over the age of 30 value career elements less (Browne, 2012).

6.5.1 Career Progression

Past research confirms that career progression is a strong motivational tool for the younger generation (Bencsik et al., 2016). Baldano (2018) found that career progression was one of the top motivators for Generation Z while Patel (2017) believes that job responsibility and autonomy are key motivators for this generation. It is evident that Gen Z long for career progression and advancement opportunities as well as responsibility, the participants within this research study believe that people should be able to advance in their careers if they have the skillset.

6.5.2 Training

Training is an important investment for an organisation as it increases the skillset of the workforce which improves performance and, within the retail sector, can improve the

customer experience. Training can also increase employee commitment and motivation (Bullut & Culha, 2010). One participant from this research mentioned training as a motivator and described learning new things as something that made him happy and better at his job.

6.6 Conclusion

The overall findings of the research suggest that Gen Z focus on career advancement opportunities and work content, and Gen Y prioritise financial compensation and benefits. The four themes to be discussed include: Work content, compensation, benefits and career. There was a clear correlation between the characteristics of the participants and the sub-themes identified, as the participants were colleagues of the researcher it was easy to align personal characteristics with some of the answers given by the participants.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

7.1 Conclusion

This research aimed to distinguish the generational differences between the motivation and reward preferences between Generation Y and Generation Z. The literature review highlighted different topics such as generational cohort theory, Generation Z, reward and motivation. It is clear that there is limited literature surrounding Generation Z in the workplace, perhaps due to this generation not long being in the job market. The methodology used to answer the research questions followed a qualitative approach through the use of semi-structured interviews. Six participants were interviewed, the interviews were transcribed and analysed through conducting a thematic analysis based on Braun and Clarkes guidelines.

7.2 Key Findings

The key findings of the research will be discussed in relation to the two research questions that guided this research paper.

Question 1: Do Generation Z have different motivators in comparison to Generation Y?

From the analysis of the interviews, it is clear that Generation Z are motivated by the work itself, including the working environment and working within a team. Opportunities for progression were an important motivator for two participants within Generation Z. While participants from Generation Y put more of an emphasis on financial factors such as base pay and bonuses.

Question 2: Do Generation Z have different reward preferences in comparison to Generation Y?

The data shows that Generation Z prefer non-financial rewards such as career advancement opportunities and training, while participants from Generation Y had a preference for benefits and an improved bonus scheme. Participants from both generations highlighted the importance of an increased base pay to combat the cost of living.

7.3 Limitations

Limitations were identified following the completion of the research

- Literature: There was limited literature surrounding Generation Z, their reward preferences and their motivators. This could be due to the fact that Generation have not been in the workforce for that long in comparison to Generation Y. This caused difficulty while writing the literature review and while analysing the findings of the study and attempting to identify a correlation between the findings and existing literature.

- Participants: The participants were colleagues of the researcher, although the researcher took an objective approach to the methodology, underlying bias is always a possibility. The researcher could pre-empt the answers of the participants due to knowing them personally. There was a small group of participants interviewed, the group of participants may not have been an accurate representation of the Generational cohorts.

7.4 Future Research

If this topic was researched in the future, a larger sample size would be recommended in order to have an accurate representation of the generations that are being researched. Participants from different sectors could also be chosen to explore motivating factors and reward preferences. The research could provide greater insight in the reward preferences and motivators for Generation Z if the scope of the research was broadened and the researcher did not have strict time constraints

CIPD Requirements

Recommendations

The researcher has given three key recommendations for the pet retail group examined in this study to improve the motivation for both Generation Z and Generation Y

1. Career progression opportunities- Within this research, members of Generation Z mentioned career progression opportunities as a motivator for them and something they look for when joining an organisation. Unfortunately, the retail group the participants work for do not provide many opportunities for personal or professional development. By providing career progression opportunities, the members of both generations in question will experience higher motivation as they have something to work towards. The retail group should consider their employees for promotions such as supervisor, assistant manager and manager when recruiting for these roles rather than recruiting externally. These opportunities for progression should be implemented as the opportunities arise.

2. Improved reward management systems- The existing rewards system offered by the organisation is not successful in motivating the employees. The retail group needs to consider the generational differences in regards to preferences of reward. The findings show that a one-suits-all approach is not effective and the employees do not feel valued. Reward systems aim to motivate employees to work to a higher standard. The reward system should tailor to the needs of all employees, a total rewards approach should be taken. These points need to be recognised and the reward system should be reviewed and altered accordingly on an annual basis.

3. Increased pay- The retail group offer a low base pay which almost all of the staff interviewed believed was not enough. The cost of living in Ireland is consistently increasing and staff are not receiving the living wage, this needs to be considered. The retail group should consider offering the living wage to all employees in order to improve their motivation and make them feel valued within the organisation. This should be implemented at the start of the next financial year.

Implications of Findings

The recommendations will have a financial impact on the organisation, in order to offer a broader range of rewards and increase the pay of the workforce to the living wage, the organisations budgets will need to be reviewed and altered. In order to provide career progression opportunities, the organisation will save money on the external advertisement of the role, but training the member of staff will cost money and resources. Although the recommendations may have a financial impact on the organisation, the standard of work and the output from the employees will increase which can improve the business and generate more sales as the workforce will be motivated and have better training.

Personal Learning Statement

This dissertation is the final step in order to complete the MA Human Resource Management course in the National College of Ireland. I am happy that I made the decision to pursue the master's degree directly after my BA in Human Resource Management in the National College of Ireland as it gave me the opportunity to learn more and develop my skills that will be used in my career.

I enjoyed researching in the area of Generation Z and reward types, as a member of Generation Z and speaking to friends and family I recognised the difference between what

reward I would like to be offered in comparison to people that are older than me. This is an area that has not been heavily researched so I was excited to study it. Generation Z are very different to the previous generations and they will definitely have an impact on the workforce and the way people work.

I have never written a dissertation before so I am very proud to have completed this work, it is my biggest academic achievement to date. Writing the dissertation provided me with lots of valuable skills such as organisational skills by ensuring I met deadlines while keeping up to schedule with my dissertation timeline. Trying to balance work and writing the thesis was challenging, time management and motivation was essential in order to overcome this challenge.

There were many challenges while writing the dissertation, the biggest challenge for me was deciding on the research question and choosing a data collection method. As I chose interviews as a research method with the participants being my colleagues, it was very time consuming as the interviews had to be arranged when me and the participant had free time.

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Appendix A: Pilot Study Questions

1. What year were you born/what generation are you apart of?

2. How long have you been with the company?

3. What is your role?

4. What motivates you in your current role?/ What are the most important motivators for you?

5. What monetary benefits do you currently receive?

6. What non-monetary benefits do you currently receive?

7. What additional rewards do you think the organisation could offer to improve motivation?

Appendix B: Interview Questions

1. What year were you born/what generation are you apart of?

2. How long have you been **employed by** the company?

3. What is your role and responsibilities? **Full-time/Part-time?**

4. What motivates you in your current role?/ What are the most important motivators for you?

5. What monetary benefits do you currently receive?

6. What non-monetary benefits do you currently receive?

7. **Are you happy working in this organisation? What makes you happy?**

8. What additional rewards **would you like** the organisation to offer you to improve your motivation?

9. **How long more do you see yourself working for this organisation?**

10. **From the diagram shown, what type of reward do you value most? (Compensation, work content, benefits, career)**

11. **Are monetary or non-monetary rewards more important to you?**

Appendix C: Email of Participation

Hi X,

I would like to invite you to take part in my research study for my dissertation. I would like you to understand why the research is being undertaken and what it involves for you before you make a decision. Please read the following information carefully and feel free to ask me any questions if you feel as though something is not clear.

My name is Amy and I am currently undertaking my Masters in Human Resource Management at the National College of Ireland. In order to complete this course I must complete a dissertation involving primary research. The main aim of this research is to identify whether Gen Z have different motivators in relation to rewards in comparison to Gen Y within the retail sector.

I understand that you work within the retail sector and are in either Generation Y or Generation Z, therefore, I was hoping you would be a part of my research study by participating in a semi-structured interview. The interview will involve questions in relation to rewards, your motivators and your experiences in the organisation. I plan to conduct these interviews using Microsoft Teams. The interview should take approximately 10-20 minutes depending on the depth of your answers, the interview is completely voluntary. You have the right to refuse participation or withdraw from the research at any time. All of your personal data and the information you provide will remain anonymous throughout the research.

If you have any questions or need any more information about the study, I am happy to provide it. The information will be recorded and transcribed for the purpose of the research and will later be destroyed.

Would you be willing to participate in my research?

Kind Regards,

Amy Dunne

Appendix D: Consent Form

Consent Form

I.. voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.

I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.

I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.

I understand that participation involves answering a set of nine questions on Microsoft Teams.

I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.

I agree to my interview being audio-recorded and transcribed

I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.

I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous. This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my interview which may reveal my identity or the identity of people I speak about.

I understand that if I inform the researcher that myself or someone else is at risk of harm, they may have to report this to the relevant authorities - they will discuss this with me first but may be required to report with or without my permission.

I understand that signed consent forms and original audio recordings will be retained until exam board confirms the results of their dissertation

I understand that a transcript of my interview in which all identifying information has been removed will be retained for two years from the date of the exam board.

I understand that under freedom of information legalisation I am entitled to access the information I have provided at any time while it is in storage as specified above.

I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

<u>Signature of research participant</u>

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Sign   Date

<u>Signature of Researcher</u>

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study

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Sign   Date

Appendix E: Diagram of Rewards (Q10)

Compensation: Base pay Commission pay Bonus pay		Work Content: Variety Challenge Autonomy Meaningfulness
	Rewards	
Benefits: Health care Retirement Recognition		Career: Advancement Personal growth Training Job security