

JOURNAL
OF
HRM
HUMAN
RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT

Volume XXII, 2/2019



COMENIUS UNIVERSITY IN BRATISLAVA
FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT



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Publishing House:

Comenius University in Bratislava
Faculty of Management
Odbojarov 10, P. O. BOX 95
820 05 Bratislava 25, Slovak Republic
Phone: 00421 (2) 50 117 508
Fax: 00421 (2) 50 117 527
Web: <http://www.jhrm.eu>
ISSN 2453-7683

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COMPLIANCE PROGRAM AND ETHICS PROGRAM: DOES AN ORGANIZATION NEED BOTH? <i>Alexandra Bohinská</i>	1
GENERATIONAL SIMILARITIES IN WORK VALUES OF GENERATIONS X, Y AND Z <i>Shanna D. Dick</i>	10
GEN Z: WHERE ARE WE NOW, AND FUTURE PATHWAYS <i>Ravikiran Dwivedula, Poonam Singh, Mehran Azaran</i>	28
MOTIVATION PROCESS DURING THE ECONOMIC CRISIS: THE EVIDENCE OF GREEK STRUCTURAL DESIGN ENGINEERS <i>George Xanthakis</i>	41
THE INFLUENCE OF HIGH COMMITMENT HR PRACTICES ON EMPLOYEES' BEHAVIORS UNDER PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT AND AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT <i>Ansa Bajwa</i>	52
EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF TRAINING ON EQUITABLE ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT: A GENDERED PERSPECTIVE OF WORK RELEASE PROGRAMS <i>Nicole C. Jones Young, Jakari N. Griffith, Kemi S. Anazodo</i>	70



Journal of HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

www.jhrm.eu • ISSN 2453-7683

Compliance program and ethics program: Does an organization need both?

Alexandra Bohinská

ABSTRACT

The ambiguous use of terms 'compliance program' and 'ethics program' by legislators as well as in the literature can confuse organizations and slow down their efforts to build a compliant and ethical organizational culture. The aim of this article is to differentiate between a compliance program and an ethics program, and to explain their functions and their mutual relationship. Moreover, society expects from organizations to behave both legally and ethically. Thus, the article further clarifies on the theoretical level the need to implement the two programs.

KEY WORDS

compliance program, ethical conduct, ethics program, legal conduct, organization

JEL Code: G38, K20, K42

Manuscript received 24 July 2019

Accepted after revisions 6 September 2019

1 INTRODUCTION

When the Federal Sentencing Guidelines for Organizations (FSGO) were enacted by the U.S. Congress in 1991, the formal program of an organization to fight organizational crime was referred to as a 'compliance program'. In 2004, the revised FSGO elevated the role of this program since a separate guideline was dedicated to it while the initial version of FSGO dealt with the definition of an effective program only in the commentary (Ethics Resource Center, 2012). In addition, the 2004 amendments appeared to move beyond expecting organizations to merely comply with laws since they recognized the importance of the ethical organizational culture in ensuring legal organizational behavior. The program was renamed to a 'compliance and ethics program' (Michaelson, 2006). Nevertheless, according to the American legislation, "compliance and ethics program means a program designed to prevent and detect criminal conduct" (United States Sentencing Commission, 2018).

Crane and Matten (2016) think that "business ethics can be said to begin where the law ends" (p. 6). So, law compliance is a minimum requirement for organizations, while ethics represents a higher standard (Michaelson, 2006). If an organization wants to behave ethically, it has to follow the law in all circumstances in the first place. On the one hand, the American legislators and regulators have acknowledged the idea that ethical and legal conduct of organizations are closely interconnected by shifting the language from 'compliance' to 'compliance and ethics'. On the other hand, it seems that they have focused mainly on reducing and eliminating criminal or illegal acts because they do not mention unethical conduct in their definition of a compliance and ethics program. As Michaelson (2006) notes, "sometimes, we speak of ethical progress in referring only to an increasing quantity of compliance standards imposed by legislation, regulation, and corporate policy on business conduct" (p. 244).

Formal ethics programs and compliance programs have their roots in the USA and many countries have replicated the American approach to dealing with unethical and illegal activities of organizations. Moreover, some US laws, for example the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act or Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002, apply to non-US

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organizations as well (Scherer & Palazzo, 2009). This means that many organizations outside the USA prefer or even have to follow American guidance and requirements for an effective compliance and ethics program if they want to be listed on the public equity markets or do business in the USA.

In the scientific literature, confusion arises regarding the terms 'compliance program' and 'ethics program' because different authors use one term or the other with different meanings or they use them interchangeably. Ambiguity is also apparent in the organizational world. Some companies have implemented ethics programs, other companies have adopted compliance programs. We can also come across compliance and ethics programs or ethics and compliance programs in practice. Therefore, it is crucial to make a clear distinction of the terms and what they mean for organizations if we want them to eliminate organizational misconduct.

2 DEFINING THE TERMS

Kaptein (2015) considers an ethics program and a compliance program being synonyms as he offers one definition for both programs: "An ethics or compliance program can be described as the formal organizational control system designed to impede unethical behavior" (p. 415). This suggests that he does not differentiate between ethical and legal, or unethical and illegal. He also identifies an ethics program or a compliance program with what other authors call an integrity, ethical compliance, business ethics and compliance, shared values, and responsible conduct programs. For Martineau, Johnson and Pauchant (2017), programs that "seek to improve the ethical behavior of employees and managers, in compliance with organizational rules and standards, and in line with corporate values" can be referred to as 'corporate ethics programs', 'legal compliance programs', or 'integrity programs' depending on their orientation (p. 791). Some scholars do not regard compliance programs and ethics programs as equivalents, but they combine managing ethics and managing legal compliance in an organization by means of one program. According to Weaver, Treviño and Cochran (1999), "formal ethics programs can be conceptualized as organizational control systems aimed at standardizing employee behavior within the domains of ethics and legal compliance" (p. 42). Majluf and Navarette (2011) see compliance and ethics programs as "the way companies make explicit their guidelines for ethical behavior in terms of basic principles and values, strategies, and company policies, as well as in terms of well-defined norms and rules such as the expectation that all employees should observe the law, honor contracts, and follow regulations" (p. 568). Hence, they do not have a separate definition for each program. Ethics and legal compliance in organizations are definitely closely linked together, but they are not identical. Therefore, if an organization wants to manage both ethics and legal compliance successfully, it needs to have a detailed plan on how to handle ethics and compliance by having an ethics program and a compliance program. This is possible only if an organization has a clear idea of what an ethics program and a compliance program stand for and what their functions are.

A COMPLIANCE PROGRAM AND ITS FUNCTIONS

Although we find the term 'compliance program' in the literature and it is widely used in practice, there is no generally accepted definition of this program. In fact, there are a very few authors who have tried to come up with its definition. Among them, Walker (2006) defines a compliance program as "a formal system of policies and procedures adopted by an organisation with the purpose of preventing and detecting violations of law, regulation and organisational policy and fostering an ethical business environment" (p. 71). In our work, we understand compliance program as "a set of internal policies, procedures and instruments, which regulate the organization's behavior, i.e. behavior of its owners, management and employees, so that the law is not violated during any activity undertaken by the organization" (Remišová & Bohinská, 2017:12). A compliance program represents a systematic management of all processes in the organization to ensure legal compliance (Remišová, 2015).

A compliance program has three main functions in an organization – detection of criminal conduct (Goldsmith & King, 1997; Laufer, 1999; Paine, 1994; Wellner, 2005), prevention of criminal conduct (Goldsmith & King, 1997; Paine, 1994; Wellner, 2005) and punishment of criminal conduct (Paine, 1994). It also helps improve legal knowledge of employees (Treviño, Weaver, Gibson & Toffler, 1999). The decision to implement a compliance program shows an organization's strong commitment to acting in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.

There has recently been an increase in a number of the legal regulations concerning organizations in the USA and they have become more complex (Peterson, 2013). This is certainly not the case of the USA only. For example, in Slovakia, businesses "often do not even have the time to realize new legislations or directives have become effective, not even mentioning their application" (Remišová, Lašáková & Bohinská, 2019:574). A compliance program can help an organization take control over the frequent changes in the national legislation as well as relevant international regulations or the law and implement them as necessary. If effective, it minimizes the legal risks, thus, it helps protect reputation of an organization. In case a legal problem emerges, an organization can react rapidly and be proactive

in investigations of illegal acts. No compliance program can assure that an employee or agent breaks the law, but if a court still finds the program effective, an organization can avoid severe penalties. In addition, it ensures compliance with internal policies and rules.

Regulators appreciate the fact that a compliance program helps identify legal problems before they become too serious, in which case they harm not only an organization itself but the whole society. In addition, with globalization, the problems can quickly spread beyond national markets and reach more economies.

AN ETHICS PROGRAM AND ITS FUNCTIONS

Similarly to a compliance program, scholars often describe an ethics program using its different components. Brenner (1992) says “a corporate ethics program is made up of values, policies and activities which impact the propriety of organizational behaviors” (p. 393). In fact, each organization has an ethics program even if it is not formally put on paper as besides explicit components, such as codes of ethics, ethics seminar and training, internal control systems, it also consists of implicit parts, like corporate culture, valued and rewarded behaviors as well as management behavior (Brenner, 1992). Majluf and Navarette (2011) support the idea of explicit and implicit parts of an ethics program. Their empirical study confirms the influence of both types of components on employee behavior. Weaver, Treviño and Cochran (1999) distinguish six components of an ethics program: (1) formal ethics codes, (2) ethics committees, (3) ethics communication systems, (4) ethics officers or ombudspersons, (5) ethics training programs and (6) disciplinary processes. An ethics program, encompassing all or some of the above-mentioned components, is a form of an organizational control system (Weaver, Treviño & Cochran, 1999). The aim of these control systems is to predict employee behavior and create links between specific employee behavior and organizational goals (Weaver and Treviño, 1999).

In contrast with Brenner or Majluf and Navarette and similarly to Weaver, Treviño and Cochran, Kaptein (2015) thinks that an ethics program is comprised of only tangible components. He identifies nine of them: (1) a code of ethics, (2) an ethics office(r), (3) ethics training and communication, (4) ethics report line, (5) accountability policies, (6) investigation and correction policies, (7) incentive policies, (8) monitoring and auditing, and (9) pre-employment screening. Kaptein encourages organizations to adopt at least the first eight ones.

Remišová believes implementing an ethics program represents an organization’s decision to encourage the development of employees’ moral orientation. “An ethics program of an organization is the system of connections and relations between ethical mechanisms. Ethical mechanisms mean materialization, e.g. ethics institutionalization” (Remišová, 2011:70). Each organization selects forms of ethics institutionalization based on their needs, considering different quality and quantity factors. The sector and field in which an organization operates, value orientation of owners, organizational culture, level of management ethical thinking, educational structure of employees or future perspectives of organization development are some of the quality factors to be considered. The quantitative factors include, for example, the size, structure and length of existence of an organization or the employee age structure (Remišová, 2011). In her later work, Remišová (2015) understands an ethics program as an integrated system of “beliefs and values, mechanisms, processes and ways of communication which the organization adopts for a long-term and continuous development of ethics in its organizational culture” (p. 80). In this sense, she classifies three main components in the program structure:

1. A group of ethical requirements (norms and rules of conduct in an organization);
2. An ethical infrastructure (different forms of institutionalization - written documents, information flow channels, subjects and bodies, forms of education, mechanisms of supervision);
3. Ways of communication (implementation and enforcement of an ethics program in an organization).

As for the functions of an ethics program, Kaptein (2015) suggests the following seven using his Corporate Ethical Virtues Model:

1. Offer clarity to employees regarding (un)ethical behavior;
2. Demonstrate role-model behavior by management;
3. Provide the necessary resources to employees to behave ethically;
4. Foster a commitment to ethical behavior among employees;
5. Enhance transparency surrounding (un)ethical behavior of employees;
6. Create openness in the discussion of ethical issues;
7. Reinforce ethical employee behavior.

In general, organizations implement an ethics program to regulate employee behavior in a desired way. An ethics program has two main functions - to promote ethical behavior and to suppress unethical behavior. Remišová, Lašáková and Kirchmayer (in press) mention that repressing unethical behavior is based on complying with the internal rules in an organization, while supporting ethical behavior emphasizes employee ethical development. Based on their empirical study, they come up with the third function besides two functions most described in the literature – counseling and resolving ethical issues.

As already mentioned, some authors use the terms ‘compliance program’ and ‘ethics program’ interchangeably claiming that the actual name of the program is linked to the orientation to ethics management in an organization. Paine distinguishes two strategies to ethics management in an organization: the first one is based on legal compliance, the second one on integrity. The compliance-based strategy is directed mainly towards the conformity with external standards, i.e. with criminal and regulatory law. The lawyers usually formulate and oversight such a strategy and it is enforced by education, reduced discretion, auditing, controls and penalties. Many organizations prefer to follow the compliance-based strategy since they want to ensure the penalty mitigation in case an unlawful conduct arises. This approach is often focused on avoiding severe penalties without covering issues that can be unethical. The integrity-based strategy, on the other hand, goes beyond legal requirements on organizations since besides acting in accordance with legislation, it also stands on taking responsibility for ethical conduct by owners and management. They develop the strategy with help of human resource, lawyers and other functions as applicable. Every organization with such an approach can self-govern itself following its values and principles. It creates an environment where an ethical conduct is enabled and rewarded, and consequently employees also become jointly accountable for the organizational activities (Paine, 1994).

Weaver, Treviño and Cochran (1999) distinguish between two types of ethics programs – a compliance-oriented ethics program and a values-oriented ethics program. The former focuses on legal compliance, leading to enforcement of legal rules, monitoring of employee behavior and punishing misconduct; the latter concentrates on creating commitment to organizational values among employees and supporting their ethical aspirations. Scholars agree that an ethics program can be aimed at ensuring legal compliance and at internalizing values at the same time (Paine, 1994; Weaver and Treviño, 1999). Qualitative (Paine, 1994) and quantitative (Weaver and Treviño, 1999) studies have proved that both orientations can eliminate unethical conduct. They have also shown that a values-oriented ethics program can positively influence employee behavior in more areas. Moreover, it has been confirmed that these two program orientations do not replace one another, but they complement each other.

Compliance and values orientations have been the most discussed in the literature, however, an ethics program can also be oriented towards protecting top management and owners, satisfying external stakeholders, and so on. Recently, Martineau, Johnson and Pauchant (2017) have identified six orientations of ethics programs, which are not in opposition, but create a synergetic effect. Their ‘six-orientation model’ is composed of the following orientations:

1. Structural orientation towards practices such as ethics offices, committees, programs and resource allocation;
2. Social-environmental orientation, or orientation towards social and environmental responsibility;
3. Consultation-participation orientation, encouraging dialogue with employees and stakeholders on ethical issues, conducting surveys, and employee involvement in the development of ethical initiatives;
4. Experiential development orientation, focusing on providing training programs using meditation, contemplation, arts, or spiritual practices;
5. Detection orientation, concentrating on revealing deviant behavior;
6. Normative orientation, aiming at regulating employee behavior through policies and standards.

From the above, it is clear that managing ethics is a very complex process, and it should not be approached simply by selecting one orientation, as no orientation can cover the wide range of organizational activities and ethical issues. Therefore, it is advisable for an organization to combine different orientations.

3 SHOULD AN ORGANIZATION ADOPT A COMPLIANCE PROGRAM, AN ETHICS PROGRAM OR THE TWO?

Both a compliance program and an ethics program are aimed at regulating employee behavior, as well as behavior of an organization as an entity. While **a compliance program concentrates on legal norms and regulations and internal rules, an ethics program focuses on ethical principles and norms**, which guide and influence conduct of individuals and groups, including organizations. It is impossible not to include ethics in a compliance program and vice versa; an ethics program should definitely cover a commitment to legal compliance. So, there are areas that will be covered by both programs. Nevertheless, those two programs have different goals and functions, and are in no way identical.

It is crucial to remember that there is a difference between legal and ethical conduct. The law is in fact an institutionalization or codification of ethics into specific social rules, regulations and restrictions. But the legislation regulating organizations cannot cover all their areas and activities. So, the standards given by legal acts are considered only minimal requirements for organizational conduct. If organizations were self-governing their behavior based on ethical principles, a big part of the legislation and international regulations would become redundant.

As Crane and Matten (2016) note, there is a so called ‘gray zone’ of issues that organizations encounter but are not regulated by law. In addition, some legal acts do not deal with ethical matters, still, organizations have to act in accordance with them. Besides, some processes and instruments can be legal, yet unethical. Last but not least, ethics

does not only try to determine what conduct is right or wrong, it also deals with ethical dilemmas with no obvious right solution.

The law as well as ethics have encountered dynamic changes recently. Globalization, the technological progress, the rapid transfer of information and other current business trends have led to the need of reconsidering some ethical concerns regarding organizational activities. New acts have been passed on the state levels and guidance or international regulations have been issued to standardize organizational conduct in sensitive areas. Kaptein (2017) remarks that new ethical norms have appeared as well in response to new theories, available information and phenomena.

In democracy, all subjects, individuals and organizations, are expected to comply with the law. Ignorance of the law does not exempt anyone from its consequences. Therefore, it is recommended for an organization to have a thorough plan on how to ensure compliance with the increasing number of new legal rules or changes in the law. A compliance program provides such a plan. It aims at guaranteeing that an organization satisfies the standard behavior required by the market and given by legal rules. **A compliance program is a set of policies, processes and instruments which determine the way an organization implements legal rules and internal regulations into its processes so that law, including internal law, is not breached.** It regulates behavior of owners, governing bodies, managers, employees and other agents of an organization. A compliance program focuses mainly on the observance of formally written, external or internal rules.

A compliance program represents an organization's commitment towards society to do its best to keep to the rules expressed in forms of laws. **Its function is to prevent, detect and repress illegal activities and actions that are not in accordance with internal rules.** In addition, its purpose is the promotion of legal conduct. An organization manifests internally and externally that the observance of the law and rules forms the basis of its ethical conduct. A thought through compliance program addresses legal risks that an organization faces and encourages adherence to the law. It leads to the state where owners, managers and employees start self-regulating themselves, legal behavior becomes part of their DNA. They realize that breaking the formal rules results in the unfair functioning of the market which is harmful for organizations, as well as for society. At this stage, a detection and repression of unlawful conduct become of a less importance and a compliance program is mainly a plan for incorporating a new law or changes in laws, for improving the level of lawfulness of processes and activities, and for enforcing legal behavior even outside the organization. A number of formal internal policies guiding employee and management behavior in an organization can start decreasing. If it has not done it yet, an organization can ask its business partners to behave legally as it cooperates only with those who either have their own compliance programs or adhere to the requirements for legal conduct of an organization. The number of organizations committed to behaving legally in all situations grows, and eventually the increase of legal norms regulating organizations gradually slows down.

A compliance program is mainly influenced by an external environment. It deals primarily with the requirements coming from outside of an organization. Changes in the program result from the development of legislation and external demands on organizational conduct. An organization can find a law or regulation improper, unfair, or not in line with its values. Still, it has to find a way how to incorporate such a rule or regulation to its activities and processes. However, there are legal ways to change the situation, and an organization can take advantage of them. It cannot decide to ignore or break a rule or regulation.

Even if the observance of laws and rules falls under the area of ethics, it is not enough for an organization to commit to following the legal rules in an ethics program without clearly determining how it will achieve legal compliance. Organizations often focus on keeping those standards for which sanctions are known. In other words, they try to avoid penalties and punishments, so they center their attention on legal conduct. For these organizations, ethics in business restricts to legal compliance. Enderle (1997) mentions that human action takes place on three levels - micro-level (individual level), meso-level (organizational level) and macro-level (the economic system). Activities at these levels are not separated, there are multiple relations between them, one level cannot determine the other completely. Organizations as part of the social system contribute to the quality of morality of the society in which they operate. Consequently, they also influence the quality of life in that society. For this reason, organizations should not only commit to legal conduct, but expand the requirements and commit to ethical behavior based on ethical norms and principles. This can be achieved through an ethics program. While the objective of a compliance program is to assure the standard behavior required by the market, an ethics program is an organization's manifestation that it wants to exceed this standard.

An ethics program defines fundamental values and ethical principles that are essential to an organization. It describes a desired behavior and conduct. It explains what behavior is required and supported in an organization. An ethics program also determines processes and tools to achieve ethical behavior, conduct and decision-making. It motivates representatives and employees to behave ethically not only because it is expected from the external environment but because it is the right thing to do. **An ethics program's aspiration is for owners, managers and employees to internalize values and ethical principles that an organization follows.** Moreover, an ethics program provides instructions on how to act in situations that are unethical and helps managers and

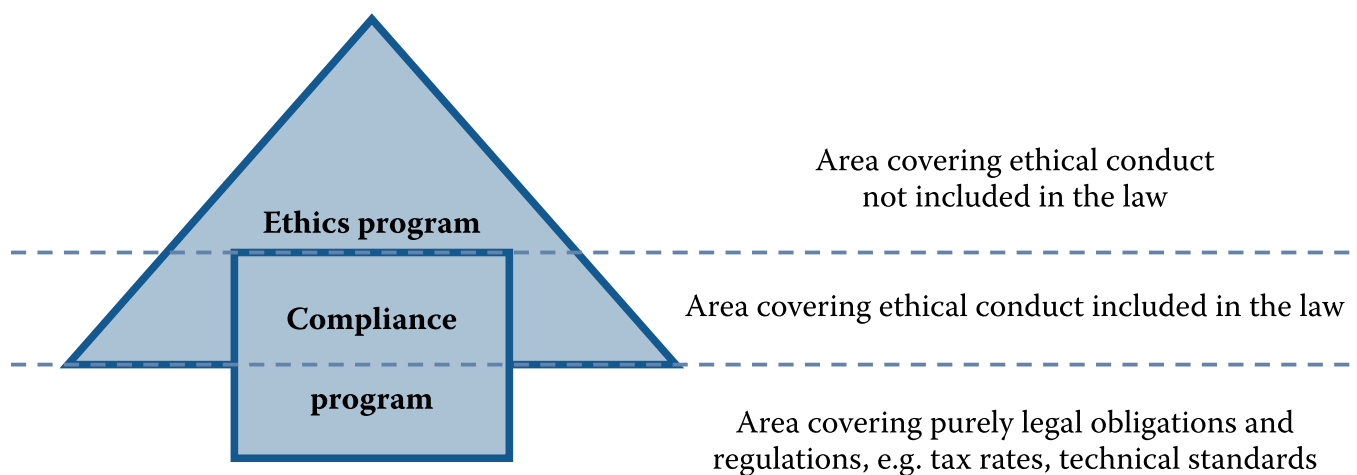
employees decide in case an ethical dilemma occurs. So, it also covers those areas that are not included in the legislation. It evolves together with an organizational culture, which means that impulses for changes come mainly from inside of an organization with the objective to constantly improve conduct of an organization and its representatives.

Similarly to a compliance program, an ethics program has three main functions – prevention, detection and repression, but it concentrates on the undesired and harmful conduct that is not covered by the law, i.e. on unethical conduct. In addition, it strengthens an ethical alignment of owners, management and employees. It is a program of the ethical development of an organization, its ambition is to reach a point of self-governance of everyone in an organization, at all levels. This means that representatives of an organization behave ethically in all circumstances. As Remišová and Lašáková (2017b) emphasize, ethical conduct integrates ethical motives and ethical consequences. This means that reasons behind owners, managers and employees' decisions and actions are ethical and at the same time, they consider the consequences of their decisions and actions on different stakeholders and the environment. If one or the other is missing, conduct is considered as unethical.

Taken the above into the consideration, I believe that it is not enough for an organization to only implement a compliance program to assure the requirements given by the law and internal rules are met or to only include a commitment to legal compliance in an ethics program. It is highly advisable for every organization to have a plan on how to deal with legal compliance. At the same time, an organization also has to have a formal description of what behavior is desired and restricted and how that particular organization can make a difference in the society it is part of. Consequently, I think an organization needs to adopt the two programs – a compliance program and an ethics program, the latter should be an umbrella program for the former as respecting the law and internal rules creates the base for the ethical conduct. Picture 1 represents the relationship between the two.

Building a compliant and ethical organizational culture is similar to building a house. An organization needs to lay the foundations first. Otherwise, without the strong foundations, it builds on a shaky ground and no matter how high up it will go, the lack of stability will always threaten the organization. A compliance program can be seen as the foundations. It ensures that the basic requirements of society are satisfied and that the internal rules are followed. Although the foundations are an essential element, an ethics program can be considered a roof that covers and protects the foundations. If an organization limits itself to following laws, in other words just meeting the basic demands, it does not offer much to society and cannot be successful in the long run.

Picture 1: Relationship between a compliance program and an ethics program



Source: Own representation

4 CONCLUSION

States have started to have stricter requirements on organizations when it comes to their conduct because of many organizational scandals and frauds that led to the instability on the financial markets, loss of trust of investors as well as customers and broader society. For example, corruption, a widespread problem globally, can have many economic as well as non-economic implications for any democratic state, including non-optimal allocation of resources, deformation of competition environment, negative impact on the economic growth and investments, and even citizens' distrust of the rule of the law, equality before the law and liberal democracy as such (Zemanovičová & Vašáková, 2017). The work of many NGOs has also pressed organizations to fight against illegal and unethical

conduct (Remišová & Lašáková, 2018). Criminal liability of organizations together with a punishment mitigation in case of an effective program to fight organizational misconduct have been introduced in many countries. As a result, organizations have begun to adopt compliance programs to satisfy the law and to avoid severe penalties. A compliance program is a set of written guidelines, processes and instruments to control behavior in an organization so that the law and internal rules are not breached during any activity undertaken by the organization. In today's complex environment, including legal environment, such a program is a great tool to deal with legal risks as its goal is to prevent, repress, detect and punish illegal activities in the organization.

Moreover, as Remišová & Lašáková (2017a) conclude, the quality of our lives is directly affected by the morality in the economic sphere. Organizations have acquired more power in the globalized world, they can influence the business standards and contribute to the better functioning of the market, and consequently improve the quality of life in society in which they operate. This is possible only if their decisions and activities follow high ethical norms and principles. Ethical behavior can be achieved thanks to a series of ethical mechanisms that support each other and lead to a self-regulation of organization's representatives, in other words by an ethics program. The aim of an ethics program is to detect, prevent and repress unethical behaviour, but what is even more important, its function is to support and develop ethical behavior of owners, managers and employees.

Legal and ethical conduct is a presupposition of the long-term success of an organization. In order to achieve such a conduct, it is not enough for an organization to randomly institutionalize a few forms of ethics. It needs to have systematic plans, or entire programs in other words, on how to ensure legal and internal rules as well as ethical norms and principles are always followed in an organization (Bohinská, 2018). A compliance program helps an organization to incorporate laws and internal rules in the daily operations. An ethics program leads to behavior based on ethical norms and principles that does not harm anyone, on the contrary, it adds value to society and the organization itself. Therefore, an organization should definitely adopt both programs. A compliance program creates the solid foundations of a compliant and ethical organizational culture, while an ethics program further develops ethical aspirations of leaders and employees.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This work was supported by The Slovak Research and Development Agency under the contract no. APVV-16-0091.

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Journal of HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

www.jhrm.eu • ISSN 2453-7683

Generational similarities in work values of generations X, Y and Z

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ABSTRACT

Human resources professionals (HRPs) must understand generational work values to lead organizations. While this study acknowledges the generations' differences in work values throughout the academic literature, its purpose is to identify the similarities in work values between Generations X, Y, and Z employees to provide HRPs the basis for employee motivation. HRPs should be cognizant of individual differences and not focus solely on generational differences and recognize stereotyping of generational differences in the workplace. It is recommended that HRPs motivate employees based on their individual needs, monitor stereotypes in the workforce, and remain committed to employee flexibility. This study's research purpose, approach, and results prove there are more similarities than differences.

KEY WORDS

personnel, personnel management, generations, work values, motivation, generation X, millennials.

JEL Code: M5, M530, M540

Manuscript received 15 July 2019

Accepted after revisions 10 October 2019

1 INTRODUCTION

Human resources professionals (HRPs) and managers must understand the generations' work values, and the similarities and differences between them, to effectively lead an organization (Mencl & Lester, 2014) as today's workforce includes the traditionalist generation, baby boomer generation, Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z. Employees exhibit unique work values respective to their generation which drive differing views in an organization and present managerial opportunities and challenges (Chen & Lian, 2015; Locmele-Lunova & Cirjevskis, 2017; Lyons & Kuron, 2014).

The idea of a generational cohort was established in the 1940s and is used to define the group of individuals born during the same timeframe (Woodward, Vongswasdi & More, 2015). The definition of a generation has numerous meanings in the academic literature; however, the most commonly used definition of a generation is a cohort of individuals who share similar birth years, significant life events, and shared historical atmospheres throughout their critical developmental years and as they collectively move through life (Amayah & Gedro, 2014; Clark, 2017). Mannheim's theory defines generations as a group of people who identify with location, historical-social process, and patterns of experience (Mannheim, 1952; Padayachee, 2018).

The traditionalist and the baby boomer generations are retiring, or nearing their retirement age, leaving much of the workforce to be members of Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z. Having five generations present in the workforce creates a unique dynamic given their differing views on workplace values. To increase retention and motivate top talent, Froese (2013) stated HRPs should create an atmosphere that corresponds with the work values of future employees. HRPs and managers must successfully lead their organization without treating generations of employees differently because of their diverse work values (Dixon, Mercado & Knowles, 2015).

Jiri (2016) posits the most significant challenges for managers in the 21st-century workplace are the generations' differences. Viewing work as an adventure in which they work to live, the baby boomer generation is known as the workaholic generation desiring in-person communication, quality work, and personal fulfillment

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from the workplace whereas Generation X views work as a contract (Jiri, 2016). Maintaining self-reliance and a solid work-life balance, Generation X prefers direct and immediate communication and is skeptical of management (Jiri, 2016; Rani & Samuel, 2016). However, Mencl and Lester (2014) reported there are more similarities than differences between the generations such as the desire for a challenging job in which the manager consistently provides feedback in addition to the job being financially rewarding with room for career advancement. Employee productivity and turnover drive workplace morale; therefore, HRPs should be aware of the differences in employee work values before the organization's effectiveness is jeopardized (Ramkumar & Priyal, 2013). Chow, Galambos, and Krahn (2017) stated employees could predict their work values as early as age 18; therefore, Generation Z is determining its work values as it enters the workplace. As the multigenerational workforce continues to evolve, HRPs and managers should acknowledge and celebrate the similarities and differences between the generations to foster high-functioning and effective teams (Bencsik, Horvath-Csikos & Juhasz, 2016; Eastland, 2015).

Individuals may overemphasize the differences between the generations due to their life stage; however, the literature unveils differences between the generations (Anderson, Baur, Griffith & Buckley, 2017; Lyons & Kuron, 2014). These differences in work values cause conflict in the workplace. The differing life stages or generational cohorts exhibit unique characteristics that affect staffing strategies and effectiveness (Joniakova & Blstakova, 2015). Generation Y and Generation Z have rewritten the procedures for how human resources management should function to remain competitive in today's job market (Bencsik et al., 2016). Conflict can result from varied value systems, behavioral patterns, and character traits across the generations. Eastland and Clark (2015) confirmed the unavoidable conflict and distress that happens in a workplace when employees do not value and respect generational differences. When there is miscommunication in the workplace, work-value conflict can ignite between the different generations of employees (Hillman, 2014). Critical to the telecommunications industry, the conflict in work values can lead to decreased motivation (Kukreja, 2017). When this happens, employee motivation challenges managers to provide quality supervision in a workplace comprised of multigenerational employees. Joniakova and Blstakova (2015) reported staffing idiosyncrasies between the generations, which leads HRPs to adopt personnel policies to be in accordance with respective generations' differences; however, Bencsik et al. (2016) stated the cooperation and co-working of the generations provides not only conflicts but also positive results for the organization such as more significant potential for increased communication.

2 PROBLEM AND PURPOSE

The problem addressed by this study was to determine the significant differences in work values between Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z for HRPs to develop targeted motivational strategies for the multigenerational employees of the telecommunications industry. Froese (2013) stated work values are evaluative standards relevant in the workplace. There have been dramatic changes in work values from the baby boomers to Generation Y (Anderson et al., 2017; Twenge & Kasser, 2013). Chen and Lian (2015) discovered a marked difference between the work values of baby boomer employees and Generation Y employees. The baby boomers are workaholics achieving their identity through work performance; whereas, Generation Y values flexible work schedules to create a more family-centric lifestyle (Wiedmer, 2015). There is a minimal number of Generation Z employees in the workplace; therefore, their workplace values and problems are not as easily identified as their preceding generations (Bencsik et al., 2016). With opposing views, attitudes, and behaviors, the three generations differ in their perception of organizational commitment, professional goals, workplace values, and issues related to balancing professional work with personal lives. These generational cohorts display different ways of thinking, different behaviors, different attitudes, different perceptions of flexibility, and different levels of technical knowledge; all of which lead to workplace conflict (Bencsik et al., 2016). HRPs should explore the difference in the generations' work values in order to motivate their multigenerational employees.

3 LITERATURE REVIEW

There is a plethora of scholarly literature on employee motivation and its differences among the generations; however, there is little research identifying each generation's work values with the impetus of showing the differences in generational, work motivation. Motivation is a crucial area of interest for HRPs (Rakic & Zivkovic, 2017). This study expands the research of Prasad, Enns, and Ferratt (2007) by including the telecommunications industry in the study on the different work values of Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z, by hypothesizing that work value patterns noted in the respective generations could explain the differences in each

generation's work motivation; however, this study discovered increased similarities between the work values of the three generations. The scholarly literature was reviewed to identify the differences between Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z in the workplace with an emphasis on work values and motivation. The literature review is separated into the following thematic areas: the theoretical framework, generational cohorts and differences, motivating a multigenerational workforce, and work values of a multigenerational workforce.

3.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework for this study is Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. Research supports Maslow's theory that an individual's need acts as a motivator (Babic, Kordic & Babic, 2014; Zargar, Vandenberghe, Marchand & Ayed, 2014; Zameer, Ali, Nisar & Amir, 2014); therefore, this theory can assist HRPs in determining motivational strategies to use with the multigenerational workforce. Maslow's hierarchy of needs was selected over Herzberg's two-factor theory and other motivational theories because of its close alignment to intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and job satisfaction. In 1991, Howe and Strauss furthered Mannheim's generational theory by viewing generations in a cyclical manner (Howe & Strauss, 1991); however, these theories do not encapsulate the work values and motivation component to this research study. HRPs can utilize Maslow's theory when studying employee retention and talent acquisition. When considering employee performance and business management, Jerome (2013) used Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. In doing so, employers discovered they should adjust their leadership styles to promote employees' self-actualization (Jerome, 2013). Atan, Raghavan, and Mahmood (2015) used Maslow's theory when studying employees in a manufacturing environment and explained the employees' performance levels increased through self-actualization. For employees to achieve self-actualization on the job, employers must ensure the employees fulfill their physiological and safety needs (Atan et al., 2015). Individuals must meet their physiological and safety needs before ascending the pyramid in pursuit of self-actualization (Maslow, 1943). In the study of employee retention and human motivation, Maslow's theory is one of the most extensively acclaimed and referred theories (Adiele & Abraham, 2013).

Maslow's theory provides a significant contribution to management research and employee behavior because of the practical implication of the hierarchy of needs (Kaur, 2013). Theories on motivation are scholarly sources for employers and HRPs to discover the levels of motivation which lead employees to act (Lee, Raschke & St. Louis, 2016). It is critical for employers to assist employees with their self-actualization journey if they want to achieve desired workplace results (Kaur, 2013). Additionally, if employers want to increase employee retention and boost organizational success, it is paramount they understand the five levels of Maslow's hierarchy of needs to assess the employees' developmental and motivational needs.

3.2 GENERATIONAL COHORTS AND DIFFERENCES

Employees are associated with different generational cohorts determined by the year they were born, and the cohorts have specific differences germane to the respective generation. The historical events that occur during an employee's formative years affect how they perceive the workplace (Twenge, Gentile & Campbell, 2015). This section will address the generational cohorts, describe the historical events which affected the formative years of the generational cohorts and discuss the stereotypes associated with each generational cohort.

As the workplace structure continues to evolve, three generations are simultaneously working together to achieve the common business goal (Jora & Khan, 2014). Ledimo (2015) stated the differences in values, historical experiences, beliefs, and social experiences between the generational cohorts would affect their professional and workplace interactions which can have a negative impact on employee performance and employee retention. Because the generational cohorts use a categorical approach, the timeline for each cohort is subjective as opposed to scientific (Wang & Peng, 2015). This scientific research study will not be negatively affected by the categorical approach because the difference in birth years does not affect the generational cohort descriptions.

The early 21st-century workplace includes three generational cohorts of employees: a) Generation X, born between 1965 and 1980, b) Generation Y, born between 1981 and 1994, and c) Generation Z born between 1995 and 2010 (DeVaney, 2015). As older employees from previous generations retire, Generation X and Generation Y employees will be the dominant generations in the workforce (Keys, 2014). There is an additional generational cohort identified as the Cuspers (Shaw, 2013). Shaw defined the Cuspers as individuals who are born close to the separating line between generational cohorts and reap the benefit of association with both generations. Howe and Strauss (1991) identified Cuspers as the individuals who fall into two generational cohorts and are influenced by the historical and social events of each. Duh and Struwig (2015) stated employees in the same cohort share similar life experiences and historical events which occurred during their formative years.

STEREOTYPES

Campione (2015) stated there are differences across the generations; however, it is paramount to understand if the difference is attributed to the generation or the individual's age and maturation level. The individuals of Generation X have been stereotyped as not wanting to climb the corporate ladder; however, they are loyal to the organization for which they choose to work (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014; Gilley et al., 2015). Exhibiting little desire to stay in the same position with the same employer for two decades, the individuals of this generation want to reap the benefits of higher paying jobs earlier in their careers (Hernaus & Poloski Vokic, 2014). In other studies, it is noted that members of this generation are not loyal to the organizations for which they work (Karsh & Templin, 2013). However, Al-Asfour and Lettau (2014) confirm how motivated Generation X individuals are in the workplace. Because this generation had to be independent during the formative years due to single-parent homes or dual working parents, it is stated these individuals are more cynical than other generations (Bianchi, 2014; DeVaney, 2015; Karsh & Templin, 2013; Sutton-Bell, Hamilton, McMinin & Bell, 2014).

Challenging to manage, Generation Y employees want to start working in their dream position as opposed to starting in an entry-level position and working their way up (Akkucuk & Turan, 2016; Kong, Wang, & Fu, 2015). Considered high-maintenance employees, these individuals want clear direction, immediate feedback, and constant managerial support while maintaining their autonomy in the workplace (Latkovic, Popovska & Popovski, 2016; Vanmeter, Grisaffe, Chonko & Roberts, 2013). Speaking their mind and asking numerous questions, Generation Y employees have a short attention span, need instant gratification, and yearn for entertainment in the workplace (Bolton et al., 2013). Because this generation of employees was not taught how to be independent during their childhood, they need constant reassurance, feedback, and support in the workplace (Weirich, 2017).

Self-interested and overconfident, Generation Z is stereotyped for always being online and connected virtually (Puiu, 2016; Stanton, 2017). Because of their obsession with being online, this generation lacks personality and is confused (Chicca & Shellenbarger, 2018; Seemiller & Grace, 2016; Stanton, 2017); however, Tulgan (2013) stated this generation expects humor from supervisors in the workplace. Stereotyped as the *emoji-onal* generation, this generation frequently uses emojis to express their emotions (Puiu, 2016). Tulgan (2013) stated Generation Z individuals are stereotyped with an escapist mentality in that they escape the pressures of reality by playing video games, and they remain continuously tethered online. Understanding these stereotypical traits about Generation Z will assist HRPs in motivating this generation and ultimately retaining them in the organization.

3.3 MOTIVATING A MULTIGENERATIONAL WORKFORCE

It is essential to understand why employees leave an organization; but, to understand why employees choose to remain with an organization is paramount to the organization's overall success (George, 2015). George (2015) confirms that retaining top talent eliminates the costly detriment of turnover which impacts sourcing, recruiting, selecting, hiring, onboarding, orienting, and training. Pandta, Deri, Galambos, and Galambos (2015) stated employees' motivation is the critical component to their overall performance levels and their decisions to remain with an organization. Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory posits unsatisfied needs motivate behavior to the dominant need (Sandrick, Contacos-Sawyer & Thomas, 2014).

An employee's motivation directly affects his/her productivity level in turn affecting the company's competitive advantage (Islam & Ahmed, 2014). Tillott, Walsh, and Moxham (2013) proved there is a relationship between workplace satisfaction, employee engagement, and empowerment. When employees are not motivated, their performance is negatively affected, their co-workers are negatively affected, and their overall work demeanor will lead to burn out over time (Khan, Khan & Zakir, 2016). The manager's primary goal is to create cohesive teams composed of employees who work efficiently and effectively, while producing positive results that have a positive impact on the overall bottom line (Pandta et al., 2015). As managers are responsible for creating dynamic teams of employees, they should understand how the different generations of employees are uniquely motivated thereby capitalizing on the multi-generational workforce's unique characteristics which are exemplified in their teams of employees (Eastland & Clark, 2015). Award and reward systems should be updated to reflect the different motivators of a multigenerational workforce (Chekwa et al., 2013; Giaque, Anderfuhren-Biget & Varone, 2013). HRPs must work in conjunction with organizational leaders to determine feasible motivators and how frequently they should be used (Islam & Ahmed, 2014).

Motivating employees from Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z requires managers to understand their employees' work values. The motivational elements are different for the generations (Hernaus & Poloski-Vokic, 2014; Özçelik, 2015). Johnson and Johnson (2016) report Generation X places tremendous value on work-life balance which creates a motivational factor of flexible work schedules and teleworking. Catania and Randall (2013) stated it is undetermined if Generation X employees value extrinsic over intrinsic rewards or if intrinsic rewards motivate them. They want work-life balance, appreciation for quality work, the potential for advancement,

and increased responsibility (Islam & Ahmed, 2014). Generation Y prefers more overtime than Generation X as Generation X values work-life balance more than the money generated from working overtime (Becton, Walker & Jones-Farmer, 2014). Generation Y has different work expectations and requirements when compared to other generations (Gordon, 2017; Johnson & Johnson, 2016). They seek immediate feedback, want a structured working environment, and must have daily supervision (Johnson & Johnson, 2016; Özçelik, 2015). This generation is status conscious, and money motivates them to belong to a certain status (Kultalahti & Viitala, 2014). To motivate the Millennial employees, managers must frequently communicate work expectations, and when the expectations are met or exceeded, the managers must immediately and frequently recognize and applaud the employees for their work (Clark, 2017; Gordon, 2017; Johnson & Johnson, 2016). When it comes to workplace motivation, Generation Z is different from Generation X and Generation Y. Gordon (2017) posits Generation Z desires nominal face-to-face supervision. Managers can succeed in motivating this generation by electronically communicating with them through text messages, instant messages, or emails as opposed to in person (Clark, 2017). Eastland and Clark (2015) confirm Generation Z's desire to know their work adds value to the organization which is a motivational tool for managers.

Of the three Generations X, Y, and Z, Generation Y needs the most hands-on, face-to-face motivational inspiration from their managers (Stewart, Oliver, Cravens & Oishi, 2017). Acar (2014) reports all generations value intrinsic rewards. However, due to this generation's sense of entitlement, they expect immediate and frequent rewards for their work (Stewart et al., 2017). Muthuveloo, Basbous, Ping, and Long (2013) discovered recognition plays a crucial role in Generation Y's employee engagement. Appealing to Generation Y's ownership of work, responsibility, and sense of worth, the rewards they seek are not always cash-based; instead they seek intrinsic rewards such as knowing their manager perceives their work as important (Alexander & Sysko, 2013; Rajput, Marwah, Balli & Gupta, 2013).

In contrast, Neckermann and Frey (2013) stated monetary awards and rewards have a significant impact on motivation for Generation Y. Kultalahti and Viitala (2014) stated Generation Y demonstrates increased motivation from work composition in that these employees seek new, short-term projects in addition to flexible, as opposed to stringent, scheduling options in the workplace. Managers can motivate this generation by providing them with ample time to cultivate close working relationships with colleagues and supervisors (Kilber, Barclay & Ohmer, 2014). Another motivational factor for Generation Y is through formal recognition programs in the workplace (Neckermann & Frey, 2013). Because this generation grew up in an era where every child on the sports team received a trophy for participation, they are not accustomed to the rigorous competition other generations faced during their formative years (Alexander & Sysko, 2013). Because of the trophy mentality and the case made through the literature that Generation Y desires such praise into adulthood, formal recognition programs in the workplace motivate this generation (Stewart et al., 2017). Neckermann and Frey (2013) discovered a higher motivational factor for Generation Y when their rewards and awards were publicized and incorporated into a ceremony with fanfare. To satisfy their need for competition and praise, employees who seek extrinsic rewards will continually strive for publicized recognition (Achilles, Blaskovich & Pitre, 2013). Peters, Lau, and Ng (2014) stated this generation appreciates a fair rewards and awards system but must receive recognition for all the work they individually accomplished.

3.4 WORK VALUES – MULTIGENERATIONAL WORKFORCE

Contributing to the intricacy of the workplace environment, the differences in work values between the multiple generations in today's workforce present challenges for the organizational leadership, managers, and HRPs (Yarbrough, Martin, Alfred & McNeill, 2016). This research study is different from other published studies because it includes Generation Z, the up and coming generation to challenge HRPs in today's workplace. Work values are the factors that influence employees' behavior and their motivation while at work (Ueda & Ohzono, 2013). Choi et al. (2013) note work values as an individual's needs and reinforced preferences which are satisfied by their role in the workplace. Popovska, Latkovic, Jakimovski, and Popovski (2015) stated work values change over time and are the justification for individuals' and generational cohorts' behaviors and opinions. An employee's work values directly impact career choice and career development (Choi et al., 2013). To promote employee motivation, transparent communication, and intergenerational synergy, managers must understand each generation's foundation of work values (Gursoy et al., 2013).

Several critical areas highlight the differences between the generations' work. Because of the Millennials' constant parental support during their formative years, they need mentoring and meaningful feedback from their supervisors on a regular basis (Kilber et al., 2014; Weirich, 2017). Kroth and Young (2014) report that the Millennials expect and need more frequent feedback than the previous generational cohorts; however, Coates (2017) confirmed Millennials' antipathy for micromanagement and their desire for workplace empowerment with autonomy. Generation X and preceding generations did not question policies, procedures, or regulations in the

workplace; whereas, the Millennials question every directive and policy to understand why policies are made and why they are asked to perform certain tasks (Rajput, Marwah, Balli & Gupta, 2013). Another difference in work values is noted in work-life balance which has shifted over the years. Generations preceding Generation X had a primary focus on work; whereas, Generation X and Generation Y desire more of a balance between their personal and professional lives (Bush, 2017; Kroth & Young, 2014). Kroth and Young (2014) stated the older generations viewed work as a critical component to and an important extension of their lives, but Generation X and Generation Y view work as the necessary means to achieve their ambitions. Several studies confirmed the foundational points that drive Millennial employees to find employment elsewhere include autonomy, personal freedom to balance work and life, and have a flexible work schedule (Coates, 2017; Queiri, Yusoff & Dwaikat, 2014). Employer loyalty is another work value that has shifted with the generational cohorts. Bush (2017) stated Generation Y employees do not stay with the same employer for the length of their career. To adjust to the newer generations' needs, managers should cultivate loyalty through robust mentoring and coaching proving the company's plan for the employee's future growth (Ferri-Reed, 2014; Weirich, 2017).

Additional research proves there are similarities in how the generations relate their work values (De Meuse & Mlodzik, 2010; Fatima, Shafique, Qadeer & Ahmad, 2015; Johnson & Lopes, 2008; Montana & Petit, 2008; Peachey, Burton, & Wells, 2014; Peltokorpi, Allen, & Froese, 2015; Radford & Chapman, 2015; Wesner & Miller, 2008; Yang & Guy, 2006). Older research studies prove more similarities than differences in attitudes and work values between the generations (Deal, 2007; Furnham, 1982; Jurkiewicz, 2000; Singer & Abramson, 1973; Tang & Tzeng, 1992). There is no significant difference between the appraisal of work values of the baby boomer generation and Generation X (Yang & Guy, 2006). Generation X and Generation Y share the same work motivators including opportunities for promotion and continuous employment (De Meuse & Mlodzik, 2010; Montana & Petit, 2008). Additionally, the level of workplace commitment is the same across the generations (Johnson & Lopes, 2008), and Generation Y has similar needs to the baby boomer generation (Wesner & Miller, 2008).

4 RESEARCH METHOD

This research study's underlying hypothesis was that there is a difference in motivation for employees due to the difference in work values for each generation. Prasad et al. (2007) categorized the 11 employment arrangements on the Employment Arrangement Survey into three categories of work values which are work security, achievement, and flexibility; therefore, the work values identified by this research study were work security, achievement, and flexibility. In parallel with the research problem statement and purpose, there were three research questions and corresponding hypotheses supporting this quantitative research study.

RQ1. Are there differences in the way Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z value work security?

RQ2. Are there differences in the way Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z value achievement?

RQ3. Are there differences in the way Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z value flexibility?

5 POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The target population for this research study was the employees of a telecommunications company located in the northeastern United States. The company provides telecommunications cabling and equipment modernization services for the private sector. The population size for the company was 100 American professional employees from Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z. The population can be narrowly or broadly defined according to Delost nad Nadder (2014). According to Cozby and Bates (2012), if the population increases, the sample size necessary to gain the same result will not significantly fluctuate or compromise the validity. This study achieved a 95% confidence level with a 5% margin of error by using a minimum sample size of 80 participants where the independent variable was the generational cohort, and the dependent variable was the work values. There were 81 employee participants who responded to the survey. Two respondents did not provide any answers beyond the first question of the survey; therefore, the final sample size used for investigating the research questions had 79 participants that provided answers to the survey questions.

6 INSTRUMENTATION

The Employment Arrangement Survey which utilized a 5-point Likert scale was used to gather the data for this research study. The validity of the Employment Arrangement Survey is proved by several previous research projects that used this instrument and validated the scales using the random half-sample method (Enns et al., 2006 and Prasad et al., 2007) and identified the survey items that were used in their studies. The limited sample size and performing the

research at only one employment place in the telecommunications industry limits the generalizability of the results and thus lowers the external validity of the study. Internal validity is defined as the degree to which the detected changes in a dependent variable is attributed to differences detected in the independent variables (Halperin, Pyne & Martin, 2015) and will be tested by checking statistical significance of the differences detected in the data.

Although previous research studies using the Employment Arrangement Survey reported high validity and reliability (Prasad et al., 2007) of the instrument, it may vary when the scales are applied to different populations and in a different context; therefore, internal consistency and reliability were re-tested in this study by computing Cronbach's alpha. Job preference subscales from the Employment Arrangement Survey were first checked for reliability by investigating their internal consistency by calculating Cronbach's alpha statistic that corresponds to the correlation between each of the subscales and the total mean value that is calculated for the set. All 11 subscales showed very good internal consistency (Table 2) with reliability values ranging from .833 to .904 which shows that the scales can be reliably used for further analysis to test the research hypotheses.

7 FINDINGS AND RESULTS

There were 81 participants who took part in the study, distributed into three generational groups (Table 1). The majority of respondents belonged to Generation Y (n = 45, 55.6%) and to Generation X (n = 28, 34.6%), while only eight participants (9.9%) were born in or after 1995 and belonged to Generation Z. The small size of the Generation Z group is not a limitation to use MANOVA per se, but it could result in showing statistically insignificant results due to small sample size overall and for this particular group.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

Generation	Count	Percent
Generation X (born between 1965 and 1980)	28	34.6%
Generation Y (born between 1981 and 1994)	45	55.6%
Generation Z (born in 1995 or after)	8	9.9%

Two respondents did not provide any answers beyond the first question of the survey; therefore, the final sample size used for investigating the research questions had 79 participants that provided answers to the survey questions. According to the Employment Arrangement Survey analysis procedure and manual, the survey consists of 37 questions that can be scored to construct 11 work values subscales. The subscales were constructed by taking the mean responses of the corresponding questions for each subscale for each respondent to indicate his/her perception of the corresponding work value subscale.

Table 2: Employment Arrangement Survey Descriptive Statistics

Generation	Mean	SD	# of items	Cronbach's alpha	
Security	Job security	4.2	0.8	3	.856
	Pay	3.8	0.8	2	.864
	Benefits	3.6	0.9	2	.871
Achievement	Social interaction and support	3.4	0.9	5	.833
	Specificity of performance requirements	4.1	0.8	3	.850
	Career development opportunities	3.9	0.9	3	.904
	Recognition	3.6	0.9	3	.887
	Work choice discretion	3.3	0.9	2	.845
Flexibility	Discretion in choosing when to work	3.3	1.0	2	.902
	Discretion in choosing where to work	3.2	1.1	2	.841
	Travel discretion	2.3	1.3	2	.899

Note: 5-point Likert scale

Job security ($M = 4.2$, $SD = 0.8$) and specificity of performance requirements ($M = 4.1$, $SD = 0.8$) had the largest mean scores on five-point Likert scale used in the study indicating that these two work values are most preferred by the participants. While travel discretion ($M = 2.3$, $SD = 1.3$) and discretion in choosing where to work ($M = 3.2$, $SD = 1.1$) had the least values (i.e. they are less preferable by the survey participants compared with other work value measures).

There were three research questions aimed that will be examined in the current study; each of which corresponding to appropriate null and alternative hypotheses that will be tested. MANOVA was used to test the hypotheses. MANOVA procedure is the most appropriate procedure to compare and test if the work values measures are different across the three generation groups. MANOVA requires several assumptions to be satisfied for the results to be valid. According to Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson (2004), the following assumptions are required and were checked (Hair et al., 2004, p. 362):

- there should be no univariate or multivariate outliers – that can be checked by visual inspection of the boxplots constructed for each of the variables;
- there should be a multivariate normality of the measures. This can be assessed using Shapiro-Wilk test with a p-value greater than .05 indicating that the distribution is approximately normal;
- there should be a moderate correlation of the dependent variables with the absolute value of correlation coefficients being greater than 0.5 but less than 0.9 (which could indicate a multicollinearity issue);
- there should be the homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices. This can be tested using Box's M test of equality of covariance showing a p-value greater than .001 for the assumption to be satisfied. Here a lower than usual value of significance level is used as Box's M test is a very sensitive test;
- there should be the homogeneity of variances, which can be assessed using Levene's test of equality of variances, showing a p-value greater than .05.

To further investigate the difference for each of the 11 work values subscales, a set of post hoc ANOVAs was performed (one for each of the 11 work values, if the overall MANOVA is statistically significant). ANOVA test was used to provide a separate analysis for each of the 11 work values. The underlying assumptions of ANOVA are similar to the ones of MANOVA (they are a subset of MANOVA assumptions), no further tests of underlying assumptions are needed. The corresponding p-values of the test statistics were compared to conventional significance level $\alpha = .05$. The null hypothesis of equality of values was rejected if $p < .05$.

7.1 RESEARCH QUESTION ONE

The first research question and corresponding hypotheses were to investigate whether work security differs between generational cohorts.

RQ₁ Are there differences in the way Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z value work security?

H₀ There is no statistically significant difference in the way Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z value work security.

H₁ There is a statistically significant difference in the way Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z value work security.

MANOVA analysis was used to compare work security values between the three generational cohorts. First, the assumptions of MANOVA were tested. There were no significant outliers in any of the three subscales (job security, pay, and benefits) measuring work security values domain. All mean values were calculated based on five-point Likert scales and their minimum and maximum values ranged between one to five. Several respondents with the least (equal to one) and highest (equal to five) values were included in the analysis as they were not a result of a typo or otherwise invalid data (they were not outliers). The normality of the distribution was violated for all three subscales; however, this result was not a major violation for MANOVA. According to Johnson & Wichern (2007), MANOVA is robust to non-normality. Multicollinearity was assessed by calculating Pearson correlation coefficients between the three subscales of security. The test revealed that all subscales are moderately correlated to each other (Pearson correlation coefficients ranged from a minimum of 0.596 to maximum of 0.697, all statistically significant with $p < .05$, Appendix 1). Homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices was tested using Box's M test showing a p-value equal to .0012, which is slightly higher than .001 – a borderline for this test. Homogeneity of variance assessed by Levene's test was proven for job security and pay ($p > .05$) but not for benefits subscale ($p = .015$). To account for this violation when running individual scale tests using ANOVA, a more stringent alpha level was used for this subscale ($\alpha = .025$).

The results of MANOVA showed no statistically significant difference in work security between the three generational cohorts ($F(6,148) = 1.263$, $p = .279$). Follow-up univariate ANOVAs was performed for each subscale and also showed no significant differences either (Table 3). These results support the null hypothesis that there is no statistically significant difference in the way Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z value work security and provide a negative response to the first research question.

Table 3: Univariate ANOVAs for Work Security Value Subscales by Generational Cohort.

Percent	Generation X		Generation Y		Generation Z		ANOVA F (2, 76)	p-value
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		
Job security	4.05	.97	4.30	.66	4.52	.69	1.425	.247
Pay	3.66	.90	3.78	.76	3.86	1.11	249	.780
Benefits	3.59	1.05	3.67	.70	3.29	1.41	.249	.578

Note: 5-point Likert scale

7.2 RESEARCH QUESTION TWO

The second research question and corresponding hypotheses were to investigate whether work achievement differs between the three generational cohorts.

RQ₂ Are there differences in the way Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z value achievement?

H₀ There is no statistically significant difference in the way Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z value achievement.

H₁ There is a statistically significant difference in the way Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z value achievement.

To compare work achievement between generational cohorts, MANOVA was applied. Before running the test, the underlying assumptions for MANOVA were checked. There were no significant outliers in any of the five variables included in the achievement values domain. All mean values were calculated based on five-point Likert scales and their minimum and maximum values were between one to five. Several respondents with the lowest (equal to one) and highest (equal to five) responses were included in the analysis as they were not due to typos or otherwise invalid data. The normality of the distribution was violated for all subscales; however, this result is not major for MANOVA, as according to Johnson & Wichern (2007) this method is robust to non-normality. Multicollinearity was assessed by calculating Pearson correlation coefficients for the five subscales. The test revealed that all subscales are moderately correlated to each other (Pearson correlation coefficients ranging from a minimum of 0.383 to maximum of 0.744, all statistically significant with $p < .05$, Appendix 1). Homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices was proven by Box’s M test showing a p-value equal to 0.798. Homogeneity of variance assessed by Levene’s test was proven for all five subscales ($p > .05$).

The results of MANOVA showed no statistically significant difference in work achievement between the three generational cohorts ($F(10,146) = 0.805, p = .625$). These results support the null hypothesis that there is no statistically significant difference in the way Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z value work achievement and provide a negative answer to the second research question.

Follow-up univariate ANOVAs were performed for each subscale. The results showed no statistically significant difference for all work achievement except the specificity of performance requirements (Table 4). A set of pairwise comparisons were performed to further explore the difference between the three generational cohorts. However, the pairwise comparisons did not show statistically significant differences. These results however indicated that the value of specificity of performance requirements was slightly increasing from Generation X ($M = 3.77, SD = 0.87$) to Generation Y ($M = 4.14, SD = 0.73$) and then to Generation Z ($M = 4.52, SD = .54$), but these differences were not statistically significant.

Table 4: Univariate ANOVAs for Achievement Value Components by Generational Cohort.

	Generation X		Generation Y		Generation Z		ANOVA F (2, 76)	p-value
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		
Social interaction and support	3.21	1.00	3.49	.80	3.54	.86	.994	.375
Specificity of performance requirements	3.77	.87	4.14	.73	4.52	.54	3.461*	.036
Career development opportunities	3.60	.98	3.95	.80	4.38	.76	2.805	.067
Recognition	3.39	.96	3.61	.84	3.76	.92	.783	.461
Work choice discretion	3.20	.98	3.28	.83	3.64	.75	.722	.489

Note: * indicates a statistically significant difference at $p < .05$; 5-point Likert scale

7.3 RESEARCH QUESTION THREE

The third research question and corresponding hypotheses were dedicated to investigate whether work flexibility value differs between generational cohorts.

RQ₃ Are there differences in the way Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z value flexibility?

H₀ There is no statistically significant difference in the way Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z value flexibility.

H₁ There is a statistically significant difference in the way Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z value flexibility.

One of the subscales for work flexibility value was travel discretion that received a lower number of responses (56 compared to 79 for all other subscales) as 23 respondents responded to these questions as inapplicable to them. Therefore, the total number of cases included in the analysis for flexibility subscale was 56. However, to check whether this reduction in sample size plays a significant role on the results, the analysis was performed twice: for 56 responses obtained for these subscales and for 76 responses obtained for discretion in choosing when and where to work subscales. The results were consistent, so the first approach including all three subscales as supposed by Prasad et al. (2007) and was reported below.

The MANOVA was useful to examine the third research question and test the corresponding hypotheses. Before running the MANOVA analysis, the underlying assumptions were tested. There were no significant outliers in any of the three dependent variables included in flexibility values domain as all mean values were calculated based on five-point Likert scales, and their minimum and maximum values did not exceed the range from one to five. Several respondents with the lowest (equal to one) and highest (equal to five) values were included in the analysis as they were not a result of typos or otherwise invalid data. The normality of the distribution was not satisfied for all three subscales; however, this violation was not a major one for MANOVA as according to Johnson & Wichern (2007) this method is robust to non-normality. Multicollinearity was assessed by calculating Pearson correlation coefficients among the three subscales. The test revealed that all subscales are moderately correlated to each other (Pearson correlation coefficients ranged from a minimum of 0.342 to maximum of 0.689, all statistically significant with $p < .05$, Appendix 1). Homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices was proven by Box’s M test results showing a p-value equal to .145, which is higher than .001 – a borderline for this test. Homogeneity of variance was assessed using Levene’s test and showed that all three subscales satisfy the assumption ($p > .05$).

The results of MANOVA showed no statistically significant difference in work flexibility between the three generational cohorts ($F(6,104) = 0.412, p = .870$). Follow-up univariate ANOVAs were performed for each subscale, and the results revealed no statistically significant difference either (Table 5). These results support the null hypothesis that there is no statistically significant difference in the way Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z value flexibility in work and provide a negative answer to the third research question.

Table 5: Univariate ANOVAs for Flexibility Value Components by Generational Cohort.

	Generation X		Generation Y		Generation Z		ANOVA F (2, 76)	p-value
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		
Discretion in choosing when to work	3.32	1.14	3.3	.81	3.64	1.03	0.402	.670
Discretion in choosing where to work	3.23	1.18	3.19	1.03	3.29	1.38	0.026	.975
Travel discretion	2.45	1.25	2.15	1.21	2.5	1.66	0.424	.657

Note: * for travel discretion subscale the error df is equal to 53, as there were only 56 respondents who provided a valid answer to this question.; 5-point Likert scale

8 IMPLICATIONS

First, this study implies there are more similarities between the generations than differences; therefore, HRPs should be cognizant of individual employee differences and not focus solely on employee generational differences. Because there is great variability among people, within generational cohort individual differences likely are far greater than across generational cohort differences (De Meuse & Mlodzik, 2010; Zhang, Tang, & Tang, 2016). Prudent to the human resources industry, this implication suggests managers should motivate employees based on their individualistic needs as opposed to their subscribed generational cohort’s needs. HRPs should provide individualized consideration to employees as there is a significant relationship between *individual* motivation and employee engagement (El Badawy & Bassiouny, 2014). Another noteworthy individual difference is education level. Because

an employee's education level affects his work values (Li, Liu, & Wan, 2008), HRPs must ensure that managers take an individualistic approach when managing employees. This implication is congruent with Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory on the individual pursuit of self-actualization. Individuals, as opposed to generational cohorts, fulfill the five levels of Maslow's pyramid in the pursuit of self-actualization. Given the individualistic nature of people, the individual differences highlighted *within* generations are more significant than the group differences noted across generations (Davis, Pawlowski & Houston, 2006).

Second, HRPs must recognize stereotyping of generational differences in the workplace. An example stereotype of generational differences is the trophy mentality of Generation Y in which these employees must receive public praise and formal recognition through tangible achievement (Stewart et al., 2017). Because there was not a statistically significant difference in the way the three generations value achievement in the workplace, HRPs should be aware and monitor the risk of the sweeping generational stereotypes regarding achievement. The mere perception of generational differences regarding workplace achievement can cause damage to the workforce (De Meuse & Mlodzik, 2010). HRPs should educate managers on these generational stereotypes to ensure managerial attitudes and behaviors are not based on all-encompassing generalizations about employees' generations as opposed to the workforce reality where employees should be treated as individuals. Because managerial attitudes and behavior influence subordinate employees, HRPs should remain vigilant of and sensitive to the generational stereotypes and make a concerted effort to mitigate them by offering professional development training to managers.

Third, employee flexibility is a critical component of HRPs' recruiting and retention efforts. The findings from this study suggest that employees, regardless of their generation, value flexibility in the workplace. Krywulak and Roberts (2009) posit all employees regardless of their generation want flexibility in the workplace. This concept was echoed in a research study on the Canadian nurse workforce in which Generation X and Generation Y similarly valued flexibility (Lavoie-Tremblay, Paquet, Duchesne, Santo, Gavrancic, Courcy & Gagnon, 2010). Generation Y employees seek employers that have enough flexibility in their benefits and compensation structure to offer development activities, training, and new challenges (Robyn & du Preez, 2013). When bolstering recruitment initiatives, human resources professionals should include the organization's commitment to embrace employee flexibility. Climate surveys can identify which aspect of flexibility is essential to employees (Li & Hsu, 2016). Remaining committed to understanding the employee's interpretation of and need for flexibility in the workplace, human resources professionals can strengthen retention efforts. Regardless of the generational differences or similarities, human resources professionals must understand what it takes to recruit and retain individuals for their workplace.

9 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The findings of this research study provide evidence that there are no significant differences in the work values between Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z. These findings are supported in the academic literature (Deal, 2007; De Meuse & Mlodzik, 2010; Hart et al., 2003; Johnson & Lopes, 2008; Jurkiewicz, 2000; Levy et al., 2005; Stapleton et al., 2007; Wesner & Miller, 2008; Zhang, Tang & Tang, 2016), and they reinforce the individuality of employees as opposed to stereotypes assigned to the generational cohorts. Employee motivation is an undocumented, psychological contract between an employer and the employee (Kukreja, 2017), and employee motivation is a critical component of organizational success (Zameer et al., 2014). This research study was limited to one employer in the telecommunications industry and may not be indicative of the population as a whole. Because this research study utilized the quantitative method to gather data, it could be lacking in the personal anecdotes that are gleaned from face-to-face interviews via the qualitative methodology. Another limitation could be the risk of system errors as a result of the online environment used to orchestrate the instrument. If there is an insufficient sample size, there could be a limitation of generalizability. Future research could revise this cross-sectional study into a longitudinal study following the sample of employees over a more extended period of time. Finally, additional research could contain additional demographic questions to include the participant's educational level, as Li, Liu, and Wan (2008) posit employees' education level directly impacts their work values.

It is recommended that HRPs motivate employees based on their individual needs, monitor generational stereotypes in the multigenerational workforce, and remain committed to the importance of flexibility for all employees. It is recommended HRPs deliver targeted professional development training to managers on the importance of coaching employees based on their individual needs, determining the difference between fact and fiction when it comes to generational stereotypes in the workplace, and valuing the importance of employee flexibility. Finally, it is recommended that HRPs remain vigilant of current employee needs to bolster recruitment initiatives and strengthen retention efforts.

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Appendix 1: Pearson Correlation Coefficients for Work Values Subscales

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Job security										
2. Pay	.661**									
3. Benefits	.593**	.697**								
4. Social interaction and support	.409**	.383**	.396**							
5. Specificity of performance requirements	.744**	.637**	.570**	.489**						
6. Career development opportunities	.693**	.692**	.571**	.485**	.763**					
7. Recognition	.512**	.540**	.387**	.681**	.539**	.594**				
8. Work choice discretion	.519**	.560**	.501**	.402**	.476**	.546**	.499**			
9. Discretion in choosing when to work	.500**	.654**	.388**	.328**	.510**	.527**	.469**	.670**		
10. Discretion in choosing where to work	.502**	.672**	.476**	.340**	.394**	.526**	.514**	.689**	.640**	
11. Travel discretion	.301*	.451**	.221	.088	.167	.369**	.225	.342**	.524**	.441**

Note: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$



Journal of HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

www.jhrm.eu • ISSN 2453-7683

Gen Z: Where are we now, and future pathways

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to consolidate the literature on generation z employees at workplace. The literature though sporadic, has garnered increasing interest from both academicians as well as management practitioners. Using co-word analysis, a qualitative research method, nineteen peer-reviewed articles published during the years 2000 and 2019 were analyzed. This analysis extracts five major themes: Generation Z characteristics, Workforce expectations, prevenient generation characteristics, Inter-generational dynamics, and Workplace transformation. Potential research directions that lie at the intersection of these research themes are presented as a conclusion for future research.

KEY WORDS

generation z, intergenerational dynamics, qualitative research methods, workplace

JEL Code: M10

Manuscript received 11 June 2019
Accepted after revisions 28 August 2019

1 INTRODUCTION

Generation Z or Gen Z is the demographic cohort after the Generation Y, also known as the millennial. While there are differences between the two cohorts, most of the researchers and demographers consider the years between mid-1990 to mid-2000's as the starting birth years of Gen Z generational cohort. In organizational behavior literature, generational traits have been widely discussed (c.f. Christensen, Wilson & Edelman, 2018; Grow & Yang, 2018; Lanier, 2017). The generational differences between generation z, and other preceding generational cohorts - millennial, generation x, and baby boomers has also been presented (c.f. Lazányi & Bilan, 2017; Jiří, 2018). As the generation Z prepares to establish itself in the current labor market, existing management is likely to face some inter-generational issues. Given these inter-generational differences, there is a need to understand how workplace perceptions have changed for generation z. From the academic point of view, research on generation z at workplace is increasing, although sporadic. This is an opportune moment to consolidate the research themes investigated so far and suggest possible research directions for the future.

Scholarly research has focused on various themes relevant to this generational cohort. For example, engaging generation Z in the classrooms has garnered widespread attention (c.f. Cameron & Pagnattaro, 2017; Seemiller & Grace, 2017; Moore, Jones & Frazier, 2017). A related area of interest are teaching methods that are most effective to deliver instruction to generation Z students (c.f. Shatto, 2017; Igel & Urguhart, 2012). Yet another burgeoning area of research emanates from consumer behavior studies on generation Z. Understanding their consumer experiences (Priporas, Stylos & Fotiadis, 2017; Puiu, 2016), perceptions towards traditional and digital advertising formats (Southgate, 2017), and brand loyalty (Rodriguez, 2015) have been researched more recently. Research that focuses on workplace issues relevant to managing generation Z employees has been concomitant. For example, Loveland (2017) investigates the perceptions of generation Z college students towards education and career development. Attitude of generation Z employees towards older employees which has implications for employee diversity is presented by Bertić and Telebuh (2018). In the same direction, Gajda (2017) presents the

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perceptions of this young workforce towards the labor market. Given the inherent instability (or the dynamism) of the labor market, generation Z would evaluate the possibility of fulfilling their personal and professional goals when they enter the workforce (Gadja, 2017). Also important would be their assessment of how aligned are their values with the organizations, and existing workers belonging to a different generation (Lazányi & Bilan, 2017). Recent research attests that generation Z employees prefer virtual work even when collocated with their colleagues (Kubátová, 2016).

Thus, we see a milieu of research themes pertinent to generation Z. While the research stream identified numerous ideas, there are a number of competing perspectives on workplace issues that are most relevant to generation Z. There is little effort to organize the literature towards a structured theoretical corpus. The research on generation Z is still in nascent stages. If there are no efforts to consolidate the literature, there is a possibility of research growing sporadically without these perspectives interacting with each other. Our research question- *'what are the research themes pertinent to generation Z employees at workplace?'*, is motivated by this understudied research direction. In order to answer this research question, we set out with the following two objectives:

1. Identify underlying research themes on generation Z in the workplace
2. Analyze the interaction between these research themes to offer directions for future research

2 ORGANIZATION OF THE PAPER

The organization of the paper is as follows. First, we will present the literature on generation z employees. Second, in the methodology section, we will discuss 'co-occurrence of key words', a qualitative research technique that is used to identify underlying research themes from a theoretical corpus. Third, we will present the findings of our qualitative research analysis. In the fourth section, we offer a detail discussion of the findings- explaining the research themes, and providing directions for future research. This is followed by the conclusion.

3 LITERATURE REVIEW

Scholarly research on generation z has especially gained importance since the turn of the century. While the research is still nascent, various themes such as generational differences in the cohorts (c.f. Southgate, 2017; Zhitomirsky-Geffet & Blau, 2016), Generation Z values that determine their consumer behavior (c.f. Priporas, Sylos & Fotiadis, 2017; Duffett, 2017), and the impact of social media on their behavior (Turner, 2015) have been studied. In addition to these broad themes, focus on the learning styles of Generation Z cohort and its implications on teaching pedagogy and education management has also received considerable importance in literature (c.f. Puiu, 2017; Pousson & Myers, 2018; Hariadi, Dewiyani & Sudarmaningtyas, 2016).

The focus of our paper is to go beyond this extant research that mostly concentrates on values and general behavior of generation Z to discussing the issues relevant to workplace. Such a direction for research is important in the wake of generation z entering the workforce.

We address this research gap by presenting a synthesis and review of generation z at workplace. We considered three research databases for our literature review- EBSCO, ScienceDirect, and Sage Journals. Using the key words "generation z" and "workplace"; "generation z" and "organization", we extracted 26 peer-reviewed articles from EBSCO, 57 articles from ScienceDirect, and 6 peer-reviewed articles from Sage publications. We examined each of these articles for their relevance to workplace, and also for any redundancy. Thus, we eliminated the articles which did not directly address workplace issues. For example, Schroth (2019) provides a description of general characteristics of generation Z. Grow, and Yang (2018) measures the expectations of generation Z students studying advertising. Chicca, and Shellenbarger (2018) describe the characteristics of young students studying nursing and classroom delivery techniques that are effective for this group. Gutfreund (2016) looks at the values of this generational cohort, and how it influences their buying behavior. Canaan, and Karkoulian, and El-Kassar (2016) juxtapose the conflict resolution styles of two generations of workers- generation x, and generation y. They propose future research which would include examining the conflict handling style of generation Z.

Our final theoretical corpus included 19 peer-reviewed articles. We analyzed these articles to source the underlying research themes, and also to propose future research directions. This is presented in the subsequent sections of this paper. In table 1, we present a summary of the major findings of these 19 articles.

Table 1. Generation Z in workplace: summary of literature

Author (s), Date	Major findings
Desai, & Lele (2019)	Age of the respondents does not affect their behavior to engage with social network ; Gen Z's perception of workplace very different from earlier generations; significant correlation between nature of work and workplace
Grow, Y& ang (2018)	Traits to gen Z as being distinct from millennial; softskills, creativity, work ethics, knowledge, and leadership seen as being important for career success in advertising industry; Gen Z has a proclivity for health-care benefits & financial stability, flexitime, supportive work environment, and upward mobility; perceptions towards gender equality different between men and women
Bencsik, Horváth-Csikós, & Juhász (2016)	Characteristics of gen Y and Z compared with respect to social interaction, use of technology, values towards achieving life goals; generation Z is professionally ambitious and highly skilled; Gen Z prefer virtual teamwork over offline meetings and prefer teamwork only when under conditions when they are compelled to do so; other characteristics include easy sharing of knowledge virtually, not distinguishing personal and professional life, and need for rapid access to information
Lazányi & Bilan (2017)	Generation z values in-person performance appraisal, opportunities for professional advancement, and greater job security
Berge, & Berge (2019)	Generational differences do not play a significant role, as much as the individual's learning preferences when it comes to professional development programs; Gen Z values financial rewards, career advancement, and work-life balance the most as these are shaped by the socio-economic (recessionary) conditions of their time; Other motivators include ongoing /continuous training, and supportive co-workers to perform well on the job
Lanier (2017)	Generation Z prefers in-person feedback on performance, value traditional opportunities for advancement, improved economic security, and better benefits
Iorgulescu (2016)	Have a low proclivity to work in start-up companies and instead, want to work in stable -large multinationals; value opportunities for advancement, generous pay, job security, and mentoring; problem solving, ability to communicate with a diverse set of stakeholders, and continuous learning are perceived as most important skills
Gupta (2018)	Lack of inter-personal relationship between generation z and other employee cohorts at work leads to attrition of generation z workers
Jirí (2018)	Gen Z does not have a preference for a supervisor or co-workers belonging to a generational cohort
Christensen, Wilson, & Edelman (2018)	Gen Z is low on optimism & very distinct from millennials; respond and better learn to visual stimulus and observation and so leaders should act as role models.
Goh, & Kong (2018)	Adrenaline rush as a motivator to indulge in theft at workplace
Fratričová & Kirchmayer, (2018)	Uninteresting nature of work, bad team climate, work overload, and having no sense of purpose in one's job are most demotivating to Generation Z workers. On the other hand, career advancement and continuous learning/growth, generous rewards and chances of making a positive impact are motivating to this generational cohort.
Ergle (2015)	Gamification in organizations increases inter-personal communications, and therefore leads to higher employee engagement among Generation Z and Y employees.
Čič, & Žižek (2018)	Role of leaders in developing HRM practices in organizations that promote inter-generational cooperation
Goh, & Jie (2019)	Feeling of guilt towards food wastage in restaurant among generation z employees
Goh, & Lee (2018)	Perceptions of workplace in hospitality industry by Generation Z: positive people in the industry, work is interesting & exciting, task significance, opportunities to travel, stable career, and opportunities for cross-training lead to positive perceptions of workplace; long hours, low workplace health and safety, discrimination, emotional labor, pressure to perform, and low pay lead to negative perceptions of workplace in hospitality industry
Ozkan, & Solmaz (2015)	Generation Z employees value social environment, financial security and stability at work; have no gender-based preference for supervisor
Ghura (2017)	High entrepreneurial orientation, low proclivity for traditional career paths, low employee retention due to lack of intrinsic motivation, value autonomy over micromanagement, more motivated by challenging work over routine tasks
Foster (2013)	Decline of standard employment relations (full-time jobs/40 hour week) affects job stability and tenure; however older workers perceived negative effects of low job stability and tenure over younger workers who perceive job stability and tenure more positively; emergence of dual career couples, perceptions of underemployment significantly affect perceptions of work

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

A prevalent trend to construct a research question is through ‘gap-spotting’ (Alvesson & Sandberg, 2013)- identifying or constructing gaps in the existing literature to generate research questions. However, scholars have argued against this approach that only incrementally adds to the theory and does not offer novel high impact research (Alvesson & Sandberg, 2013). Alvesson and Sandberg (2014) call for a view of knowledge production that increases the likelihood of generating novel ideas through synthesis and questioning of existing literature. Following this recommendation, we not only describe the research themes (in response to research objective 1), but also examine the possible interactions between these themes to offer pathways for future research (in response to research objective 2).

4.2 METHOD

We reiterate here that the purpose of this paper is to identify workplace issues that are relevant to Generation Z employees. Further to this purpose, the objectives of the research are to consolidate the research themes, and provide directions for further research. Thus, we choose a qualitative research technique- ‘co-occurrence of key words’ to consolidate the research themes.

For the purpose of analysis, we consider the 19 peer-reviewed articles published between the years 2000 and 2019 (summarized in table 1). Generation Z is a cohort that only came into existence during this period. Furthermore, we only considered articles that directly addressed the research question- research themes relevant to Generation Z at workplace.

The absolute and relative frequencies of key terms occurring across the corpus was analyzed first. This was done by reviewing the key terms appearing in the abstracts of the research articles. Voyant tools, an open-source web-based text analytics tool was used.

In order to identify the underlying research themes, the frequency trend analysis of the key terms was followed by the construction of a social graph. VosViewer 1.6.10 (created by Lieden University Center for Science and Technology; also see van Eck, & Waltman, 2017 for a more detail explanation of the tool), an open source data analysis and visualization tool was used. The tool organizes the terms into various clusters which are color-coded. The words are counted for their presence in the documents using binary counting method, i.e., the number of times one word appears with another word. This counting of such co-occurring words is run iteratively until the words with proximity (words pairs appearing together) are grouped in a cluster. The 19 peer-reviewed articles (summarized in table 1) appearing in the research databases- EBSCO Host, ScienceDirect, and Sage Publishing were considered.

We considered presenting our findings in a visual form. Recent studies using qualitative research methods are extensively using such visual forms to map, and analyze disparate research themes. It is possible to represent the concepts and the relationships between them very clearly (Langley & Ravasi, 2019).

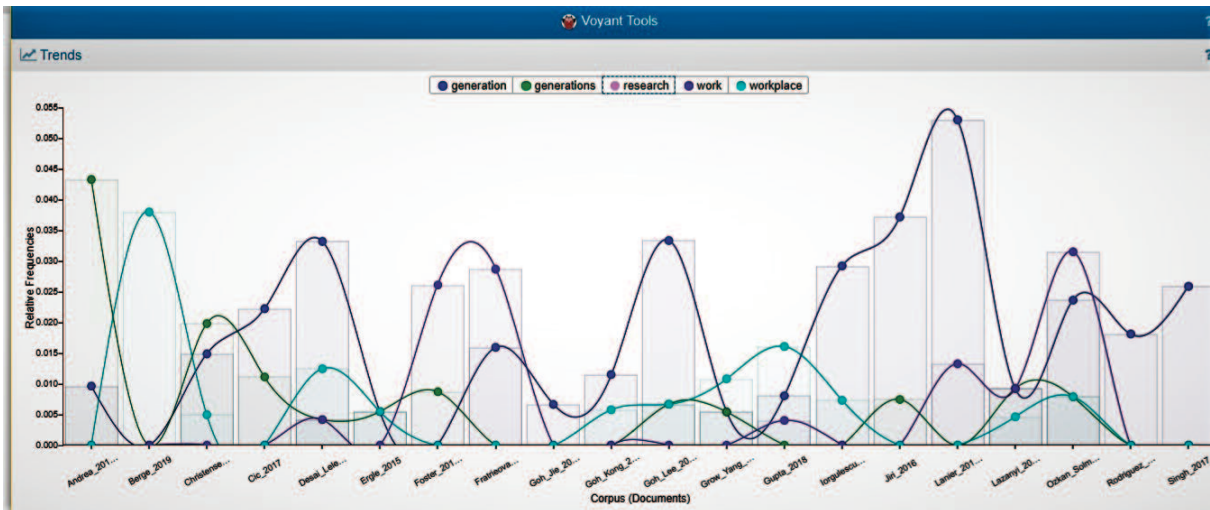
5 FINDINGS

There were four key terms that occurred most frequently, in the order, - generation, generations, work, and workplace. Interestingly, a further analysis of the frequency trends of these key terms revealed that ‘generations’, ‘work’, and ‘workplace’ occurred together more frequently (see table 2, and figure 1). The term ‘research’ was omitted from the analysis as it is understandable that it is a common term in peer-reviewed articles and may not necessarily add new meaning to the findings.

Table 1. Generation Z in workplace: summary of literature

Term	Frequency
Generation	66
Generations	24
Work	22
Workplace	19

Figure 1. Graphical representation of most frequently occurring terms



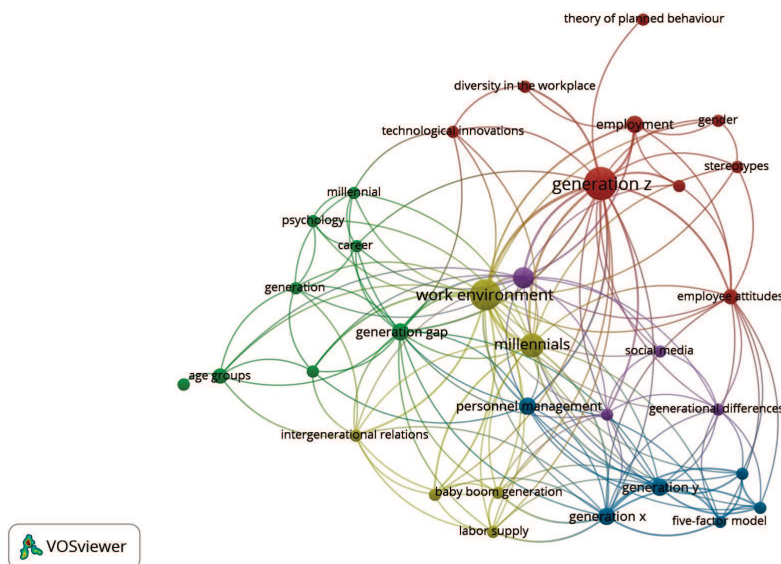
The co-occurrence of key word analysis revealed 33 key words that were organized in five clusters. These five clusters may be understood as the underlying research themes. The five clusters are : Generation Z characteristics, workforce expectations, Prevenient generation characteristics, inter-generational dynamics, and workplace transformation. The key words within each of these clusters extracted from co-occurrence analysis are summarized in table 3 below.

Table 3. Co-occurrence of key word analysis

Cluster	Key words
Cluster 1. Generation Z characteristics	Diversity in workplace, employee attitudes, employment, gender, Generation Z, inter-personal relations, stereotypes, technological innovation, theory of planned behavior
Cluster 2. Workforce expectations	Age group, career, generation, generation gap, industrial management, millennial, psychology, skill development
Cluster 3. Prevenient generation characteristics	Conflict management, five-factor model, generation x, generation y, personality, personnel management
Cluster 4. Inter-generational dynamics	Baby-boomer generation, inter-generational relations, labor supply, work environment
Cluster 5. Workplace transformation	Generational difference, social media, workplace

The social graph of the co-occurrence of key word analysis representing the clusters and associated key words is shown in figure 2.

Figure 2. Social graph of co-occurrence of key word analysis



6 DISCUSSION

The first research objective of this paper is to reveal the underlying research themes on workplace issues pertinent to Generation Z. The themes are organized into five clusters which are – ‘Generation z characteristics’, ‘workforce expectations’, ‘prevenient generation characteristics’, ‘intergenerational dynamics’, and ‘workplace transformation’.

6.1 CLUSTER 1. GENERATION Z CHARACTERISTICS

Every individual brings unique set of values, and aspirations to the workplace. Some of these values are shaped collectively for the generational cohort by the prevailing socio-political-economic conditions. Generation Z can be considered the first digital native generation, raised with technology. Thus, they bring in technological fluency to workplace, and use it extensively to collaborate with other workers in the organization (Lanier, 2017). Although, research on characteristics of this generation is still nascent, Christensen (2018) suggests that Generation Z is less optimistic towards work as their values have been strongly influenced by the global economic recessions in the recent past. Grow and Yang (2018) further compared the characteristics of Generation Z men and women. They found no notable difference in their career goals as both have similar career expectations such as development of creativity and communication skills, critical thinking, and time management. However, more men than women perceived that gender equity existed at workplace (Grow, & Yang, 2018).

6.2 CLUSTER 2. WORKFORCE EXPECTATIONS

Extant research acknowledges the difference in the values and therefore the work preferences between Generation Z and the preceding generations (Fratričová, & Kirchmayer, 2018). In line with their proclivity for being independent as well as high entrepreneurial motivation, and outcome orientation (Christensen, 2018), Generation Z values autonomy at work (Weidmer, 2015) which also includes non-traditional employment arrangement such as teleworking (Weidmer, 2015; Murray, 2013 as cited in Christensen, 2018). This inclination towards greater freedom at work is similar to what is observed among the millennial generation cohort (Weidmer, 2015). Fratričová and Kirchmayer (2018) address one of the first studies on work motivation of Generation Z employees. In doing so, they extend the current dialog on the traits and values of Generation Z to its relevance at workplace. Their literature review identifies the following as Generation Z motivators - opportunities for learning & professional development, financial rewards, work culture, and flexibility (Fratričová & Kirchmayer, 2018). A qualitative research study by these authors revealed work-person fit (eg. ‘enjoy work’, ‘having a sense of purpose’), relationships at work (with regards ‘team climate’, ‘conflict with coworkers’, ‘leadership’), work-related factors (such as ‘workload’, ‘equity of rewards’), achievement (performance appraisal, career growth, recognition) as some of the key motivators for Generation Z employees (Fratričová & Kirchmayer, 2018). However, suggesting the lack of generation gap, Jiří (2016) concludes that Generation Z does not have any generational preferences for a supervisors, and were willing to cooperate with employees across generations at work. However, leaders supporting their career aspirations and well-being were certainly valued.

6.3 CLUSTER 3. PREVENIENT GENERATION CHARACTERISTICS

Jiří (2016) posits that different generations represented at workforce today pose challenges for managers. Citing Cook (2015), Hammill (2005), and Wasserman (2007), Jiří (2016) suggests that the generational differences strongly exist with respect to views on values, family, education, monetary rewards, and work ethics. In this regard, Berge & Berge (2019) discuss three work related attributes of generation-x that precedes millennials, and Generation Z. The three attributes are : work ethics, preferred mode of acquisition of softskills, and preferred mode of acquisition of hardskills. They conclude that generation x workers do not engage in extra-role behavior, prefer to learn softskills through interaction, and discussion with peers, and acquire hardskills through on the job learning. Furthermore, this generation values education early in one’s career vis-à-vis Generation Z which espouses continuous learning through one’s active years in career (Selingo, 2018 as cited in Berge & Berge, 2019). In a similar study conducted at Air Baltic corporation in Latvia, Ergle (2015) argues that generation y (or the millennial) values internal communication in the organization, challenging tasks, feedback on performance, and recognition as being important for employee engagement. The antecedents to this proclivity for challenge, and recognition can be understood through the personality traits of the millennial generation - high self esteem (leading to need for recognition, taking up challenging assignments, and inclination for rewards- Brailovskaia & Bierhoff, 2018).

6.4 CLUSTER 4. INTERGENERATIONAL DYNAMICS

Extant research indicates a growing interest in understanding the working relationship between employees of different generations. Şenyuva (2018) suggests there are significant differences between value preferences of nurses belonging to baby boomers, generation y, and Generation Z. With respect workplace issues such as empowerment, and job satisfaction, a study by Couburn & Hall (2014) among registered nurses in USA suggests that nurses belonging to baby boomer generation perceived greater psychological empowerment at work over the younger generation. This also led to higher job satisfaction in this group. The characteristics of the different generational cohorts also affects the labor market. For example, Fordor and Jaeckel (2017), and later, Lazányi and Bilan (2017) study the impact of existing workforce belonging to generation x and millennials on the new entrants to the labor market-Generation Z. Generation x, and millennials have the necessary qualifications and the social ties to establish themselves in the labor market. This then affects the opportunities for Generation Z. While millennial and generation x remain more invested in their careers, Generation Z values greater flexibility at work or work-life balance. Thus, Generation Z's proclivity for greater freedom on the job coupled with generation X and Millennials' work ethics of staying committed to the organizations affects the availability of suitable labor/candidates in the job market.

6.5 CLUSTER 5. WORKPLACE TRANSFORMATION

Generation Z is the first global, most technologically literate, and socially empowered generation (Reeves & Oh, 2008 as cited in Desai & Lele, 2017). They are highly dependent on technology and are constantly connected to social media because they value rapid access to information. This proclivity for rapid access to information is also explained by specific characteristics of this generation - collaboration, freedom, scrutiny, fun, integrity, speed, and innovation (Tabscott, 2009:6 as cited in Desai & Lele, 2017). These traits are also well suited for modern organizations which are characterized by rapid changes to the industry and market structures, and evolution of technology (Grafton, 2011 as cited in Ghura, 2017). These characteristics of Generation Z, and their profound influence on the work environment makes them distinct from the other preceding generations.

6.6 FUTURE RESEARCH

The second research objective is to understand the interaction between these five research themes and set the direction for future research.

In the remainder of this section, we bring forward some areas for potential research that lie at the intersection of these domains. We will propose possible research directions between the themes Generation Z characteristics; and workforce expectations, prevenient generation characteristics, intergenerational dynamics, and workplace transformation.

GENERATION Z CHARACTERISTICS & WORKFORCE EXPECTATIONS

Generation Z entering the workforce poses new challenges for the organizations. Attracting, and retaining talent from this cohort will become important for organizations to build and leverage their competitive advantage. Identifying the key career anchors – preferences of Generation Z workforce should form the bases for the organization's human resource policy and practice. Initial research on this topic (Bohdziewicz, 2016) suggests that Generation Z employees value lifestyle choices over security. Furthermore, this cohort rejects the traditional vertical career path that is based on development of functional competencies. Another human resource practice that is significantly affected by the traits and expectations of Generation Z workers is recruitment and selection. Being the digital native generation, research indicates that organizations that use social media as a tool are successful at attracting Generation Z employees (Woźniak, 2016).

Furthermore, perceptions of organizational practices such as job rotation, employee development, and work-life balance may be different among men, and women. For example, Ansari, Jabeen, Moazzam, and Salman (2016) contend that such practices are perceived as being dated and being skewed towards the male employees in the organization. On the contrary, Hamid, Siadat, Reza, Arash, Ali, and Azizollah (2011) found no significant differences between men and women for their perceptions towards rewards, and motivation. There is a need to reconcile such differences in the literature, especially in studies that concern Generation Z workforce.

GENERATION Z CHARACTERISTICS & PREVENIENT GENERATION CHARACTERISTICS

The older employees (baby boomers) are leaving the organizations and younger workforce (Generation Z, and millennial) is replacing their ranks. Research suggests that the values across these generations vary. In certain industries like hospitality and tourism, high employee attrition from amongst the baby boomer and millennial employees has been a norm (Goh & Lee, 2018). On the contrary, Generation Z perceive a career in hospitality and

tourism industry more favorably with opportunities to travel, and challenging work. This then has significant implications for human resource planning in the organizations when forecasting the demand and supply of workforce belonging to Generation Z cohort. In a similar study, Bako (2018) investigated the preferences for leadership attributes across the generational cohorts. Attributes such as lacking in team spirit was rated more negatively by baby boomers than Generation Z. The leader's ability to resolve conflicts was rated highly Generation Z while it received less importance from generation y employees. Generation z valued charismatic leaders more than any of the previous generations. Thus, these studies seem to suggest that the preferences of preceding generation has seemingly minimal influence on the preferences of Generation Z employees. This then has significant implications for human resource practices and leadership in the organizations when they have workforce from across the generational cohorts.

GENERATION Z CHARACTERISTICS & INTERGENERATIONAL DYNAMICS

Intergenerational dynamics at workplace received considerable attention in literature (c.f. Wallace, 1956; McLoughlin, 2013; Howe & Strauss, 2007). Howard and Strauss (2007) suggest that even within a generation, individuals change during their lifetime. Furthermore, each succeeding generation in their early life seems to replicate the traits of their preceding generation in their mid-life years. While their study considered baby boomers, generation x, and generation y, Generation Z was not considered given their absence from the workforce at the time of this research study. This then poses an interesting question as to whether the values of Generation Z is likely to evolve/change over time? Will there be a difference in the values between the current cohort of Generation Z in the workforce, and the late entrants? When the research seems to be divided on the similarities or differences between the generational cohorts, it would be of considerable academic and managerial importance to understand when during their lifetime and careers does Generation Z start exhibiting dissimilarities with their preceding generation? Radulescu, Ghinea, and Cantaragiu (2018) investigated the intergenerational dynamics across 4 generational cohorts - silent generation, baby boomers, generation x, and generation y. Baby boomers were reported as being most difficult to interact with. The highest level of differences (with respect to work and workplace) were reported between generation x, and y employees. Lack of tolerance, and reluctance to accept others' perspective were reported to be the most significant reasons contributing to these differences. Social factors such as parenthood, relationship within family, and inclusion also contributed significantly towards these differences. Yet another factor contributing to inter-generational differences is culture. Yu (2003) suggests that significant differences exist between millennial and other generational cohorts who are working in Asian countries vis-a-vis western countries. In yet another study by Wyn (2012), significant differences exist between generation x employees belonging to Australia and Canada with respect to their perceptions of workplace practices and in general life. Extrapolating these findings to Generation Z poses an interesting question on what mechanisms would play a pivotal role in bridging the intergenerational gap between Generation Z and Generation Y, and millennial in the wake of changing societal conditions and for different cultural contexts.

GENERATION Z CHARACTERISTICS & WORKPLACE TRANSFORMATION

Modern organizations are structured around virtual global teams operating beyond the national and geographical boundaries. Improvements in communication, coupled with modern technology has powered the emergence of such organizations. This trend also poses challenges especially for people management. Issues such as managing diverse team of employees, developing a global mindset among the employees, and cultural intelligence become the focus of managerial decisions (Radostina & Renata, 2018). Technology has also facilitated knowledge management practices at firm level that lead to innovation (Sung & Choi, 2018). Generation z with its tendency to access information and adopt emerging technologies are equipped with skills and values required for modern organizations. There has been extensive research on Generation Z employees in the hospitality industry. Literature is silent on other industries. For example, research on leadership traits in millennial leaders working in information technology industry indicates that traits are a significant predictor of leader's performance (Bargavi, Samuel & Paul, 2017). Thus, identifying factors leading to person-job fit, and person-organization fit can shed further light on the aspirations of Generation Z, with implications for managing the human capital of the organization. Similarly, Anantatmula and Shrivastav (2012) note tensions between generation y and other employees of preceding generations in project-based organizations. Challenges for a project manager to develop team management practices for such diverse project teams is discussed.

A discussion on directions for future research is summarized in table 4 below.

Table 4. Directions for future research

Clusters	Proposed research themes					
	Generation z characteristics	Workforce expectations	Prevenient generation characteristics	Intergenerational dynamics	Workplace transformation	
Generation Z characteristics	X	Identifying the career anchors	The influence of previous generations over Generation Z with respect to perceptions of organization, and industry	Contrast and compare the characteristics of generational cohorts	Identifying the factors contributing to person-job fit, and person-organization fit between Generation Z and the modern competitive organization.	
		Adapting the channels of recruitment and selection to align with the Generation Z employee preferences		Perceptions of leadership across the generations in an organization		Identifying factors that explain similarities or differences between generational cohorts
		Reconciling differences in the literature towards perceptiosn of organizational practices among men and women.		Tracking the values of early and late Generation Z employees- determining factors that may lead to changes in the generation’s values across their career span.		
				Determining social factors that significantly shape the values and therefore the work ethics of generation z.	Implications for leader’s effectiveness when managing Generation Z employees	
				Identifying tensions contributing to inter-generational conflicts and implications in diverse teams such as projects, and in different cultural contexts.		

7 ACADEMIC AND MANAGERIAL CONTRIBUTION

The findings of this qualitative study have implications for both academics and practitioners. From the academic standpoint, this study sets the initial tone for a structured investigation of workplace issues relevant to an emergent workforce. This study also points to commonalities across the research themes that are useful to frame the appropriate research questions. In doing this, this paper goes beyond the more commonly researched question- are there differences in what generational cohorts value in their work context (Lester, Standifer, Schultz & Windsor, 2012). The use of co-occurrence of key words as a technique is not common in the study of generational cohorts. Meaningful co-occurrence clusters suggesting clear research themes have emerged. This reflects the growing body of research on Generation Z. Using a clustering technique such as co-occurrence of key words and following it through with the construction of a social graph reveals the interconnected flow of research ideas (Assefa & Rorissa, 2013).

There are more generations in today's workforce than ever before, and this poses challenges for human resource management professionals. Every generation has generalities and characteristics which are unique. Human resource management professionals through (human resource) practices help organizations to overcome these challenges of diversity and leverage the contributions that each generational cohort offers (Amaya & Gedro, 2014). This study brings forward expectations of Generation Z from their workplace. These expectations can be translated to human resource practices such as identifying appropriate career anchors, maintaining person-job fit & person-organization fit, and meeting the learning needs of this workforce. Understanding the expectations of this group also has significant implications for the organization's culture. The interaction between Generation Z and employees of different (generational) cohort, differences in their core values, and technology prominently influence the organization's culture. Organizational leaders have a role to leverage the opportunities brought about by these changes. This study points towards certain hotspots- intergenerational conflicts, using the appropriate leadership style, building a positive image of leadership, and creating a competitive organization in the wake of employee diversity. All of these issues have been called to attention and further research in our analysis.

8 CONCLUSION

Generation Z has begun to enter the workforce that is still dominated by the millennials and their preceding generation. As with every generation, their life experiences will shape what is most important to them and their perceptions of work. This study explored the themes underlying the research on generation z at workplace. There is a growing body of research that explains the values associated with Generation Z. To a lesser extent, we also see research that compares these values across generations when they work together in organizations. Research that focuses on the implications for human resource practices in organizations, and an academic interest to bring forward issues relevant to workplace may have been wanting. Our study aims to bridge this research gap. We outline specific research topics that concern Generation Z, and, their interaction with their work and work environment. We believe that this research direction will lead to continuation of dialog and further work on this emerging workforce.

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Journal of HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

www.jhrm.eu • ISSN 2453-7683

Motivation process during the economic crisis: The evidence of Greek structural design engineers

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ABSTRACT

During the period of 2008-2017 the work environment in Greece changed in a great number of organizations due to the devastating outcomes of the financial crisis. This sudden change of organization, in political and economic contexts generated new topics in the field of organizational research. To look into that concept, an empirical research was conducted within the Greek structural design Engineers. The aim of this paper is to investigate the motivation process at the workplace during the economic crisis. Generally, employee motivation has been studied and analyzed by dozens of scholars who apparently have exhausted the subject, others created theories and others did empirical research. The current research focuses on the in-depth analysis of a small group of employees (qualitative research) in a workplace with a strong influence of the current crisis.

KEY WORDS

Motivation, economic crisis, Greece, motivation, schematic presentation, HR management

JEL Code: M12

Manuscript received 21 January 2019

Accepted after revisions 14 June 2019

1 INTRODUCTION

Motivation is a force which acts in each man making him act in one way or another. Different assumptions result in various motivation theories. The classic motivation theories in the management context are American (Maslow, McClelland, Herzberg etc.) and they reflect the culture in which they were developed. The American motivation theories reflect the cultural environment of the United States of their day. Most of the theorists were middle-class intellectuals, so their theories reflect the national intellectual middle-class culture background of 19th and 20th century. This period covers a period of rapid economic growth (1865-1928), the Wall street crash (1929), the Great Depression period (1930-1940), World War I (1940-1945). The second half of the twentieth century was a time of high economic growth (1945-1964), sexual freedom and drugs, while the concept of 1980's based on huge consumption of money and goods. In general, it was a period of economic growth and recovery.

In Greece during the current economic crisis, the biggest issue, with no doubt, is the sharp increase in unemployment. The unemployment rate was around 10% in the first half of the previous decade. In May 2008, the unemployment rate reached the highest level of the last decade (6.6% of the workforce). Then it began to grow as the country plunged into the recession. In May 2013, the number of unemployed was almost 1.4 million and the unemployment rate was 27.5%, while the corresponding rates in the other European countries were much lower: 26.3% in Spain, 17.2% in Portugal, 13.5% and 12.1% in Ireland and Italy respectively (Eurostat, 2013).

2 MAPPING MOTIVATION RESEARCH

The systematic review of existing literature highlights the different approaches to motivation in the workplace. After carefully studying the research work on motivation and related theories, we have come to the following categorization of the theoretical approaches:

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1. *Motivation Theories (Content vs. Process theories)*

Content theories of motivation are based on the assumption that all people have a similar set of (unchanged) human needs and behave to meet these needs. Meeting these needs is a motivation factor. At the other hand Process theories consider that the behavior of the employees is determined and shaped by both the external environment and the individual. It is the individual who will eventually decide on how to behave and determine the intensity of the effort he will make in his work. Process theories assume that although the needs of individuals are similar, the importance and weight of them are different for the individuals (dynamic view), quite subjective and lead to different behaviors.

2. *Extrinsic / intrinsic motivation factors*

A large part of the literature on work motivation has been developed around the distinction between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. External motivation concerns the formation and maintenance of a particular behavior linking it to specific (and desirable by the employee) benefits. Intrinsic motivation, on the other hand, results from the inner, psychological needs of the individual and their satisfaction through work (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The behavior with intrinsic/ internal motivation is observed when there is no apparent reward other than the activity itself (Deci, 1975).

3. *The dynamic and multiple character of motivation*

Motivation in workplace is one of the most discussed subjects in organizational studies, and more generally in social sciences. As an object in direct relation to human behavior and internal psychological and cognitive processes, motivation is directly influenced by the specific environment in which each person operates (socio-economic, environment-work environment). Despite the many related theories and approaches that have been developed and the many studies that have been conducted, no approach to work motivation has so far been able to offer a satisfactory holistic interpretation of the phenomenon (Latham, 2011), in order to develop a unified theory (ground theory). Hitka and Balazova (2015) point out in their research that motivation factors vary according to:

- a) human needs,
- b) social conditions and lifestyle, and
- c) the internal and external environment of the company (Mikro-Makro environment).

2.1 MOTIVATION DURING AN ECONOMIC CRISIS

The motivation generally at work as a subject to be studied has been explored by many scholars during the years worldwide. The uniqueness of each employee, his interaction with the working environment and the management team, the social context of each age and the changing needs of the individual in it, make it difficult to find the "absolute" motivation factors, effective for every employee. At the same time above conditions give an interest in any new work whose setting its own research framework (research sample, current socio-economic conditions) illuminates and analyzes another aspect of the "motivation" phenomenon party space.

In the years 2010-2015, due to the global economic crisis, studies focus on changes in motivation factors due to this. The need for security that the employees were looking for in the workplace at the time is something that is highlighted in all studies on motivation during the crisis, mainly by the team of Hitka and Sirotiakova (2011), Bakanauskiene and Ubartas (2012), Zavadsky et al. (2015), Hitka and Balazova (2015), Hitka et al (2015) from Slovakia and the Czech Republic. In the work of Hitka et al. (2015) it is stated that employees enjoy the appreciation from the company and that could act as a motive. Zavadski et al. (2015) proposed the interaction with the management team as an alternative way of motivation, while communication within the organization is ranked third.

Hitka et al. (2015) report internal communication as a potential motivation factor (at no cost), that companies should not ignore. Employees are looking for support from the organization and open communication. They are looking for a leader to inspire them, and together they will go out and out of the crisis. Good relations with colleagues, good working conditions are ranked in high positions among the motivation factors during the crisis (Hitka & Sirotiakova, 2011). In Jelacic (2011, Croatia), the education factor was in the third place between the motivation factors, considering it as a professional asset for the post-crisis era. In several surveys during the economic crisis (Hitka & Sirotiakova, 2011; Hitka & Balazova, 2015; Zavadsky et al., 2015) an equity motivation factor and a fair assessment system are highlighted and discussed.

At last, I would like to refer to two surveys, which took place in Greece at about the same time, considering different target population, and have resulted in completely different results, which seem to ignore the current intense and prolonged economic crisis.

The first survey, Chatzopoulou et al. (2015) took place in the Regional Unit of Grevena (Western Macedonia) in April 2014, the sample consisted of 85 local government employees and as independent variables gender, age, educational level of employees and hierarchy within the organization were used.

The survey concluded that in the current period of economic downturn, employees (permanent) employees in Local Government indicate as factors of motivation and satisfaction the following (in order of priority):

- a) interesting work,
- b) equal and fair treatment,
- c) objective assessment, and
- d) satisfactory salary.

While the eleventh position shows the factor of security and stability at work.

The second research by Grammatikopoulos et al. (2013) took place in the field of mental health professionals. Four categories of health professionals (doctors, nurses, administrators, other employees) who worked in two psychiatric hospitals (Thessaloniki and Corfu) participated. The results of the study have shown the most important factors of motivation in the field:

- a) meaningful work,
- b) respect, and
- c) good interpersonal relationships at the workplace.

3 OBJECTIVES OF THIS STUDY

The subject we are examining and focusing on is the wider field of HR management, leadership- employee's motivation and especially under conditions of an economic crisis. The research focused on a specific professional team: the Structural Design Engineers and especially those who work with a dependent employment within a firm. The current research attempted to investigate the impact of an economic crisis on the motivation factors in the work environment.

The individual objectives of the current survey are set at two levels. On the first level, there is an overview of motivation and motivational factors, based on a literature review of existing research work. At the second level, the study tried to explore the potential changes in the content and importance of motivational factors related to the economic circumstances and the particular characteristics of the target population.

4 METHODOLOGY – GROUNDED THEORY

The research was integrated in two phases:

Phase A

Literature review (theories and researches) based on a dynamic approach to needs

Phase B

On field research was done using a qualitative method, a small sample (12 workers in total) and semi-structured face to face interviews. The respondents worked as civil engineers in two consultancies: A (Building Design Projects) and B (Bridge Design Projects).

The present qualitative research is informed by a *constructivist* grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2000, 2006, 2009) which is a modification of the classic grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The grounded theory approach aims to create a conceptual framework that is grounded in the data rather than to verify an existing one. Strauss and Corbin (1990) explain that by using the grounded theory approach “a theory is inductively derived from the study of the phenomenon it represents. That is, it is discovered, developed, and provisionally verified through systematic data collection, analysis, and theory stand in reciprocal relationship with each other.

Grounded theory is well suitable with the research aim of this study - to describe and explore the construction of motivation process within structural design consultancy field. The design of the study is not based on predetermined assumptions about the content, meaning, and functions of the employee motivation. However, it is inevitable for all researchers to have former knowledge of their field of study. The previous knowledge about motivation concept does not function as a lens constraining my inquiry; on the contrary, it enables me to have a wider knowledge concerning the motivation in workplace.

The classic grounded theory is grounded on the assumption that reality is single, and researcher can discover it (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Many scholars characterize the classic grounded theory as “objectivist” because it sees the researcher as having “a separate, unbiased, unobtrusive, researcher role in collecting and analyzing data and focus on the content of expressed verbalizations and observable behaviors” (Lal et al., 2012). In the classic grounded theory, the theory that emerges is assumed to be an objective portrait of the reality and independent from the researcher (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

The **constructivist grounded theory** (Charmaz, 2000, 2006) differs from the classic (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) grounded theory approach in its beliefs about reality and the role of researcher. The constructivist grounded theory

approach assumes that a) there is not a single reality but multiple (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005), and b) reality is not discovered by the researcher, but co-constructed between the researcher and the people under study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). The constructivist grounded theory accepts the subjectivity of researchers and their role in the co-construction of reality. Charmaz (2006) points out that the theory that emerged from data is not separate from the researchers, but they “construct ... [the] grounded theories through ... [their] past and present involvements and interactions with people, perspectives and the research practices”.

The present study follows a *constructivist* grounded theory approach because its ontological and epistemological assumptions are compatible and suitable with the corresponding assumptions of the present research.

4.1 TARGET POPULATION – THE SAMPLE

Initially, the employees, six civil engineers of company A, were selected. In this company the researcher had a long working experience. At the time of the interviews (2012-2013), we no longer belonged to the body of employees, but our privileged access to this area allowed for an in-depth understanding of respondents' answers.

Six more employees were selected by company B. Company B was chosen because, unlike A, its client was the Greek public sector. Initially, we had assumed that B's employees would have less insecurity given the nature of their clientele.

Company A mainly deals with private sector business/buildings (hotel units, warehouses, residences, commercial developments) while company B mainly deals with the public and design of concrete bridges projects. Company A has a wider range of projects, smaller budget projects, shorter-term studies, and it is dependent on private initiative. Company B, on the other hand, is fully specialized in the subject of its studies, has a small number of projects, but has a long duration and budget and is fully dependent on the public sector.

In this study, knowing that the specimen is not representative, sampling will be used without probability and, more particularly, *convenience* sampling. Convenience sampling is a sampling method that utilizes participants that are available to the researcher due to accessibility (Bryman & Bell, 2011: 190). The participants were familiar to the author from before. Nevertheless, the participants were primarily chosen for the research because of their relevance for the research question and not simply because of their accessibility to the author. This type of sampling is used in pilot surveys, where there is no intention of generalizing the results. In this sampling, people close to the researcher are selected and represent a common feature that is attempted to study (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2008). The above type of sampling is chosen as the most appropriate because of the researcher's access to research facilities due to his work in the specific consultancy in the past.

The sample of the survey was 12 employees, 5 men and 7 women who have worked as Structural Design Engineers for 3 to 15 years, 6 worked in company A and 6 in company B. The sample, all the individuals have a higher level education (5 year study diploma) and 3 of them hold a postgraduate degree. They are 30-45 years old. The majority (9 employees) were born outside Athens and moved to Athens to find a job.

Table 1: Interviews Schedule

Before crisis
Would you please describe in short your life until now?
Tell me about your family, your childhood, your studies, and your decision to look for a job in Athens.
Please describe how working at company A /B was.
Describe your role, your responsibilities.
Are you happy working here?
During crisis
Please describe what the first days of the crisis within the organization were like.
How would you describe the leadership within your firm during the economic collapse of 2008?
Please take me into a positive experience that stemmed from the recession.
Please take me into a negative experience that stemmed from the recession
Please describe your thoughts, feelings and perceptions you experienced during the months following the economic collapse.
Please describe your thoughts, feelings and perceptions you experienced during the months following the economic collapse
Have your thoughts, goals, or behavior, both personally and within the organization changed in any way due to economic crisis?
Would you please describe the most transforming moment through the entire experience of the economic crisis.

4.2 COLLECTING DATA – INTERVIEWS

Interviewing - and particularly the semi-structured technique – is the most widely used method. (Silverman, 2010). The use of interviews in a grounded theory approach is an appropriate and suitable method for data collection (Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Charmaz, 2006; Creswell, 2002; Silverman, 2010) and complements other methods such as participant observation. I decided to include the technique of face to face semi-structured interviews in the design of the study in order to gain deep understanding of group members' ideas, perceptions, and meanings.

Prior to entering the field, I designed a semi-structured interview guide (See Table 1) with few, broad and open-ended questions that would enable the group members to offer their own perspectives, but also allow unexpected accounts and stories to emerge (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002).

Before each interview I ensured employees of their anonymity, confidentiality and also provided them with the opportunity to ask any questions. Finally, I asked - and all employees agreed - if I could record their interview. During interviews I also took notes, but I stopped whenever I felt that note-taking was distracting either me or the participant. The interviews were conducted in Greek and typically lasted between 50 minutes and one hour and fifteen minutes. After each interview I kept a short record about the interviewing experience with each member, ideas, impressions, and incidents that emerged during the interview.

The interviews took place in 2013 and were completed in the second half of the year. The selected employees worked there before the start of the crisis (2008) until December 2012. This restriction was deemed necessary to delimit and stabilize the sample of the research given the continuing rate of reductions in the sector.

ANALYZING THE DATA

Initially the interviews were transcribed in a high level of detail and the transcripts were checked for accuracy. The data analysis was an emergent, iterative process. The data analysis includes a thematic approach (Riessman, 2003) in which the emphasis is “on the content of the data” – in “what was said”. Thematic analysis, along with grounded theory requires more involvement and interpretations from the researcher's side (Guest et al, 2012). The authors state that thematic analysis shifts away from the counting of explicit words or phrases and turns the attention to identifying and describing the implicit and explicit ideas within the data, these being the themes. Codes generated in the process are usually developed to identify the themes and linked to the raw data as summarizing elements for later analysis (Guest et al, 2012). The reason for why thematic analysis was chosen for the main method of data analysis for this research, was that thematic analysis can be said to be the most useful method for catching the complexities of meaning in a textual data set (Guest et al, 2012). Moreover, it is also the most common method of analysis utilized in qualitative research. Furthermore, the process of thematic analysis allows for guideline-oriented, problem-centered, and focused interviews. (Kuckartz, 2014).

The process begins by initial work with the text, which indicates that the text produced from the interviews is carefully read and particularly important passages of it are highlighted (Kuckartz, 2014,). In the next phase the coding process begins, and the second step is to develop the main topical categories. These topics usually stem from the research question and have already impacted the way in which the data has been collected. According to the author, in the first coding process the researcher works through the text in a sequential manner and assigns text passages to categories. After the main coding process the text passages should be compiled to each of the main categories, and subcategories should be determined for categories that the researcher wants to differentiate. Once the sub-categories have been defined, the second coding process can begin. Here, coded text passages within each main category are now assigned to newly constructed subcategories. The final, and important, phase of the process is the analysis and presentation of results. (Motivation Factors during economic crisis).

In practice the process was executed as follows.

- 1) Firstly, the transcripts were reviewed and important sentences or phrases, in relation to the research question were highlighted.
- 2) Then, all the highlighted sentences were organized under each question to be able to review their similarities and differences. Following from this, the data was reviewed again to construct first order concepts.
- 3) After this, the data was viewed again to see what second order concept could be derived from the found first order concepts and to examine if more first order concepts would be found.
- 4) After the formation of the second order themes, the aggregate dimensions/core categories were formed based on what would simply describe each theme found.

As the form of analysis is thematic analysis, the first order concepts, second order themes and finally aggregate dimensions/Core categories are closely related, and constructed, based on what surfaced many times from the data. The process is presented in Table 2 and is related to that of employee motivation during economic crisis, as it is the core of this study and of the research question.

5 RESULTS – MOTIVATION FACTORS DURING ECONOMIC CRISIS

This Research work explored the motivation in a dynamic environment, taking into account the socio-economic context in which the research was conducted. In order to achieve this, a qualitative research with twelve personal face to face semi-structured interviews was conducted. There are *eight* distinct conclusions that can be drawn in relation to the sources of work motivation.

First of them is that employees during economic crisis are motivated by **social aspects at work**. The socialization can be with the management team and / or with colleagues, and equal importance is placed on both kinds of socialization. The motivation factor of stability and security has been replaced by the satisfaction of the need to belong to a social / workplace.

Second factor that was presented to be of importance for the motivation employed in this specific period that, namely, managers voice their **appreciation towards their employees**. This aspect was valued very highly, even among those women who felt like they never receive praise for their work, or whose managers simply do not show their appreciation towards their staff. This was in some cases valued even more than receiving additional compensation. The participants who had received appreciation, continued to appreciate it and acknowledge its impact on their work motivation.

Third, it is clear that the **management and leadership** styles that are adopted by a firm business and its management will have a determining effect on the motivation level, the morale and the job satisfaction of the employees. Nevertheless, the relationship between the management style that is used within the business and the level of motivation within the workforce is a subject of much debate within industry. In many circles, there is continuous debate about whether leaders are born or developed. Reflecting on the discussions about motivation, it is evident that humans are very complicated and are made up of a number of traits. With motivation, these influences are both inherited and acquired from our environment and influences. It is in this regard that the study seeks to establish the role of leadership on employee motivation. The characteristics of the good boss (as a motivating factor) have been greatly modified from a "person responsible and man with knowledge and skills to solve any technical problem at work" and turned into "the one who will discuss with their employees their daily problems, support and will be their link with the management team".

The success of every organization depends on its employees' drive to thrive through their efforts, commitment, engagement, practice and persistence. Thus, motivation is an important topic because leadership competencies include the ability to motivate employees as one of the crucial duties or jobs. Leadership begins with the initial effort made to recruit a new employee; proceeds through the entire induction process; and continues every day until the employee departs the organization. This process is cultivated by a manager/leader, motivating new employees and it highlights, once again, the importance of leadership in an organization. The quality of a manager's relationship with an employee is the most powerful element of employee motivation. It creates a professional, positive and respectful attitude and employees are more likely to adopt a similar approach with their peers and enjoy work

Fourth conclusion that can be drawn is that feedback and **communication** is tremendously important for employees. They tend to value the feedback received from their colleagues, managers. Feedback is also very closely related to the amount of work motivation that employee feel. Feedback indicates how they do their work and without indications of this work motivation is harder to achieve. Communication with the management team, information about their plan and their schedule to deal with the crisis is fundamental for employees and their wiring in this. The need for communication / information from management on the current situation, future actions and plans to exit the crisis has emerged as a key driver of motivation.

Fifth a form of **social equality / sharing** of economic losses act as a factor of motivation. The financial difficulties combined with the parallel reduction of income they face make them feel socially degraded while their employers still hold their position. Employees are looking to see the consequences of economic losses on their employers as well.

Sixth, a situation that might easily be overlooked when considering work motivation, but proved to be of significance, is simply thriving at work, **good working environment**. Enjoying what you do and principally enjoying going to work is something that proved to be important for achieving work motivation. It can be said that thriving at work might be a result from other aspects being "in order", but generally enjoying going to work is something that affects the overall sensation of work motivation.

Next conclusion, the potential of **development** was also an important element when considering work motivation. Being able to develop within the work that you do, through job rotation or education courses, was identified as one of the primary motivators among the participants. The theoretical framework also supports the importance of personal development when trying to achieve work motivation. Therefore, the importance of possibility for development cannot be overlooked. Even though the factor continued personal development is important especially for those employees of lower hierarchy scale (younger engineers).

Finally, employees found the **characteristics of the job** (interesting job, personal responsibility for the result, which requires knowledge and skills and can be fulfilled from start to finish) which continue to motivate the employees, are important to have an influence on their work motivation, but their strength decreased because of the difficulties faced

during this period. Nevertheless, they were greatly appreciated and experienced as motivating to be able to influence the work. Variance/interesting job are also something that was identified as a quality within work that motivates women. Not wanting to do the same tasks and things day after day was strongly indicated. Job rotation, varied job tasks and -situations were identified to be especially motivating. Prior research supports this notion as a key motivation factor.

Moreover, financial rewards did not prove to be among the top motivators for the employees during the economic crisis. It was stated many times that when other aspects are in order, money has very little motivational impact in the specific environment. The money incentive replaced a (possible) fixed monthly compensation of the employee.

Table 2: Analyzing Data

Non-Monetary Motivators		
First Order Concept	Second Order Concept	Core Categories
Co-worker support and interaction Time at work goes quickly and creatively Not anxious going to work Staying at home is boring Been doing the same job for years Working is important for them	Interaction with other people Happy to work Importance of work	Social needs
Increased responsibility at work Signaling appreciation Full working hours Be proud of your work Design of known buildings	Your effort is being noticed Comments on the quality of work	Appreciation
Co-workers feedback Manager comments Freedom to execute	Comments on the quality of work	
Looking for a confident and skillful leader A leader who support the employees Leader with action plan Leader who will inspire them A leader who will analyze the situation and then act	Employees looking for a leader with skills, willing to lead them out of the crisis	Leadership
Supportive manager A manager with understanding A manager who can discuss with them A manager who will be their connection with the management team	Manager	
Be informed about the future plans Know what the management team thinks Is there any action plan? What is the financial situation? I want to be faced honestly.....	Communication at all levels Discussion with employees	Communication

Table 2: Analyzing Data (continued)

First Order Concept	Second Order Concept	Core Categories
Unequal contribution of economic losses They continue to lead a luxury life Economic status is the same as pro-crisis Just their profit reduced Go on holidays but don't pay our salaries We face economic problems They don't care about these	Employees looking for equity They feel a form of social inequality	Equity
Personal responsibility for the outcome Can accomplish from start to finish Job that requires knowledge and skills Independence at work Autonomy	Responsibility Knowledge and Skills Independence Variance/interesting job	Job characteristics as intrinsic motivation quality at work
Fair balance work/personal life Freedom of initiative Correlation rewards/personal targets Support and understanding of employee's needs I want to be faced honestly.....	Working conditions Relationships between employees	Working environment
Improve myself every day Develop at work everyday Exploit my scientific knowledge Gain experience - expand my knowledge Refresh existing knowledge	Continue working on my profession Develop my knowledge	Professional development
Money as Motivators		
Demanding nature of the job Mean to achieve an end Importance of money recognized Motivation found from other sources	Money as a primary motivator Money as a second order motivator	Overall motivational Effect of money

6 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 PROPOSALS TO MANAGEMENT

As proposed management measures that will strengthen the specific motivation factors the followings are suggested:

- 1) Verbal praises, that emphasize the appreciation of the employee work offered. Developing a climate of collaboration between management and employees and mutual support and appreciation.
- 2) Work environment, where calm and good relations between colleagues predominate.
- 3) Manager supportive and understanding of the employee personal / family problems.
- 4) A sense of security in the workplace (as far as feasible).
- 5) Opportunities for progress and development / education. Organizing internal seminars where the existing knowledge in the organization will spread between older and younger employees and the team's working relationships will become stronger.
- 6) Open communication and interaction with the organization's management. Organizing meetings and discussing the latest developments.

- 7) Organization of social events within the firm will stimulate links between management and employees.

6.2 REFLEXIVITY

An important feature of qualitative research is “the process of reflecting critically on the self as researcher” (Guba & Lincoln, 2005) that is called reflexivity. Reflexivity plays an important role in the constructivist grounded theory approach since this approach views the researcher not as an objective or neutral observer but as part of the world that is studied (Charmaz, 2005). The constructivist grounded theory acknowledges the subjectivity of the researcher - the researcher co-constructs reality with the people who participate in the study (Charmaz, 2006) - and encourages the researcher to reflect on the effects she/he might bring in the study (Neill, 2006). Author's reflexivity starts with the understanding of the assumptions and values that he/she brings in the research process.

6.3 LIMITATIONS OF CURRENT RESEARCH AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The current research has several limitations. The first limitation regards the role of the researcher during the field work and the potential impact in the research process. A second limitation is that research took place in the setting of a time and place of the employees' group that may differ in terms of purpose and structure from other workgroups. The findings are not easily transferable to other settings although they could offer useful insights in studying employee motivation, in general. This last limitation produces a recommendation for future research to include additional employees' groups in the single study. The comparison between different workgroups could enable a more fruitful exploration of the role of motivation. A third limitation regards issues like power relations that are not addressed in the study. Future research should explicitly take them into consideration since power relations could further enhance our understanding of motivation in workplace (Zanoni et al., 2010).

6.4 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

The current study attempts to make a contribution in the field of motivation in workplace. Taking into consideration the suggestions of several scholars (Hitka and Sirotiakova, 2011; Hitka and Balazova, 2015; Zavadsky et al., 2015), who point out the need for additional research on employee motivation in the workplace. The research findings position the present study along other studies in the literature that emphasize the multiple character of motivation.

6.5 PROPOSALS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The current research examines the motivation factors in the field of structural design and was conducted in Athens (commercial and financial center of Greece) during the period 2008-2012 using the qualitative research method.

During the third stage of crisis, the stage of maturation, the symptoms are obvious. The organization is forced to do something to save everything. At this stage, the organization tries to "cure" the various symptoms that arise from the crisis while the crisis has become part of the body functioning and coexisting with it. Based on the findings of the current research, the survey could be repeated in the same population as described above using a larger sample and the quantitative method of analysis (using questionnaires and statistical analysis), trying to verify the assumptions of this work.

A related workplace (with similar work and working/social characteristics) is that of lawyers working in large companies who could be investigated checking the validity of the findings of the current research. The recording of similarities and differences would lead to the extension of the conclusions in the field of higher education employees. Also the research could be extended to sectors with completely different labor and social characteristics, such as sellers, a place where a large proportion of workers are employed and are heavily facing the consequences of the economic crisis. It would also be interesting to extend the survey to public sector workers, where labor conditions have changed significantly over the last few years due to the necessary reforms to it, which followed the signing of economic memoranda.

A research challenge would also be to extend this research to the "tomorrow" employees - the current students of Greek universities. It would be interesting to look for motivation factors in an almost "dead" labor market. Schools such as those of Civil Engineering and Business Administration, whose graduates will have a major job search problem, are believed to be interesting target populations. Finally, exploring leadership in times of economic crisis in connection with motivation and communication within business would lead to interesting and constructive executives for executives.

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Journal of HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

www.jhrm.eu • ISSN 2453-7683

The influence of high commitment HR practices on employees' behaviors under perceived organizational support and affective commitment

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ABSTRACT

Employee engagement and employee's innovative work behavior is extremely necessary for all organizations in this technological era of time. Organizational development and competency depends upon the employee's innovation and productive behavior. A model has been developed that suggests the connection between high commitment HR practices and affective commitment with employee engagement and innovative work behavior where perceived organizational support has the moderating effect between the relationship of HCHRP and affective commitment. The study has been conducted using a sample of 209 respondents. Respondents work as middle staff, management, top management and executive management in corporate sectors.

KEY WORDS

innovative work behavior, employee engagement, perceived organizational support, high commitment HR practices, affective commitment and organizational management

JEL Code: M12

Manuscript received 5 December 2018

Accepted after revisions 8 July 2019

1 INTRODUCTION

Job engagement creates very auspicious results for companies, and it is not an easy task to get the employees engaged (Rich, Lepine & Crawford, 2010). Sixty-seven percent of workers surveyed were seen either not engaged with their work or not engaged energetically with their tasks, however only 33 % of workers surveyed were found to be engaged with their assigned tasks (Endres & Mancheno-Smoak, 2008). The results draw extensive attention to the issue, mainly to find the substitute means of recollecting job engagement. Kahn (1990: 694) well-defined the engagement as "the identities to the work parts; in commitment, persons engaged also show themselves bodily, cognitively and passionately throughout role presentations". The engagement is a developing work attitude that processes the emotional existence as well as the participation of workers (Wefald, 2012). By way of engagement assertiveness is reflected, the administrations need to explore the methods of raising the engagement. High commitment Human Resource practices contain many staffing plus assortment practices, work plan, as well as motivation practices which places emphasis on rising workers' lasting investment in the organization (Collins & Smith, 2006). The selection of the Human Resource system can, therefore inspire or discourage workers. In order to affect the behavior of employees and to motivate them positively, the firms should choose a system that inspires these ideal worker actions (Khilji & Wang, 2006). High commitment Human Resource practices raise an excellent association with workers depending on mutuality as well as interdependence (Wei, Han & Hsu, 2010). Famous media articles and corporate advisors said that assured workers contribute businesses competitive benefits (Burke & Ng, 2006). Novel creativities depend greatly on workers' social wealth and manners at the workplace as the basic contributions in the worth formation procedure (Chen & Huang, 2009). There remains a great interest of scholars in knowing what factors influence the innovative behavior of employees at work (Dorenbosch et al., 2005). Research shows that there are various factors that are the antecedents of innovative behavior of individuals at work. They commonly include the individual plus circumstantial features. Current studies mostly focused on practices of human resource management: contracting and assortment (Lepak, Bartol & Erhardt, 2005), payment

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policies (Fernandez & Pitts, 2011; Tan & Nasurdin, 2011), work plan (Dorenbosh, van Engen & Verhagen, 2005), management (Scott & Bruce, 1994), as the precursors of inventive work performance. Innovative behavior is much important for the firms because firms are facing huge demand from their environment to engage in innovative work behavior.

To compete with other organizations innovative work behavior is of utmost necessity, otherwise organization may face a huge loss. In Pakistan, the environment of absence of innovative work behavior and inappropriate use of HR practices are destroying many companies (Wood & de Menezes, 1998). By using the innovative procedures and approaches, a firm can attain the goals and ordinary innovations, and can ultimately achieve the competitive advantage (Birdi & Patterson, 2006). Innovative behavior at work depends on "ordinary invention" innovative efforts intentionally value the workers to provide outcomes (Janssen, 2000). To uphold the competitive advantage, a critical component is innovative behavior at work because through this an organization can respond rapidly to the economic changes (Hitt, Keats & DeMarie, 1998). Many scholars believe that with the proper policies and support even ordinary workers can make the strongly inventive performance at work (Evans & Waite, 2010), then creative behavior at work can be completed, accepted, observed and oppressed for the assistance of organization as well as their personnel (Dul, Ceylan & Jaspers, 2011). High commitment HR practices play an important role to encourage creativity, new innovation by improving the worker's skill (Dul & Ceylan, 2011). The accomplishment or letdown of an association greatly depends upon the HR (Baron & Kreps, 1999). High commitment HR practices definitely forecast innovative work behavior. Innovative behavior at work has four phases, recognizing the chances or difficulties, generating the new concepts, discovering assistance for novel ideas and then finally the execution of concepts (De Jong & Den Hartog 2010). Still, innovative work behavior may be broken or sometimes may include the combination of such activities (Scott & Bruce, 1994). Capitalizing on staff's principals to improve happiness at work, better worker assurance, and assignation, and behaviors that are nested in a cooperative, influential routine (Pauwe, Wright & Guest, 2013), and the procedures and circumstances under which the tasks are attained, persist mainly unidentified (Boon & Kalshoven, 2014).

On the bases of aforementioned discussion, it is argued that the worker's emotional assurance, which fosters the job engagement and innovative work behavior, through the high commitment HR practices as high commitment HR practices control emotional contacts of employees. High-commitment human resource management systems consist of different human resource practices that influence the abilities, motivation, and opportunities of individuals. According to various literature, ability-enhancing (selective staffing and extensive working out), inspiration improving (incentive-based recompense and presentation assessment) and opportunity improving (flexible job strategy and contribution) HRM is measured to be most influential in fostering innovative work behavior. Emotional assurance is conceptualized as the individuals' expressive affection to the association and signifies employees' willingness to stay within the company. Affective commitment is determined as a consequence of human resource management (Bal, Bozkurt & Ertemsir, 2014) and is considered to affect innovative work behavior positively (Yesil & Sozbilir, 2013). The field of innovative work behavior is relatively new and still developing as well as the knowledge about the factors influencing innovative work behavior is fragmented. Thus, there are plenty of prospects for further study on the determinants of innovative work behavior. There is no prevailing empirical study, which would fully examine human resource management in a systematic way and its impact on innovative work behavior. There is no prevalent experimental research that would completely inspect human resource management in an organized manner and its influence on innovative work behavior (Pukienė, 2016). Till now study proposals concerning the intermediary spiritual procedures that would clarify in what way and for what reason many individuals and related experiences have the impact on the inventive conduct left questionable and unfledged (Shalley, Zhou & Oldham, 2004; West & Farr, 1989). Perceived organizational support is the gradation to which staff trust that their association standards their assistance and attention to their happiness and satisfies socioemotional desires (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison & Sowa, 1986). While the employee commitment is a property of the relationship amongst an association and its workforces. The "engaged employee" can be defined as one who is entirely absorbed by and passionate about their effort and so takes positive action to further the organization's reputation and interests (Kahn, 1990). Summing up the discussions of earlier scholars, it is argued that the high commitment HR practices can influence the effective commitment of an employee under perceived organizational support, which in turns leads to job engagement and innovative work behavior of an employee. Scholars had a deficiency to explain this chain of relations. So, this is the research gap which will be filled through this discussion.

A key idea of research is to investigate the relationship between high commitment HR practices and employee's innovative work behavior and engagement. Secondly, the aim of research is to observe the mediating effect of affective commitment among high commitment HR practices, job engagement, and innovative work behavior. The other objective of current research is to find out whether perceived organizational support plays a moderating role in improving the impact of high commitment HR practices on affective commitment, therefore, perceived organizational support has been included as moderator.

- 1) What effect high commitment HR practices have on an employee's attitude and behavior (i.e. job engagement and innovative work)?
- 2) What effect affective commitment has on employee's attitude and behavior (i.e. job engagement and innovative work)?
- 3) Do the high commitment HR practices have an influence on affective commitment of an employee?
- 4) Does the affective commitment of an employee act as a mediator in the relationship of high commitment HR practices and employee's attitude and behavior (i.e. job engagement & IWB)?
- 5) Whether perceived organizational support moderates the relationship between high commitment HR practices and employee's affective commitment?

The study will deliver vision and information for the supervisors, specialists, and researchers about worker assignment and innovative work behavior in the arena of high commitment HR practices. Formerly level of the worker commitment is dignified, managers can grow and implement alteration policies which would really recover the workforce commitment in their association. Practitioners may benefit from understanding job engagement and innovative work behavior through high commitment HR practices.

2 THEORITICAL INSIGHTS AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Affective Commitment: Firms mostly support the employees that are newcomers by giving coordination, teaching, plus further socialization means for the purpose of reducing the insecurity and worry, accelerate work and role expertise, and assist conversion from unknown to known (Feldman, 1976). Effective socialization has significant consequences comprising work enactment, organizational commitment, and retaining (Bauer, Erdogan Bodner, Truxillo & Tucker, 2007). In the literature of organizational conduct, commitment to the organization is considered as a significant aspect because it influences the involvement, attitudes, as well as the effectiveness of an organization (Angle & Perry, 1981; Mayer & Schoorman, 1992; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch & Topolnytsky, 2002). Affective commitment is the worker's emotional affection to, empathy with, also the participation in the business and its objectives (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch & Topolnytsky, (2002) describe the affective commitment as the degree to which a worker is spiritually committed to a firm and has the feeling of having its place in the organization. Commitment has been related to individual features, legislative arrangements, and job proficiencies, such as salary, management, role clarity, and ability range. When an employee attaches to the organization emotionally, passionately and devotedly he/she conceive the administrative objectives as their own objective and work hard and desirously to achieve those objectives. Those workers that have a greater level of emotional attachment i.e. affective commitment see their occupations as including a broader variety of conducts (containing actions usually thought of as extra role) (Morrison, 1994). Therefore, affective commitment has an effect on the behaviors of the employees that exist out of the stated restrictions (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). The study of Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch & Topolnytsky (2002) reveals that amongst the three kinds of commitment (effective, continuous & normative) affective commitment was more greatly associated to job engagement, work participation, as well as job assurance. Though the identical assumption about the process intricate in making the affective commitment has not yet been found, Meyer & Herscovitch (2001: 316) suggest that such variable that will raise the likelihood of the subsequent three issues will assist a person to be committed effectively. Firstly, an employee gets involved, which means inspired by his or her personal spirit or engaged in the course, in progress of achievement. Secondly, an employee identifies the worth or significance of the object or the progress of achievement to him or herself. Lastly, business with the object or progress of achievement will form a person's uniqueness (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001: 316). Affective commitment is supposed to be directly associated with conduct that is advantageous for the business like as presentation, presence, and to stay with the business (Mowday, Porter & Steers, 1982).

High Commitment HR Practices: High commitment HR practices are those practices that aim to enhance efficiency as well as output and depend on situations that inspire workers to recognize with the aims of the firms and effort hard to achieve those objectives (Wood & de Menezes, 1998). HR practices can be categorized as "control" or "commitment" practices (Arthur, 1994). Firms with high commitment structures have better production, economic presentation, and efficiency as compare to those firms that have fewer commitment structures (Arthur, 1994). HCHRP's involve many selection and recruitment practices, task plan, and encouragement performance which concentrate on rising workers' lasting speculation in the organization (Collins & Smith, 2006). To have a positive impact on the worker inspiration as well as performances, firms should, therefore, choose a structure that inspires this desired worker conduct (Khilji & Wang, 2006). HCHRP's raises a great value association with workers centered on exchange and interdependency (Sun et al., 2007). Social interchange theory (SET) (Sun et al., 2007; Tsui, Pearce, Porter & Tripoli, 1997) claim that high commitment HR practices generate a reciprocally helpful situation where organizations invest in their workers thus encourage them to return that speculation by using greater levels of

optional conduct. Many pieces of evidence reveal a positive influence of high commitment HR practices on workers' assertiveness and conduct (Kalshoven & Boon, 2014). Despite of the fact that this study supports the view that investing resources into employees leads to better prosperity at work, to high worker engagement and commitment, and to practices that affect the enactment (Kalshoven & Boon, 2014), the procedures and circumstances, in which such things are accomplished, remain almost unclear (Kalshoven & Boon, 2014). High commitment HR practices are usually considered as a group of precisely composed mixes of HR practices to enhance execution (Boselie, Dietz & Boon, 2005). The usage of HCHRP is started on the supposition that firms need to encourage workforce responsibility by putting resources into them (Gould-Williams, 2007). At the point when firms participate into high commitment HR rehearses, workers are expected to view this as a statement of the firm's faith and sense of duty regarding them, gratefulness for their work, and wish to take part in a lasting affiliation (Sun, Aryee & Law, 2007).

Innovative Work Behavior: Innovative behavior of workers is very important to the firm's success as well as existence (West, Richter & Shipton, 2004). Particularly in present quickly altering settings of business, it is of great importance to be capable enough to attain a competitive advantage. Due to the globalization, there is great competition among the organizations for resources as well as product-market globalization accomplishments. A persons' innovative work behavior is the basis for all organization who perform extraordinarily; and therefore, "the study of what inspires or supports employees innovative behavior is important" (Bruce & Scott, 1994). There are many definitions given for the innovative behavior of the individuals. De Jong & Den Hartog (2010) described innovative conduct as "all a person's activities aimed at the creation, recognition, and presentation of valuable uniqueness" (p. 285), thus claimed that "such favorable innovation may comprise the advancement of novel invention thoughts or expertise, alterations in managerial processes directed at refining work affairs or the presentation of novel concepts or novel skills to work procedures proposed to expressively improve their efficiency as well as achievement" (p.285). Yuan & Woodman (2010) theorized innovative behavior as together the creation as well as the introduction of novel concepts and the recognition or execution of unique concepts.

Job Engagement: Kahn (1990: 694) well-defined the engagement "the union of organization associates' identities to the work parts; in commitment, persons engaged also show themselves bodily, cognitively as well as passionately throughout role presentations". The engagement is developing work attitudes that process the emotional existence as well as the participation of workers (Wefald, Mills, Smith & Downey, 2012). Schaufeli, & Bakker (2004) explained that engagement is "an optimistic, satisfying as well as the job-related state of thoughts and described by energy, devotion as well as engagement dimensions". Work engagement or a worker's enthusiasm, excitement for and interest in his or her occupation, is a working state of mind that numerous businesses and their workers in different fields plan to keep up and create. Engaged people are depicted as being mentally present, completely there, associated, coordinated, and centered in their past performances (Kahn, 1990). Engagement includes contributing to the "hands, head, and heart" (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995) in dynamic, full job performance. Workers who are greatly employed with their work part not just concentrate their physical exertion on the quest for part related objectives, but also at the same time are intellectually cautious and truthfully associated with the attempt (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995; Kahn, 1990). Perceived organizational support (POS) was experimentally confirmed to have an optimistic impact on work as well as business engagement (Saks, 2006). POS denotes to the workers' views that a firm gives importance to its offerings and also takes care of their welfare (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). POS let the workers feel obliged "to take care of the business well-being also to support the firm to attain its goals" (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

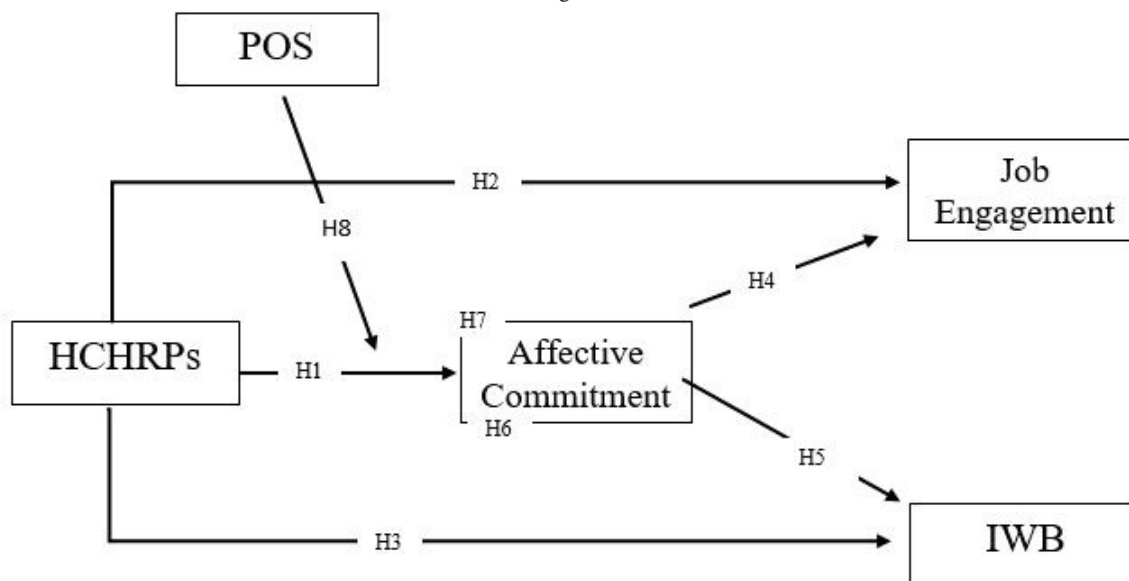
Perceived Organizational Support: POS reveals the comprehensive views workers create regarding the degree to which the firm gives importance to their involvement and take care of them (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). These views are created insights into the firm's willingness to recompense augmented work struggle and gratify socio-emotional necessities. Perceived organizational support motivates employees to show care for the organization's welfare (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison & Sowa, 1986). Organizational Support Theory said that POS creates a general feeling of responsibility to assist the business in achieving its goals, an affective obligation to the firm, and an improved probability that greater act will be observed than compensated (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). The support from the organization satisfies both the financial requirements by incentives plus paybacks and socio-emotional requirements that include appreciation, respect, and societal distinctiveness (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

Social Exchange Theory is defined as "the voluntary actions of individuals that are motivated by the returns they are expected to bring and typically do in fact bring others" (Blau, 1964). Organizational Support Theory proposes that "employees form a generalized perception concerning the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being (perceived organizational support)" Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison & Sowa, 1986). HRM researchers widely use the Social Exchange Theory as a basis to describe the association among high commitment HR practices and worker's performance (Kehoe & Wright 2013).

High commitment method to HRM is much probable to move to common welfares revealed great gratification and great enactment and causing from an optimistic communal altercation. Social Exchange Theory has been

extensively used as a descriptive structure in administrative conduct and work relations (Coyle-Shapiro & Conway, 2004). Organizational Support Theory (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002) grasps that workers improve POS for the sake of meeting wants for support, respect as well as association, and to consider the welfares of improved labor exertion. POS rises workers' identified responsibility to support the business to attain its aims, their emotional obligation to the institute, and their anticipation that enriched presentation will be compensated. Behavior results of POS comprise rises in in-role, as well as extra-role presentation and declines in extraction, conduct such as nonappearance and income. Conferring to Organizational Support Theory, workers are likely to allocate human-like features to firms and therefore inspire the progress of POS (Eisenberger et al., 1986). The study has been conducted in two broader facets; first, high commitment HR practices are taken as a predictive variable whereas job engagement and innovative work behaviors are taken as possible outcome variables. Perceived organizational support has been taken as moderator and affective commitment as mediator because it will help out to improve the influence of high commitment HR practices on job engagement and innovative work behavior.

Figure 1



High commitment HR practices procedure and processes influence the impact on worker's commitment and inspiration (McClellan & Collins, 2011). Arthur claims that supervisors who use the high commitment HR practices are trying to 'create committed workers who can be trusted to utilize their prudence to complete work assignments in the ways that are reliable with firm objectives' (1994: 672). Following the above arguments, below hypothesis is purposed.

H1: High commitment HR practices positively relate to affective commitment.

Putting resources into employees leads to better prosperity at work, high worker engagement and commitment, and practices that affect the enactment (Albrecht, Bakker, Gruman, Macey & Saks, 2015). HCHRP select such dedicated employees that can be trusted to use their decision to do the work assignment in such ways that are steady with firm objectives' (Arthur, 1994: 672). Thus, investing in HCHRP will encourage spirits of efficiency and inspire association of worker and business morals, as showed in workers' improved commitment with their work.

H2: High commitment HR practices positively relate to job engagement.

Motivation to innovate is encouraged by HCHRP including rewards for innovation, employee training, and development, teamwork, involvement in decision making (Fernandez & Pitts, 2011). The results of the study of Tan & Nasurdin (2011) indicated that HRM practices have an important positive influence on innovative work behavior. There is a strong relationship between the recruitment procedures and that of innovative behavior (Özbağ, Esen & Esen, 2013). HRM is considered to be most influential in fostering innovative work behavior (Scott & Bruce, 1994).

H3: High commitment HR practices positively relate to innovative work behavior.

Workers who are effectively dedicated to their firm, feel themselves as a part of the organization i.e. have a sense of fitting, and thus might recognize with firms' morals and objectives that enhance their degree of participation in the business's accomplishments, their readiness to follow the firm's objectives, and the resilient sense of remaining with the firm. Workers with a sturdy affective commitment remain engaged with the business for the reason that they desire to do this (Allen & Meyer, 1990: 1-3.). The studies of scholars Dunham, R. B.,

Grube, J. A., & Castaneda, M. B. (1994) reveal that affective commitment is more associated to job engagement, work participation, as well as job assurance.

H4: Affective commitment positive relate to job engagement.

Those workers that have a greater level of emotional attachment i.e. affective commitment see their occupations as including a broader variety of conducts (containing actions usually thought of Extra Role) (Morrison, 1994). Therefore, affective commitment has an effect on the behaviors of the employees that exist outer the stated restrictions (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). Thus from the 'Meyer' & 'Herscovitch' point of view it is clear that effective commitment of the employees affects the behavior of the employees if the employees have strong emotional commitment with the organization they will actively take part In the Innovative activities because affective commitment is an emotional bond to the organization (Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch & Rhoades, 2001).

H5: Affective commitment positively relate to innovative work behavior.

There is a positive association among the innovative work behavior (IWB) and HRM, HRM and affective commitment, affective commitment and IWB, on the other hand, it would examine the mediating role of affective commitment on the relationship of IWB and high commitment HR practices (Pukienė, 2016). That's why the proposition could be suggested, that affective commitment might have a mediating role amongst IWB and high commitment HR practices.

H6: Affective commitment mediates the relationship between high commitment HR practices and innovative work behavior.

Affective commitment is determined as a consequence of human resource management (Bal, Bozkurt & Ertemsir, 2014) and is considered to affect innovative work behavior positively (Yesil & Sozbilir, 2013).

H7: Affective commitment mediates the relationship between high commitment HR practices and job engagement.

Based on the above literature, it is summarized that perceived organizational support and high commitment HR practices have a positive relationship with affective commitment. POS acts as the mechanism through which high-commitment HR practices influences organizational commitment (Mostafa, Gould Williams & Bottomley, 2015). Perceived organizational support encourages the employees to get more emotionally attached to the firm. Similarly, high commitment HR practices also foster affective commitment. High commitment HR practices and perceived organizational support can jointly enhance the employee's effectiveness i.e. performance through affective commitment. Perceived organizational support can play a moderating role in order to improve the impact of high commitment HR practices on affective commitment.

H8: Perceived organizational support moderates the relationship between high commitment HR practices and affective commitment such that the relationship is stronger when POS is high.

3 METHODOLOGY AND MEASURES

The study is based on quantitative research thus the paradigm of the study is positivism. Target population is IT companies and banking sector in Lahore, Pakistan. Data has been collected from the multi branches of Banks i.e. Standard Chartered Bank, HBL, BAHF Meezan Bank, Punjab Bank, Muslim Commercial Bank & Bank Alflah, working in Lahore and some of the IT companies i.e. Alnafay IT Solutions, Future Vision, IT Vision & IT department of UOS Lahore. The respondents were all the middle staff and managers. Data has been collected using convenience sampling. Earlier Studies also used the similar sampling technique, they used the convenient sampling for collecting the data about job engagement, innovative work behavior and Affective Commitment (Gardner, Wright & Moynihan, 2011). I tested my hypotheses with surveyed data that was collected from subordinates and their supervisors. The survey was governed to 240 employees and their 20 supervisors. Since, in the banking and IT sector, high commitment HR practices are greatly entailed therefore these sectors have been chosen for the data collection. Reference to the Justification of Measure & Validity about survey questions, an eight-item scale adapted from Lynch, Eisenberger & Armeli (1999) has been applied to capture employee perceived organizational support. Affective commitment is an employee's emotional attachment to the organization, a nine-item scale of Affective Commitment from Rhoades et al. (2001) has been applied to capture the employee's affective commitment.

An eight-item scale of Job Engagement adopted from Schaufeli, Bakker & Salanova (2006) has been used to measure the extent of job engagement of employees. A fourteen-item scale adapted from Snell & Dean (1992) has been used to measure the employee perception of the extent of high commitment Human Resource practices. A nine-item scale adapted from De Jong & Den Hartog (2010) has been used to measure the innovative behavior of employees. Immediate supervisors rated how often the subjects exhibited the nine innovative work behaviors described in the items. Descriptive tools and inferential tools have been used for the analysis and results. Moreover

English is the official language of top education in Pakistan, so the investigation was done in English, as was the case in numerous earlier studies that were performed in Pakistan (Khan, Quratulain, & Bell, 2014). To make it more certain that contributors comprehend the survey, I only took data from professional workers; the English expertise of blue-collar workers may not be satisfactorily well-built to fill the survey. The contributors were approached for their approval to take part in the survey, all the way through personal plus professional associates of the author. After receiving permission, I distributed the questionnaire to gather the data from two sources. The first survey was sent to workers, evaluating high commitment HR Practices, affective commitment, perceived organizational support and job engagement. The second survey was governed by their supervisors to evaluate the innovative work behavior of those employees who have filled the first survey. The respondents were provided with a survey questionnaire. Every survey was accompanied with a cover letter that explained the purpose of this investigation as well as highlighted in what way the imminent created from the result will assist the managerial efficiency in common. The contributors were made certain about the total privacy and were told openly that there was no right or wrong answer (Spector, 2006). Among the 240 initially distributed surveys, I received 209 complete set. Thus, my final sample comprises of 209 paired responses.

4 RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The research involved teams consisting of employees, staff, and management (N = 209) from banking and IT sectors. Results elaborate that there was a total of 209 respondents. In total six categories were taken in the personal information part which are gender, age, job nature, tenure, total experience, and qualification. It revealed the number of male and female respondents. From the 209 samples, there were 181 males and 28 females. This means that 86.6 % were males and 13.4 % were females. The ratio of female respondents is less because fewer women work in Pakistan. In Pakistan, most of the executive posts are occupied by men. Moreover, from all banks existing in Pakistan just one bank's president/CEO is a female that is The First Women Bank. Therefore, the small sample size of women is due to the comparatively lesser percentage of females in job (in Pakistan). Age of 23.4% of total respondents ranged from 18-24 years, age of the 46.4% of total respondents ranged from 25-31 years, age of the 17.7% of total respondents ranged from 32 to 38 years, age of the 4.8% of total respondents ranged from 39 to 45 years and the age of the 1.1% of the total respondents ranged from 46 years and above. These results show that the age of most of the respondents lies in the range of 25 to 31. 26.3% of the total respondents do fieldwork, 50.7 % of the total respondents do office work, 13.9% of total respondents perform technical jobs, 3.3% of the total respondents are staff members, and 5.7% of the total respondents work at the managerial level. The descriptive analysis depicts that most of the respondents were those who do office work. Job tenure for 17.2% of the total respondents is less than one year, job tenure for 46.9% of the respondents ranged from one to five year, job tenure for 19.1% of the respondents ranged from five to ten years, job tenure for 7.2% of the respondents ranged from ten to fifteen years and job tenure for 9.6% of the respondents ranged from 15 years and above. It shows that job tenure of most respondents is in the range of one to five years.

Reliability analysis of items has been performed and it has revealed that all the Cronbach's Alpha values are above 0.7, which is in the acceptable range (Gliem & Gliem, 2003) as shown in Table 1 below Cronbach's Alpha of the measuring items of perceived organizational support is .829. Cronbach's Alpha for the measuring items of Affective commitment is .874. Cronbach's Alpha for measuring items of innovative work behavior is .899. Cronbach's Alpha for the measuring items of job engagement is .919. Cronbach's Alpha for the measuring items of high commitment HR practices is .937.

Table 1

Variable Name	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Perceived organizational support	8	0.829
Affective commitment	9	0.874
Innovative work behavior	9	0.899
Job engagement	8	0.919
High commitment to HR practices	14	0.937

Correlation: Table 2 shows that independent variables including high commitment human resource practices and affective commitment are significantly correlated with the dependent variables including job engagement and innovative work behavior.

Table 2: Bivariate Correlation

Pearson Correlation					
	POS	JE	HCHRP's	IWB	AC
POS	1				
JE	.319**	1			
HCHRP's	.242**	.780**	1		
IWB	0.091	.478**	.626**	1	
AC	.281**	.562**	.487**	.407**	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*AC = affective commitment, POS = perceived organizational support, JE = job engagement, HCHRP's = high commitment HR practices, IWB = innovative work behavior.

Regression Analysis: Fox (1997) specified that multiple regression study permits the evaluator to conclude that how and what relationship exist among dependent and independent variables. Multiple Regression has been performed to test the hypotheses 1, 2, 3 4 & 5.

Table 3: Main Effect of HCHRP's on job engagement, innovative work behavior, and affective commitment

Variable	Job engagement			Innovative work behavior			Affective commitment		
	B	R ²	Sig	B	R ²	Sig	B	R ²	Sig
Step 1									
Gender	.036			.139*			.053		
Age	-.072			-.013			.137*		
Job Nature	.145*			.208**			.084		
Step 2									
High commitment HR practices	.782***	.611	.000	.612***	.422	.000	.576***	.355	.000
Affective commitment	.604**	.374	.000	.404***	.219	.000			

N = 209. Gender, age, and job nature used as control variables

*** Significant at the .001 level (2-tailed),

** Significant at the .01 level (2-tailed),

* Significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)

Step 1: Step 1 shows the control variables' results of one way ANOVA revealed that among the control variable gender have a significant effect on innovative work behavior, age has a significant effect on affective commitment while job nature have a significant effect on job engagement and innovative work behavior, therefore, control for all these variables.

Step 2: In step 2, the effect of independent variable on outcome variables has been checked while controlling for the demographic variables. The results depict that high commitment HR practices have a significant impact on affective commitment as ($\beta = 0.576$, $R^2 = 0.355$, $p = 0.000$), based on the given results it can be derived that there is a significant impact of high commitment HR practices on affective commitment. Hypothesis # 1 is supported based on above results that:

H1): High commitment HR Practices positively relate to Affective commitment.

Based on the results, high commitment HR practices were found to have a significant impact on job engagement as ($\beta = 0.782$, $R^2 = 0.611$, $p = 0.000$). Hence it can be derived that there is a significant impact of high commitment HR practices on job engagement. Thus it supported hypothesis # 2 that:

H2): High commitment HR practices positively relate to job engagement.

High commitment HR practices have a significant impact on innovative work behavior as ($\beta = 0.612$, $R^2 = 0.422$, $p = 0.000$), based on these results it can be derived that there is a significant impact of high commitment HR practices on innovative work behavior and it positively predicts innovative work behavior. These results significantly support hypothesis # 3 that:

H3): High commitment HR Practices positively relate to innovative work behavior.

Affective commitment has a significant impact on job engagement as ($\beta = 0.604$, $R^2 = 0.374$, $p = 0.000$), thus it is derived that there is a significant impact of affective commitment on job engagement. Hypothesis # 4 is supported based on these results that:

H4): Affective Commitment positive relates to job engagement.

Employee's affective commitment also found to have a significant impact on innovative work behavior as ($\beta = 0.404$, $R^2 = 0.219$, $p = 0.000$), based on this it can be derived that there is a significant impact of affective commitment and it enhances the innovative work behavior. Thus hypothesis # 5 is supported that:

H5): Affective commitment positively relates to Innovative Work Behavior.

Furthermore, the results for the regression coefficient illustrate that if one unit of high commitment HR practices increase job engagement will increase by .782 units. Similarly, one unit increase in high commitment HR practices will increase innovative work behavior by .612 units and affective commitment will increase by .576 units by increasing one unit of high commitment HR practices. The coefficient of determination, R^2 of high commitment HR practices for job engagement is 0.611, hence it is inferred that 61.1 percent of the variability in job engagement is explained by high commitment HR practices. The coefficient of determination, R^2 of high commitment HR practices for innovative work behavior is 0.422, hence it is inferred that 42.2 percent of the variability in innovative work behavior is explained by high commitment HR practices. The coefficient of determination, R^2 of high commitment HR practices for affective commitment is 0.355, hence it is inferred that 35.5 percent of the variability in affective commitment is explained by high commitment HR practices. After this, the main effect of mediator on dependent variables has been checked. It shows that job engagement will increase by .604 by one unit increase in affective commitment. Similarly, if one unit affective commitment increased innovative work behavior will increase by .404. The coefficient of determination, R^2 of affective commitment for job engagement is 0.374, hence it is inferred that 37.4 percent of the variability in job engagement is explained by affective commitment. The coefficient of determination, R^2 of affective commitment for innovative work behavior is 0.404, hence it is inferred that 40.4 percent of the variability in innovative work behavior is explained by affective commitment.

Mediation Analysis: To check the mediation effect of affective commitment in the relationship of high commitment HR practices and outcome variables i.e. job engagement and innovative work behavior, the conditional process modeling method of Hayes & Preacher's (2014) has been used. To test the mediation and moderation, Hayes has signified the conditional process models. Founded on the projected study structure, model 4 has been selected in process macro for analysis of this mediation influence as suggested by Preacher & Hayes (2008). For the sake of this objective, high commitment HR practices have been taken as an independent variable while innovative work behavior has been taken as a dependent variable while affective commitment has taken in the mediating variable section. Results are shown below.

Table 4: Mediation of AC in the relationship of HCHRP's & IWB

	Effect	SE	P	LLCI	ULCI
The total effect of HCHRP's on IWB	.6439	.0557	.0000	.5341	.7536
The direct effect of HCHRP's on IWB	.5771	.0632	.0000	.4525	.7016
Indirect effect of HCHRP's on IWB	.0668	.0342		.0048	.1387

*AC = affective commitment, HCHRP's = high commitment HR practices, IWB = innovative work behavior.

Hayes & Preacher (2014) stated two main situations for ascertaining the mediation i.e. the indirect effects should be significant and the values of LLCI and ULCI must be in the same direction and must not be zero. Results depict that indirect effect of high commitment HR practices on innovative work behavior is also significant ($\beta = .0668$, $CI = .0048$ to $.1387$). However, the total effect ($\beta = .6439$, $p = .000$) and direct effect ($\beta = .5771$, $p = .000$) are also significant. Therefore, the results found support for partial mediation prove the hypothesis that:

H6): Affective commitment mediates the relationship between HCHRP's and Innovative Work Behavior.

In the next step, the high commitment HR practices have been taken as an independent variable while job engagement as the dependent variable and affective commitment has taken in the mediating variable section. Results are shown below.

Table 5: Mediation of AC in the relationship between HCHRP's & JE

	Effect	SE	P	LLCI	ULCI
The total effect of HCHRP's on JE	.8257	.0461	.0000	.7348	.9165
Direct effect of HCHRP's on JE	.7021	.0498	.0000	.6039	.8004
Indirect effect of HCHRP's on JE	.1236	.0330		.0668	.1963

*AC = affective commitment, JE = job engagement, HCHRP's = high commitment HR practices.

Results depict significant indirect effects of high commitment HR practices on job engagement ($\beta = .1236$, $CI = .0668$ to $.1963$). However, the total and direct effects are also significant, which shows the support for partial mediation. Therefore, providing support for the hypothesis of the study:

H7): Affective commitment mediates the relationship between HCHRP's and job engagement.

Moderation Analysis: Moderator can be defined as a variable which can intensely effect or perform optimistic part in making the connection among dependent and independent variables, better (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013, p.91) A moderator has a resilient perspective to modify the course as well as an impact level of the variable's constructive relationship of predictive variable and outcome variable. Hayes & Preacher (2014) described that the analysis of moderation chiefly stresses on basic fundamentals that regulate the path as well as the influence of the relationship among dependent and independent variable. Because of its greater impact, moderating variable performs a basic part for bringing the alteration or perfection in the prevailing relationship among the dependent and independent variables. Moderator effect the degree of causative influence of a predictive variable on the outcome variable. The concept of moderation is also called the interaction effect (Hayes & Preacher, 2014). To check the moderating effect of perceived organizational support in the relationship of high commitment HR practices and affective commitment, the conditional process modeling method of Hayes & Preacher's (2014) has been used. To test the mediation and moderation, Hayes & Preacher (2014) has signified the conditional process models. Founded on projected study structure, model 1 has been choose in process macro analyze this moderation influence as suggested by Preacher & Hayes (2008). For the sake of this objective, high commitment HR practices have been taken as an independent variable while affective commitment has been taken as a dependent variable. Perceived organizational support has taken in M variable segment. Interaction has been calculated automatically by this method. Below are the results of moderation analysis.

Table 6: Moderation of perceived organizational support

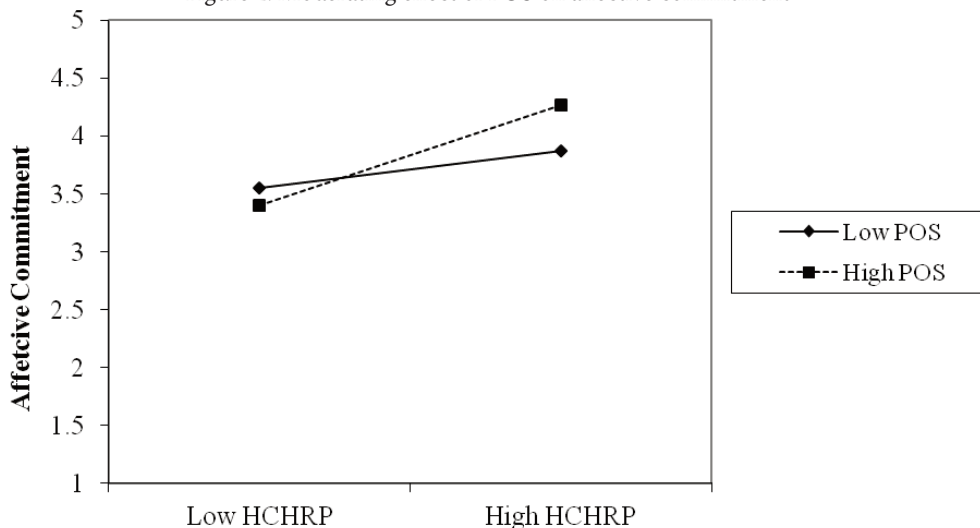
Variables	Affective commitment			
	B	LLCI	ULCI	p value
High commitment HR practices	0.54	-0.06	-0.39	0.00
Perceived organizational support	0.11	-0.26	-0.2	0.05
Interaction 1	-0.45	-0.25	-0.09	0.03
Total R ²	0.38			0.03

N = 209

Interaction 1 = High commitment HR practices* Perceived organizational support

According to Hayes & Preacher (2014), the moderator is approved when it fulfills two conditions. First, the interaction effect must be significant and second is the values of LLCI as well as ULCI that must not be zero and must be in the same direction. Perceived organizational support moderates between high commitment HR practices and affective commitment in such a way that relationship becomes stronger when POS was high. Moreover interaction term high commitment HR practices* perceived organizational support is significant ($p = .03$) which depict that moderation exists. However, the magnitude of this moderation effect cannot be ascertained from these results, therefore, we need to plot the graphs recommended by Damanpour (1991).

Figure 2: Moderating effect of POS on affective commitment



The figure revealed the significant interaction of perceived organizational support and high commitment HR practices on affective commitment. In order to examine the conjuncture for high and low values (Mean \pm SD) for moderation, the graphical configuration has been run through for clear understanding. The graph depicts that slope of high perceived organizational support is inclined upward at a high level of HCHRP as compared to the low level of perceived organizational support. The figure shows that affective commitment is high at the higher level of HCHRP, especially, when employees perceived a higher level of support. Based on this, it can be concluded that perceived organizational support significantly moderate to improve the influence of high commitment HR practices on affective commitment, thus, it proves the hypothesis 8.

H8): POS moderates the relationship between HCHRP's and affective commitment.

5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In the present era, innovative work behavior and employee engagement are much important for the firms because they are facing huge demand from their environment to involve in the innovative work behavior. To compete with other organizations innovative work behavior is of utmost necessity otherwise organizations may face a huge loss. The recent evidence is demonstrating a direct link amongst innovative work behavior, employee engagement, and high commitment HR practices. This study is to inspect the influences of high commitment HR practices on the behaviors of the employee. Since no research has been found in this specific area that high commitment HR practices influences the employee's behavior (Employee engagement and innovative work behavior) with the moderating effect of perceived organizational support and the mediating effect of Affective Commitment. Therefore this research has attempted to begin filling this cavity/gap in the body of knowledge and literature. It specifies that the existence of high commitment HR practices in the work-place gives strong indications to their subordinates that they are appreciated, respected and acknowledged inside the groups or companies. Outcomes exposed that perceived organizational support moderates the associations amongst high commitment HR practices and affective commitment.

In other words, in the extremely challenging work setting where workers are required to be more engaged in their job, they anticipate greater administrative support to uphold their involvement in the firm. Jain et al. (2013) recommended that workers' production greatly depends upon the contributions that they obtain from their administrations in any social interchange. The outcomes also support the results of Aistė Pukienė (2016) who concluded that human resource management can be the main aspect that effects innovative work behavior of workers, as well as affective commitment, can be the predicted result of human resource management. Social exchange theory has revealed that workers' assurance to the firm through the sensitivities of organizational support gives the better outcome of employees. Though, the study also produced the outcome that assurance is connected to an indirect collaboration amongst HCHRP's and perceived organizational support. High commitment HR practices are associated with a particular employee-centered outcome in this research. Aim of this study was to explore the effect of high commitment HR practices on innovative behavior of individual worker and it has gained a huge understanding of the impacts that high commitment HR practices on employee's innovation, by viewing the direct impact and indirect impact. Outcomes also support the study of "Sanders, Dorenbosch & de Reuver (2008)", who measured the high commitment human resource practices system work and innovative work behavior. However, going beyond the findings, the current study also demonstrates that high commitment HR practices affect employee engagement and innovative work behavior through the affective commitment. Due to which employees feel more obligation towards their organization as perceived organizational support motivates them. Impact of employee affective commitment to innovative behavior at work is too strong. The outcome is reliable with the argument of Whitener (2001), Social Exchange Theory and Social Identity Theory, which demonstrate that workers who feel they are valued and appreciated by their associations might observe more prominence in the firm (Birtch, Chiang & Van Esch, 2016). The outcomes are in line with Meyer & Allen (1991) who declared that workers with perceived organizational support might create emotional affections with the organization, and Chiang et al., (2016) who claimed that perceived organizational support can make workers have lasting belief in the firms. In a nutshell, workers provide creative actions to the firm, discoveries are also steady with the social exchange theory (Cook, Cheshire, Rice & Nakagawa, 2013). Moreover, affective commitment mediates the connection amongst high commitment HR practices and employee engagement/innovative work behavior. The results show that perceptions of organizational support inspire workers to use their inspiration to perform innovative actions.

To reach and to achieve the positive outcomes, more engaged and innovative employees are needed who can contribute more positively to the success of an organization. The results of this study established that high commitment HR practices, perceived organizational support, and affective commitment can help to increase the progressive and creative behavior of a worker. The commitment and inventive thoughts must be at the front of collective effort investigation as well as strategy and policy execution. The future investigation might examine the variation in the insight of engagement as well as innovative work behavior aspects by age. A future study might comprise the interpretations about how speedily the engagement level and innovative behavior varies after the dealings to increase the high commitment HR practices between workers.

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ANNEX A

Survey – Questionnaire

Respected Sir/Madam,

Please rate the following statements by recalling your performance. The following scale will help you to rate the performance.

(1) Strongly Agree (2) Agree (3) Neutral (4) Disagree (5) Strongly Disagree

Perceived Organizational Support					
1. My organization strongly considers my goals and values.	1	2	3	4	5
2. My organization really cares about my well-being.	1	2	3	4	5
3. My organization shows a great deal of concern for me.	1	2	3	4	5
4. My employer cares about my opinions.	1	2	3	4	5
5. My employer is willing to help me when I need a special favour.	1	2	3	4	5
6. My employer cares about my general satisfaction at work.	1	2	3	4	5
7. My employer values my contributions to its well-being.	1	2	3	4	5
8. The company is willing to help my work.	1	2	3	4	5
Affective Commitment					
1. I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I feel personally attached to my work organization.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I am proud to tell anybody to be part of company.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Working at my organization has a great deal of personal meaning to me.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I would be happy to work in my organization until I retire.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I feel obligation to do for company success.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I work 100 percent for company goal.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I really feel that problems faced by my organization are also my problems.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I feel loyalty to the company.	1	2	3	4	5
Job Engagement					
1. My job inspires me.	1	2	3	4	5
2. When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I feel happy when I am working intensely.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I am immersed in my work.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I am proud of the work that I do.	1	2	3	4	5
6. At my job, I feel strong and vigorous.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I am enthusiastic about my job.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I get carried away when I am working.	1	2	3	4	5
High Commitment HR Practices					
1. I am given a real opportunity to improve my skills through education and training programs.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I have had sufficient job-related training.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I receive on-going training, which enables me to do my job better.	1	2	3	4	5
4. HR practices here help me a great deal to develop my knowledge and skills.	1	2	3	4	5
5. This organization prefers to promote from within.	1	2	3	4	5
6. This organization always tries to fill vacancies from within.	1	2	3	4	5
7. People inside the organization will be offered a vacant position before outsiders	1	2	3	4	5
8. My job allows me to make job-related decisions on my own	1	2	3	4	5
9. I am provided the opportunity to suggest improvements in the way things are done.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Supervisors keep open communications with me on the job.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I am often asked to participate in decisions.	1	2	3	4	5

12. There is a strong link between how well I perform in my job and the likelihood of receiving recognition and praise.	1	2	3	4	5
13. There is a strong link between how well I perform in my job and the likelihood of receiving a pay raise.	1	2	3	4	5
14. There is a strong link between how well I perform in my job and the likelihood of receiving high performance appraisal ratings.	1	2	3	4	5
Innovative Work Behavior					
How often does this worker perform the following work activities:	1	2	3	4	5
1. Acquiring approval for innovative ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Searching out new working methods, techniques, or instruments.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Transforming innovative ideas into useful applications.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Introducing innovative ideas in a systematic way.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Making important organizational members enthusiastic for innovative ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Generating original solutions to problems.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Creating new ideas for improvements.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Mobilizing support for innovative ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Thoroughly evaluating the application of innovative ideas.	1	2	3	4	5

“Thank you for giving your precious time to fill this questionnaire.”



Journal of HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

www.jhrm.eu • ISSN 2453-7683

Exploring the impact of training on equitable access to employment: A gendered perspective of work release programs

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ABSTRACT

Obtaining job relevant skills while incarcerated is an important component to overcoming the stigma of a criminal history when seeking employment. Using a focus group research design, we explored occupational roles and feelings of preparedness among men and women housed in work release facilities. We found: 1) women perceived their training to be of less value as compared to their male counterparts, 2) women and men perceived differences related to their receipt of employment assistance, 3) women and men differed in explanations of prior work experience, and 4) perceptual differences appeared to be affected by the frequency of incarceration.

KEY WORDS

criminal history, selection, gender, training, diversity

JEL Code: M12

Manuscript received 23 August 2019

Accepted after revisions 20 November 2019

1 INTRODUCTION

In the United States over 6.6 million individuals were under some form of correctional supervision (e.g., prison, jail, probation, parole) (Kaeble & Cowhig, 2018), with over 1.5 million, or about 1 in 38 adults, incarcerated at yearend 2016 (Carson, 2018). Demographic correctional data confirms higher percentages of arrest and incarceration of Black and Latino men as compared to White men (Carson, 2018). Data also confirms that lower educational attainment levels are also common, with approximately 41% of the correctional population possessing less than a high school degree (Harlow, 2003). Considering the above, criminal history is common and the demographic characteristics of race and class are prominent when understanding individuals who possess a criminal history. However, another relevant demographic characteristic that may often be overlooked is that of sex. Women have now become the fastest growing jail population in the United States (Swavola, Riley & Subramanian 2016), and the female incarceration rate has increased by approximately 700% over the past 30 years (Cowan, 2019). Despite this increase, many of the reasons for it are largely unknown, as research, practices, and initiatives have traditionally focused on the needs of male prisoners (Swavola et al., 2016). This has resulted in a limited understanding of the female experience while in prison, as well as the re-integration and employment process post-release.

Several studies have pointed to the important role that pre-release employment resources play in determining individual success in obtaining employment post-release (Gillis & Andrews, 2005; Griffiths, Dandurand & Murdoch, 2007; Nally, Lockwood & Ho, 2011). More recently, however, there has been increasing interest in understanding the experiences of incarcerated and soon-to-be released women. For example, studies have examined participation rates among incarcerated women in prison programming (Crittenden & Koons-Witt, 2017), evaluated the existence of different gendered-based needs with respect to reentry strategies (Spjeldnes, Jung & Yamatani, 2014) in addition to empirical assessments of how gender and race in prison impact designated working assignments (Crittenden, Koons-Witt & Kaminski, 2018). What these studies converge on is the central

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notion that women have different needs and values when compared to their male counterparts (Freudenberg, 2006). However, relatively little is known about how these gender differences manifest in the context of work-release programs.

This is critical since a considerable amount of employment programming focuses on the development of skills important to prison industries (e.g., construction, manufacturing), is work that traditionally employs men. As Richmond (2014) notes, "it may be that the types of industries and skills obtained [through these programs]...are more applicable to the kinds of employment male offenders can obtain upon release from prison and thus make them more competitive than female inmates in the labor market" (p. 741). Thus, ascertaining the perceived benefits of prison employment programming (e.g., work release) among currently incarcerated men and women participating in such training programs is not only vital to the development of effective vocational policy and work-force development programming, but may also aid in our understanding of facilitative factors necessary for finding and maintaining employment. This understanding of potential differences as related to sex is important considering that the majority of all individuals with a criminal history will return to the community and likely seek entry into the workforce (Carson, 2018; Hughes & Wilson, 2019).

Within the context of the workplace, theories such as social role theory suggest that men and women may be perceived differently, and that these perceived gender roles may be consistent within society's current division of labor (Eagly, 1987). Despite the progress of women in the labor force, perceptions persist in the labor market resulting in gendered occupations. For example, occupations such as home health aides are generally regarded as female occupations, which may contribute to women occupying 89% of these roles. Conversely, occupations such as concrete finishers are generally regarded as male occupations, which likely contributes to men occupying 100% of these roles (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019)¹. These differences are of particular importance as we consider the employment patterns and unemployment rates of formerly incarcerated individuals. While the United States' unemployment rate is 4.0% (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019), the unemployment rate for those with a criminal record can range between 18.4% to 43.6% (Couloute & Kopf, 2018). These percentage differentials may be attributable to various factors such as the stigma of a criminal history, gendered perceptions of work, and the employment preparation available to individuals while housed in correctional facilities.

Although employment and vocational training while incarcerated has been shown to be of substantial benefit for participants, only one in every six correctional facilities offer some form of vocational training (Stephan, 2008). When training is available, portions of the evaluation may not fully consider its effect, specifically, the types of occupations the participants are likely to pursue. For instance, while carpentry, construction, and auto mechanics are common types of employment training available in a correctional facility (Lahm, 2000), these are also occupations and fields that are considerably male dominated, as women comprise 2.2%, 3.4%, 2.1% respectively (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019). Thus, while employment training in these aforementioned areas may be offered to both sexes, men may disproportionately have access to training in occupations they are more likely to pursue. This presents an interesting conundrum. Although women with a criminal history may be perceived with greater warmth by hiring managers during an employment process (Jones Young & Powell, 2015), men may have an advantage when pursuing employment opportunities due to the relevant training received during incarceration. This possibility highlights the continued importance of exploring organizational experiences of individuals from an intersectionality perspective (Holvino, 2010), in this case, gender and criminal history.

This study seeks to understand the perceptions of readiness of men and women as they prepare for their job search after release from incarceration. Research suggests that some employers are willing to hire individuals with a criminal history (Griffith & Young, 2017; Society for Human Resource Management, 2018, 2019). However, scholars have encouraged an increased understanding from the applicant or individual perspective of those with a criminal history (Young & Ryan, 2019; Griffith, Rade, & Anazodo, 2019), as a way to gain greater insight into their experiences. Participation in a pre-employment program can significantly benefit hard to employ individuals, by increasing self-efficacy and reducing psychological distress (Matt, Bellardita, Fischer & Silverman, 2006), which can be particularly beneficial for organizations. The men and women in our study were exposed to similar training protocols. Thus, in accordance with social role theory, we explore how the men and women interpreted and assigned value to their training experiences. This exploration also considers equity theory, such that providing access to the same training may not necessarily yield the same outcome or opportunity when individuals are of a different sex. Although individuals who are incarcerated do not have a constitutional right to employment programs (Laddy, 1995), having women trained in employment areas they are least likely to pursue upon release from incarceration is problematic. In short, further exploration of this topic is warranted.

¹ These occupations were selected as examples since they are positions that individuals with a criminal history could likely obtain.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Research studies have consistently pointed to concrete differences between men and women in the employment context. Social role theory suggests that individuals associate certain behaviors with a particular gender and then ascribe these beliefs to the social roles men and women should adopt (Eagly & Wood, 2012). Early research on gender differences suggested that men are more agentic (e.g., assertive) and women are more communal (e.g., concerned about others) (Bakan, 1966). Subsequent research found that men engaged in more aggressive behavior (Eagly & Steffen, 1986) while women engaged in more helping behavior (Eagly & Crowley, 1986). Although differences in these gendered behaviors may be limited, they are consistent with individuals' perceptions of male and female behavior (Eagly & Wood, 1991). Subsequent research continues to confirm these stereotypes (e.g., Koenig & Eagly, 2014; Lippa, 2010), which is interesting considering the large number of women who now occupy the workplace.

Building on the above, certain gendered stereotypes are often associated with criminal history. Words typically associated with violence such as aggressive and dangerous (Dixon & Maddux, 2005), have been used to describe individuals with a criminal history. Maclin and Herrera (2006) suggest that individuals tend to draw from certain mental representations of a criminal, likely resulting in a general consensus about the appearance of "criminals" (e.g., Valla, Ceci & Williams, 2011). Crime has thus been described as "symbolically masculine" with masculinity even described as a motive for crime (see Herrington & Nee, 2005). This supposed physical appearance of a "criminal" was further supported in a study conducted by MacLin and Herrera (2006), when participants were asked to identify "the first 10 things you think of when you hear the word criminal?" (p. 200), the only demographic characteristic that emerged was "male". This finding suggests that not only do people have a negative impression of individuals with a criminal history, but they also have a gendered stereotype. However, with women now comprising seven percent of the incarcerated population (Carson, 2018) correctional facilities and their contracted employment partners may not have fully considered nor prepared for the typical occupational differences found between men and women in the workforce. This is particularly relevant in this context considering the numerous workforce limitations encountered by those with a criminal history.

2.1 EMPLOYMENT BARRIERS

Employment training for those with a criminal history is critical considering the numerous barriers--both direct and indirect--that will affect individuals after receipt of a criminal record. These barriers, often referred to as collateral consequences, include important elements that can prevent an individual from having a productive life such as restrictions on employment, voting, housing, custody, and educational assistance (National Inventory of the Collateral Consequences of Conviction, 2019). Thus, while a period of incarceration is finite, individuals must navigate these consequences long after a period of conviction ends (Forman, 2017). The result is that the stigma of a criminal history often interferes with individuals and their ability to pursue opportunities throughout their lifetime. Within the context of employment, these consequences are particularly detrimental, as they can significantly limit the types of occupations individuals can reasonably pursue after receiving a criminal history. According to the National Inventory of Collateral Consequences and Convictions (2019), there are over 15,000 occupational license restrictions on individuals with a criminal history. Many occupations are likely fields of interest, such as a barber or make-up artist, both of which are licensed occupations in many states, and thereby inaccessible to individuals with a criminal history. As such, employment opportunities for individuals with a criminal history are often not dictated by interest, but rather by what is permissible.

If occupational restrictions are not explicit, other indirect consequences can also affect employment and result in negative effects. For instance, prohibiting the reinstatement of a driver's license (Aiken, 2016), which may occur for individuals convicted of driving or non-driving related offenses. The inability to obtain a driver's license can prevent a person from not only driving, but also possessing official identification, both of which can be prohibitive to securing and maintaining employment. Lack of access to educational funding assistance reinforces the lower levels of education and contributes to an inability to pursue advanced educational opportunities (Couloute, 2018). Housing restrictions may result in housing instability, which is also highly correlated with lack of employment (Desmond & Gershenson, 2016). Therefore, while these aforementioned restrictions may not be directly related to employment, these collateral consequences can interfere with an individual's ability to find and maintain employment after release from incarceration.

If individuals are able to successfully navigate the numerous collateral consequences and engage in the employment process, they frequently must contend with a background check. While legislation such as Ban the Box is useful in delaying consideration of a criminal background in employment decision making, this legislation is only applicable in certain jurisdictions and still applies to a majority of public rather than private employers (Avery, 2019). While this legislative context may have prompted some hiring managers to increase their willingness to hire (Griffith & Young, 2017), many employers continue to deny employment when criminal history information

becomes known. Denial of employment often relates to negative employer perceptions of individuals with a criminal history, such as untrustworthy or more likely to interact poorly with others (Holzer, Raphael & Stoll, 2004). Other reasons relate to beliefs that consumers will be uncomfortable or organizational concerns of liability (Kurlychek, Bushway & Denver, 2019). Taken together, this population of individuals is at a significant disadvantage when entering the employment process.

2.2 EMPLOYMENT TRAINING AND CRIMINAL HISTORY

While employment training may not address all of the aforementioned barriers, it can signal to employers a high level of relevant skills and knowledge, or person-job fit (Edwards, 1991).

Training within correctional facilities may present employers with a unique opportunity to develop the skills and knowledge of individuals prior to actually hiring them. Individuals are often motivated to participate in employment or vocational training while incarcerated, and these programs are often successful because they are outside of the typical prison routine (Vacca, 2004). Therefore, vocational training while incarcerated has been shown to be of substantial benefit for the participants. First, in a study by Gordon and Weldon (2003), individuals who participated in a vocational training program had a recidivism rate (i.e., rate of return to incarceration) of 8.75%, which is exponentially better than the 77% five-year average (National Institute of Justice, 2014). Second, for those with a criminal history, completing an employment reentry program is often viewed favorably by employers (Bushway & Apel, 2012). Thus, incarcerated individuals who participated in job training have often found this to be a helpful way to mitigate their negative stigma during the employment process (Pager, 2003).

Despite the numerous benefits of employment training in correctional facilities, potential inherent biases must also be considered. As discussed, because various occupations are restricted to those with a criminal history (Le et al., 2012; Quinton, 2017), training available through correctional facilities may be limited to industries and occupations that typically hire individuals with a criminal history (i.e., construction, manufacturing; Holzer, Raphael & Stoll, 2003). While logical, because these industries are also typically male dominated, which presents an interesting conundrum for women. Although women with a criminal history can certainly enter and thrive in male-dominated occupations, and the proportion of women in these industries is increasing, women may still be at an inherent disadvantage when looking for work in these industries. Furthermore, certain female-dominated industries tend to be fundamentally averse towards hiring individuals with a criminal history (e.g., certified nursing assistant) (National Inventory of Collateral Consequences of Conviction, 2019). Based on the above, our research question was:

What are individuals' perceptions of their training and preparedness as they prepare for release from incarceration and re-entry to the workforce?

3 METHODS

To examine the perspective of individuals as they prepare for re-entry into the workforce, we conducted four focus groups within two single-sex (e.g., male and female) work release correctional facilities located within one county in the Mid-Atlantic United States. Focus groups were selected as our methodology because we expected participants to feel more comfort sharing their perspective among others who share common characteristics (Kreuger & Casey, 2015). This was a particularly important consideration because incarcerated individuals are categorized as a vulnerable population (U.S. Department of Human and Health Services, 2019), which meant the researchers did not want to make participants feel pressure to participate. Additionally, focus groups allow participants to interact with each other as well as opt whether or not to respond to all of the questions (Silverman, 2017). Taken together, these factors may have increased the participants' willingness to speak freely and communicate honestly.

3.1 RESEARCH SETTING²

These specific correctional facilities were selected for a few reasons. First, both facilities are located within the same county of the state, which limits geographical variance. Geographic location is important as every state has different occupational restrictions for those with a criminal history. Additionally, geographic location can also affect the actual facilities, as different processes and procedures for managing and evaluating facilities and individuals housed within them is common. These facilities had the same Warden, or organizational leader, which likely results in a higher level of consistency between facilities. This was demonstrated to the researchers in

² As data collection within a correctional facility is unique for a management study, we provide additional detail.

various unobtrusive ways such as the similarity of the check-in process and instructions given to correctional staff about our study.

Second, these facilities offered employment training and other programs to individuals housed within their facilities. This provided us with a reasonable expectation that individuals may have participated in some type of training during their period of incarceration. The employment training available at these facilities was often a short-term program focused on learning a particular trade or skill (e.g., auto repair, forklift). Considering the variation of entry and exit dates of the individuals housed within the work release facilities, short-term training options were described as common. Third, work release facilities allow individuals to leave the correctional facility for a period of time to participate in employment. After the hours of employment are completed, individuals return to the work release facility. This provides individuals with a point of differentiation from those who are housed in a typical jail or prison, where individuals are housed 24 hours per day.

3.2 DATA COLLECTION

In both the male and female facilities our focus groups were conducted in private rooms without the presence of a correctional officer. This provided more privacy for the participants and allowed all participants the ability to speak freely about their experiences. After the officer left the room we explained the purpose of the study, provided consent forms, and responded to questions. We also reminded participants that they could decline to respond to any questions, which was a particularly important step, considering the vulnerable nature of the population. After receiving signed consent forms, individuals were given a short background and demographic survey to complete. We did receive a few questions related to some of the words, and one of the men disclosed that he had a limited reading level. These interactions reinforced our decision to primarily rely upon a qualitative method (i.e., focus groups) as this same individual who had difficulty completing the survey was able to verbally communicate his thoughts with clarity.

At the conclusion of the first focus group in each facility the officer would return to escort the participants out of the room. This break provided the researchers with an opportunity to de-brief and prepare for the second group. De-briefing after a focus group is an important part of the data analysis, as it allows the researchers to “compare notes, share highlights, and consider what others on the team have observed or heard” (Krueger & Casey, 2015: 146). When the officers returned they entered with the second group of participants. The same process outlined above occurred at both facilities and for each focus group.

3.3 SAMPLE

The final sample consisted of 34 participants, with 19 men and 15 women. As we requested separate focus groups for first-time and repeat-offenders, our sample was almost split, with 15 participants categorized as first-time offenders and 19 as repeat offenders. Our male focus groups had 9 men who were categorized as first-time offenders and 10 men who were categorized as repeat-offenders. Our female focus groups had 6 women who were categorized as first-time offenders and 9 as repeat-offenders. Thus, our focus group sizes were consistent with the average size of focus groups, which can range between 5 to 10 people (Krueger & Casey, 2015).

The average age was 34.4 (SD=10.26). The racial composition for the total sample was 50% White, 44% Black, and 6% Latino. Considering the differences in racial percentage representation between incarcerated men and women, such that White women outnumber Black women whereas the reverse is true for men³ (Carson, 2018), we also note that the racial composition by sex. For women the focus groups were 66.77% White and 33.3% Black and for men they were 36.8% White, 52.6% Black, and 10.5% Latino. Thus, the racial composition of our sample was consistent with national statistics.

The types of offenses ranged from drug possession to first-degree attempted murder, and we provide additional detail about the offense history of the sample in Table 1. Although the offenses ranged significantly, the offenses were generally categorized as felonies, which can significantly and negatively affect the ability to secure employment. Despite the current offense histories of the participants, 62% of participants were employed prior to their incarceration. However, the percentage differed significantly by sex and offense history. Seventy-four percent of men were employed prior to their incarceration compared with 47% of women. When comparing men and women with repeat offenses, the percentage was even more dramatic, with 80% to 33%, respectively. Moreover, while some occupations, such as “self-employed” existed for men and women, overwhelmingly, the occupational history provided aligned with the traditional male and female dominated occupations. Some examples for men included automotive service technician, concrete finisher, and laborer, as compared to women

³ As shown in a 2016 report by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the racial composition of incarcerated individuals was 30.6% White, 34.9% Black, and 21.1% Latino for men and 47.5% White, 19.8% Black, and 16.2% Latina for women (Carson 2018).

who indicated home health aide, certified nursing assistant, and house cleaner. Additional occupations are provided in Table 2. As shown in Appendix A, the focus group questions captured participant experiences while at the work release facility, including job searching, training, and working while incarcerated.

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

We adopted a constant comparative data analysis process, to identify patterns in the data and determine relationships between different variables (Krueger & Casey, 2015). Our de-brief after each focus group allowed us to compare our notes prior to conducting the next focus group. After reviewing all notes, all audio files were electronically transmitted to a professional transcription service in a password-protected folder. The transcribed focus group files were uploaded to NVivo 11.4.1 for analysis by the three researchers. We reviewed the audio and transcribed interview files separately to determine initial codes. Next, we engaged in coding together to reduce the various concepts into themes (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). These themes were then considered within the framework of larger theories.

While statements were from one individual, analysis of data from a focus group is slightly different than analysis of an individual interview, as we were also cognizant of additional factors when analyzing our data. As the focus group context is not ideal to explore an individual perspective (Mason, 2018), our analysis considered the interaction and dynamics between individuals within each focus group. Meaning, we considered not only the individual participant's response, but also how it may have affected other responses. For instance, in the focus group of repeat female offenders, two women interjected as another woman was trying to give a portrayal of the daily schedule:

- Woman 1: ...we come down and eat and from one -
 Woman 2: 12.30 or one.
 Woman 3: Yeah; from 12.30 to one we're outside from -
 Woman 2: Not every day; if it rains.
 Woman 3: Don't be so - we go outside from one to three or we have a group from one to 3.45 unless we go outside for yard.

This example of an interjection from multiple participants seemed to provide a check and balance, such that the second and third women wanted to make sure that we had the correct information about their daily schedule and did not provide one biased perspective. Occurrences such as these were common, and increased the confidence that the researchers were in receipt in reliable information.

Second, while understanding the frequency of a concept was important, we also focused on the extensiveness and repetition of comments (Krueger & Casey, 2015). Thus, we considered how many different people wanted to discuss the same topic or how many times the same person went back to his or her original point. This may have occurred because multiple people had a similar experience or because a participant wanted to emphasize a particular point. As an example, in the first-time, male offender group, one participant initially mentioned a difficulty obtaining his ID: "I think I have a job but it's kind of difficult for because I haven't got an ID yet in all these months I've been here..." Although another participant followed this comment and also described his frustration about the lack of an ID, the conversation began to progress away from that topic. However, about halfway through the discussion the first participant reverted back to the topic of the lack of identification, "'Oh, [Name], you're the ideal client, can we help you get your ID? Social security?' I'm like, 'Oh, great.' 'By the time you get the work release it will all be there.' I didn't get nothing." While it is possible that this participant would have continued to speak extensively about his lack of identification in an individual interview, the other focus group participants again shifted the conversation to other topics of interest.

Another difference was to also consider the intensity (i.e., level of passion expressed by the participant when providing a response) or specificity (i.e., level of detail provided by the participants) and how that may have been affected by another participant's comment. For instance, while all of the repeat male offenders stated their release date, some provided more detail than others and some displayed visible emotion, which changed the dynamic and tone of the room. As one man discussed his excitement about his upcoming release, his voice began to shift and he started to cry as he expressed his simultaneous trepidation:

The only thing that could stop me is one thing - to go back to using drugs because I'm a come to jail. I fucked up every time. I can't just - you know what I mean - I'd be functioning - like I'd do something, I'd do some drugs, I'd go hard and I'd just stay on binges and don't come home. My wife cries. I'm coming to jail. For years; every time. I'm done with this shit.

After this, the tone of the room shifted, and the next gentleman to speak was quite brief. In short, we had to consider not only the words and tone of the respondent, but also how it affected the other individuals in the room. We have provided some additional examples in Table 3.

4 FINDINGS

Four themes emerged and seemed to influence perceptions about readiness for the workforce after release such as: 1) perceived value of participant training and education, 2) gendered experience related to employment assistance, 3) gendered explanations of prior work experience, and 4) differences depending upon participant incarceration history.

Perceived value of participant training and education. Both male and female work release facilities offered training, however, the men spoke more extensively about the available training and its benefits. As one of the first-time male participants shared, “they have been bringing a lot of stuff to the table for basic training on a certain, different types of trades.” While you may not receive all of the training needed for a particular job, he explained its usefulness:

... it was a 60-hour class and basically, what it did was get your foot in the door to like place this - doing like oil changes and stuff like that. So, say I was to get released today and I didn't have a 60 hours basic and I went to Jiffy Lube or somewhere like that... with that 60-hour certificate they look at like, 'you know what, maybe we should hire this guy besides this guy who doesn't have it. He already knows how to change tires...'

Another participant shared that while he is most interested in construction, he still attended the class on small engine repair. Other participants mentioned a class for ground keeping and computer literacy. Although all participants did not participate in every available course, the male participants generally considered these training courses to be useful to their future pursuit of employment. Some also mentioned how these trainings could help them should they desire to pursue an additional certificate upon their release. An aspect of particular note is the type of occupations the men described.

Social role theory asserts that gender role beliefs pervade social settings, such as the work environment (Eagly & Wood, 2012). Therefore, the type of occupation that individuals assert as applicable or useful may depend on whether that occupation is in line with social expectations for that specific gender. When speaking about the training offered within the institution, the males in this study highlighted a few key aspects of the training that shed some light on how this type of training may be seen as useful for them. The training was described as applicable to trades and requiring certification. Skills such as the ability to do “oil changes” and “small engine repair” were emphasized and businesses such as “Jiffy Lube” were referenced.

Similar or the same types of training existed for the women at the female correctional facility as well, and many women participated. One of the female participants who participated in numerous courses shared, “[I received my] Red Cross first aid certification, I got my OSHA safety training, ten-hour construction course...” Others shared that there was a flooring class and a forklift class coming up. While training opportunities were available for women and many participated, the perceived usefulness or value of the classes seemed to differ among the women. As one woman stated, “There is not a lot that the system gives you as far as marketable skills for employment.” Although many of the women seemed to agree with the above statement, they also often continued to participate in various trainings. When asked about this disconnect one woman, repeat categorized participant said, “... having classes to go to every day is a lot better than, say, sitting in a jail cell all day long without nothing.” This statement aligns with prior research that suggests individuals who are incarcerated will participate in training simply because it is a departure from the normal routine (Vacca, 2004), not necessarily because they perceive a value.

When the women were asked about the prevalence of male-dominated training, the responses were mixed. Although one woman who has her flagging license⁴ seemed to get a bit defensive and stated that, “women have done a lot of men work, restoration and flooring,” the majority of women seemed to gravitate toward a preference for female dominated or gender neutral occupations. When asked about the likelihood of finding employment in a male dominated occupation one repeat female participant said, “I've always wondered that. Do they even hire women?” Another woman stated, “I've never seen a forklift driver as a woman.” This response may highlight the complex situation of women with a criminal history, as the occupations that are typically available for those with a criminal history may conflict with the stereotypical role of women in our society.

Social role theorists suggest that men and women internalize gender roles, which then become gender identities. In line with these gender identities, individuals tend to ascribe to vocations, activities, and interests that are typically associated with a certain gender (Kugler, Reif, Kaschner & Brodbeck, 2018). When discussing their future job pursuits, the majority of the female participants mentioned an interest in majority female (e.g., cosmetology, service providers; Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018) or gender neutral (e.g., food service) occupations, which was also consistent with their work history prior to their period of incarceration. Research on concepts such as tokenism suggest that while efforts have been made to create more inclusive mental models for women in male dominated industries, they may feel singled out, less interested, or less comfortable than they would in female dominated or more gender neutral spaces (e.g., Kanter, 1977). Not surprisingly, despite the strides of women in a variety of

⁴ Flagging is a construction related occupation where the individual safely directs traffic around a construction zone.

workplaces, careers in certain male-oriented industries have remained elusive for women (Ericksen & Schultheiss, 2009).

Gendered experience related to employment assistance. Many of the women also explained differences they perceived between the male and female correctional facilities as related to work and job pursuits. Some of the women explained that while transportation is readily available from the male work release facility to take the men to and from work, that is not the case at the female facility. As one of the first-time female participants explained:

...the bus comes here so minimally that we can't catch the bus to get to work on time... So we have to depend on our families or friends that have their own lives... we have to have a personal chauffeur 24/7.

Although many of the men also commented on the unreliability of the public transportation system, none stated that they were unable to catch a bus from their facility.

When asked about the usefulness of the staff, one of the repeat male participants shared that, "They help with job placement, that sort of thing and at the same time I'm utilizing what they have there..." One of the first-time men stated, "I'm just excited and I've got a good head start because I had help... with help from the job counselor here I'm fully employed right now." However, the female perspective was quite different. As one of the first-time females stated, "I got no help with that whatsoever. And a lot of times when employers call up here they're so rude with them that they say forget it and don't want to hire us anymore."

These findings align with legitimacy in corrections perspective, where individuals' satisfaction with a particular program may be influenced by how they were treated, or procedural justice (Elisha et al., 2017). Another important factor to consider in conjunction with the above, is the social context, which may be particularly relevant when identifying gender behavioral differences (Eagly & Wood, 2013). From this perspective, differences in female and male responsiveness to training may be a product of their perceptions of social support offered in the social context. Although the women described their reliance on the support from family members and friends for transportation, the general undertone suggests that the women did not feel supported with the necessary resources (i.e., transportation) to facilitate their participation in employment opportunities. By contrast, the men in this study perceived that they were socially supported by the appropriate resources to facilitate their employment endeavors. From a role theory perspective (Eagly & Wood, 2013) these perceptions of support may influence an individual's interpretation of behavioral expectations.

Some women continued to express frustration when discussing access to gender neutral training opportunities as well. As one female, first-time participant shared her frustration trying to access a food related training:

The problem with what I want to do is I have to apply to the Department of Labor in order to get a grant to pay for this food bank class. The Department of Labor has no grants available, there is no funding until like November which means I'm going to miss that window of opportunity.

However, the men seemed to speak positively of a food training opportunity. As two of the first-time men discussed:

"I was going to check out the culinary arts because I'd like to try and get into cooking and things of that nature. ...as far as this culinary arts, from what they were explaining, it's more or less like steps that you go through. At the end they help you find employment." [Man 1]

"They'll place you in a restaurant; the restaurant, if you're lucky they'll keep you." [Man 2]

As the flow of information can be inconsistent in correctional facilities, it was not surprising to hear individuals describe the same program in a different manner. What was of note was that the men seemed to have the more accurate information. This resulted in the men describing the program much more positively, as if it were accessible to them, as compared to the women, who seemed to describe it in terms of obstacles.

Gendered explanations of prior work experience. Research on gender differences and stereotypes suggests that men and women may have slight differences in communication (e.g., Davis, Capobianco & Kraus, 2010; Leaper & Robnett, 2011; Newman, Groom, Handleman & Pennebaker, 2008). While some of these differences are small, the ability to assertively communicate your skills may be particularly important within the context of the organizational selection process. This skill may take on additional importance when evaluating an applicant who possesses a detrimental stigma, such as a criminal history.

Our survey responses indicated that both the men and women had a variety of work experience prior to their period of incarceration, but that the majority aligned with gendered occupations. Beyond this, we also found differences in how the men and women spoke about their prior employment. A meta-analysis by Leaper and Robnett (2011) found that while the effect sizes were small, there was a significant difference in the likelihood of women using more tentative language. Our findings were consistent, as the men and women also seemed to speak about their prior work history differently, often apparent in their word usage and tone.

The men seemed to speak more assertively about their work history during the focus groups. As one of the first-time men assertively stated, "I've worked in the kitchen for ten years so I don't really see a problem finding a job." A first-time woman stated, "I have done a few things, but the thing that interests me the most is [that] I am certified in AIDS testing and counseling." Although this woman completed some college and possessed certifications, her delivery may make her seem less confident or competent. This perception is consistent with the theory advanced by Jones Young and Powell (2015), suggesting the women with a criminal history may be perceived as warm, but not necessarily competent during the hiring process.

A further example of this difference may be reflected in the type of detail provided by the men and women about their work history. Many of the men were able to provide clear specifics related to the previous employment such as the length of time, prior training, or tasks involved. As an example, we compared statements between a female and male offender who had substantial work experience. Below is the statement from the male offender:

"I have a trade. I've been in the same company for 25 years; I started when I was 16 as an iron worker, structural steel fitter, making handrails and ornamental iron. I had a side hustle with [company name] fabricating [motor mounts] for the helicopters motors because they have to rebuild them every 5,000 hours."

Below is a statement from the female offender:

"...my work would be a hairstylist entrepreneur and I also train race horses... And I have for over 20 years... and I've done hair since I was 14 and I'm 43... When I return I will work for my parents who own 30 race horses and I will work in a family owned beauty salon."

The male offender was able to succinctly and specifically describe his prior work history. While the female offender did also provide her work history, she only did so with completeness after she was prompted with numerous questions to gain clarity on her experience. This prompting for more information may explain why, the correctional facility staff told the researchers that they questioned her work history. The inability for some female offenders to speak confidently and specifically about their prior work history is problematic, particularly considering that they will already need to overcome the detrimental stigma of a criminal history.

Participant incarceration history. In general, all participants were eager to be released, however, the men and women who were categorized as first-time offenders appeared more confident and hopeful as compared to those categorized as repeat offenders. As one man categorized as a first-time offender explained, "I'm really not like apprehensive or kind of scared to go out there in society. I just more or less can't wait." A woman categorized as a first-time offender shared a similar hopeful attitude when discussing her release, "My release date I hope will be within one month to definitely three months. I have an appeal that I'm looking forward to winning." These responses substantially differed from those categorized with repeat offenses. When asked about their upcoming releases one woman shared, "I feel nervous about release... Going back into society. I know nothing has changed; it has just got worse." A man with multiple offenses stated that he was, "truly nervous about being released," went on to explain,

"I'm a little anxious, nervous more than anything though because I don't really know what to expect out there as far as family and society." The nervousness of release for some of the repeat offenders was compounded because of the low level of comfort with technology, something they may have limited exposure to considering their numerous times in incarceration. As one man shared, "...I have no trouble working. I said I can work my butt off but don't stick me on the computer, nothing like that." These differences in attitudes may translate to how individuals approach their job search and reentry into the workforce upon release.

Many of the women with first-time offenses articulated a clear, positive plan upon their release such as, "My plans when I get out in January is go home, find another place so I can have my kids back all in the same house. Once I get that situated, go back to school for human services that I started but I never got to complete at [college]." However, some may be unaware of the challenges awaiting them. For instance, one woman remarked, "I have my license to do nails so I'll probably just go back and do that." However, since cosmetology is restricted in many states for those with a felony conviction, it is possible that women with multiple convictions were already aware of the effect their criminal history may have on their employment prospects. As such, women with multiple offenses seemed more aligned with this comment, "I'm pretty nervous about going back to work because it's been like four years since I've been [un]employed." This seemed to be true even for those who may have had work history in a particular area. As one woman stated:

For pretty much 40 years I have always not had a record so it never stopped me, I was doing CNA work, doing nursing work. So now I have a record so that's going to be hard on me to go back maybe in that field because nobody might not want me because of my shoplifting charges.

While participants categorized with first-time offenses may be viewed as having higher levels of motivation, the motivation of those with multiple offenses may be affected by job search difficulties experienced after a prior release from incarceration. Despite the gender role differences and perceptions related to training and employment

opportunities while incarcerated, participant incarceration history may neutralize the effect of gender. This is an important finding since even in gender charged environments such as prisons, there may be instances where individual experience in a particular social context supersedes the gendered effects within.

5 DISCUSSION

While we acknowledge that numerous factors may affect perceptions of training within a correctional facility, our research suggests that while incarcerated men and women may have access to the same types of training, their perceptions of the training—and thereby their perceptions of preparedness for return to the workforce—may differ significantly depending on the perceived value of the training as well as the support received while completing it. Moreover, men may be more likely to make direct connections between the available training and relevance to their job search considering the occupations they are most likely to enter upon release. These differences may result in women perceiving their training while incarcerated to be less useful as compared to their male counterparts. The gendered perception of usefulness of training may be particularly detrimental to a population that already considers their employment options to be limited. While training is not the only factor related to securing employment upon release, it may further contribute to the low levels of employment (Couloute & Kopf, 2018) and low paying jobs (Lahm, 2000) that individuals with a criminal history—and women in particular—are likely to secure upon release.

5.1 RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

While this study focused on individuals housed in work release correctional facilities, we assert that the gendered perceptions found in this study may have larger implications within our management literature. From an equity theory perspective, we must consider if equity means offering the same training opportunity or offering an opportunity that may result in the same outcome. In effect, in what contexts may distributive justice outweigh procedural justice? While individuals may strive for an egalitarian society, many occupations and industries remain segregated by gender (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018). Following a procedural justice perspective, men and women would receive the same training. From an alternate perspective, offering different training opportunities may result in higher levels of employment for both genders, but it may also maintain the status quo related to gendered occupations and wage inequities. These questions are particularly important because training has been found to be an important element in the ability to secure employment and earn higher wages upon release from incarceration (Duwe, 2015; Jung & LaLonde, 2019). However, as the population of women with a criminal history continues to increase, we encourage researchers to continue to explore this dilemma related to training, employment, and perceptions of gender equity.

Second, our findings support the continued exploration of gender differences in the workplace, and highlight the need to consider how these differences may be further exacerbated within marginalized populations. Research has asserted that gender differences exist and persist in various organizational processes, such as negotiation (e.g., Leibbrandt & List, 2014). While assertive communication may assist women combat some of these differences (Amanatullah & Morris, 2010), women who are members of a marginalized population may be less likely to engage in this type of behavior. Future research should delve into this divide more specifically, as additional studies may allow us to understand some of the nuances of why these differences persist and how individuals can combat these differences.

5.2 PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

As the female correctional population continues to grow, human resources professionals may be able to assist correctional facilities review their available training and consider including training that will provide women with access to occupations that may be more gender-neutral. Although women may currently be better positioned to secure employment after release from a work release facility as compared to their male counterparts (Duwe, 2015), these findings may be apt to change considering the influx of women with a criminal history (Swavola et al., 2016). Additionally, participation and completion of a workforce training can increase earnings for the women upon their release (Jung & LaLonde, 2019). As such, offering a variety of training opportunities may ensure positive outcomes (e.g., lower levels of recidivism, higher levels of employment, higher levels of employment training completion) for formerly incarcerated women as they pursue employment after release.

Second, we encourage human resource professionals to partner with work release correctional facilities to gain access to an underutilized, but motivated workforce. As noted by SHRM (2019), in their “Getting Back to Work” campaign, it is important for organizations to commit to hiring individuals with a criminal history. Many individuals are seeking employment and experience prior to release. While the conditions of employment may be

restrictive, those who are able to secure employment while incarcerated may have a high level of continuance commitment and a low level of turnover, both of which are advantageous for employers. Upon release from incarceration, employers may find this group of employees possesses a significant amount of firm-specific human capital and high levels of commitment, making them an asset for an organization.

Third, we encourage human resource professionals to partner with correctional facilities to offer training that can develop some of the “soft skills” or generic human capital that employers expect. In a study by Robles (2012) integrity, communication, and courtesy were rated among the top three soft skills perceived to be “extremely important” by employers. As noted in our findings, communication differences were found between the men and women in our sample. Some employment training does incorporate things such as a life skills training (Jung & LaLonde, 2019), which may consider some of the aforementioned skills. However, we believe HR can better serve as a bridge to assist in explicitly incorporating some of the skills that employers may prioritize within an employment training.

Finally, a focus on identifying the elements that individuals attribute to successful work release programs, particularly for women, has the added benefit of preparing them for overall better job placements. Studies have found that women may secure employment at faster rates than men (Duwe, 2015). Additionally, women who completed a particular training had a higher likelihood of securing employment and higher wages as compared to those who had not (Jung & LaLonde, 2019). Thus, it is plausible that understanding the context of work-release programs may help to develop more effective programming that could catalyze a host of positive work outcomes for future potential employers (e.g. performance, retention, turnover, etc.). In the case of recruitment, for example, this research has implications for organizations seeking to fill staffing voids with ready-to-succeed applicants. The effectiveness of these programs on preparing new hires has critically important implications for organizations looking to meet important recruitment and hiring goals.

5.3 LIMITATIONS

Despite the strengths of our study, we still consider our limitations, such as our use of focus groups and the limited access to participants after the focus groups were conducted. Focus groups have distinct advantages, such as allowing individuals to engage with others who share a similar experience. This was particularly important considering that the researchers had limited time with the participants due to limited access to the facilities. Thus, while individual interviews may have also provided insight into our research question, we would have access to an even smaller number of individuals, and likely also a limited time frame considering the constraints of the correctional facility. Nonetheless, focus groups are subject to group dynamics, such as dominating members and groupthink. The researchers did thank participants for sharing and would encourage more participation by stating “anyone else?”, which often did result in more responses from those who may have not previously contributed. However, considering the vulnerable status of the population the researchers were also careful not to make the participants feel as if they had to participate. Second, while it would have been ideal to conduct member checks directly with the focus group participants to confirm the emergent themes, the incarcerated status of the sample participants meant this step was excluded from our analysis. Instead, the findings were shared with a Department of Corrections staff member who was knowledgeable about the male and female experiences in both facilities. Lastly, we acknowledge that no single factor can generally explain any relationship in full. This is one reason why we encourage more research within the area of women, criminal history, and employment.

6 CONCLUSION

As individuals prepare for release from a correctional facility and re-entry to the workforce, they may significantly benefit from exposure to employment training. In addition to relevance and job market demands, other factors for consideration may need to be gender and the likelihood of employment within a particular occupation or industry. Considering these additional factors may be the difference between individuals remaining marginalized by their stigmatizing demographic attribute—criminal history.

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APPENDIX A – FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

1. Please describe in as much detail as you can, how you feel about your upcoming release.
2. What do you think about, or how do you feel, when you think about searching for employment after your release?
3. How prepared do you feel to search for jobs?
4. What is your plan for employment after your release?
5. What types of challenges do you expect to encounter as you search for work?
6. How would you describe your level of confidence in finding employment after returning home?
7. What other types of life experiences, training, or skills have you had that you think would be attractive to employers?
8. How do you think your educational experience prepared you for the workplace?
9. Please describe in as much detail as you can, the type of training that you received while incarcerated and through this current program.
10. Why do you think employers may think this training is useful?
11. What other concerns do you have as you look for employment?
12. What would you say is most important for employers to know about job applicants with a criminal history?
13. Are there any additional comments you would like to share with us at this time?

Table 1. Prior employment and offense history

Prior employment⁵

	Employment history – First-time	Employment history – Repeat
Men	Dishwasher, cook assistant, barber school, warehouse, behavioral therapist, concrete finisher, mechanic, small business owner	Roofing, Automotive service technician, mechanic, busser, iron worker, self-employed (2), carpenter, laborer, truck loader
Woman	Cook, Home health aide, Self employed, Hostess/customer service, house cleaner, emergency restoration	Cook, Cashier, CNA

Table 2. Prior employment and offense history

Offense history

	Types of offenses – First-time	Types of offenses – Repeat
Men	Theft, 2 nd degree murder, robbery, drug dealing (3), gun possession (4), assault (1), counterfeiting, conspiracy (2), receipt of stolen property, burglary, drug possession, 1 st degree attempted murder	Shoplifting, theft (3), robbery (2), assault (3), possession of burglary tools, conspiracy, burglary (2), criminal trespass, drug dealing (5), gun possession (3), driving w/ suspended license, drug possession, receipt of stolen property
Woman	Disorderly conduct, drug possession (2), drug dealing, theft, assault (2), robbery (2)	Theft (3), assault (2), DUI (2), burglary (3), shoplifting (4), breaking and entering, racketeering, credit card fraud, forgery, drug dealing, failure to pay fines, probation violation, drug paraphernalia (2), conspiracy, drug possession, menacing, possession of burglary tools

⁵ The number of individuals from each category who indicated prior employment were as follows: first-time, men - 6; first-time women - 5, repeat men - 8; repeat women - 2.

Table 3. Example focus group analysis and individual comments

Men, First-time categorized

Interpretation of employment assistance	
Extensiveness / Repetition	<p>Man 1: “I really don’t know her that well so I can’t speak what I think – she kind of speaks up and tries – she’s open for people calling in about jobs and stuff. I think she’s probably doing a good job.”</p> <p>Man 2: “Yeah; she knows how to talk to them for us, you know what I mean?”</p> <p>Man 3: “So they won’t give you the bottom of the barrel jobs that the Mexicans don’t even get, you know what I’m saying?”</p>

Women, Repeat categorized

Effect of criminal history during employment search	
Intensity	<p>“I went to an interview one time at IHOP and the guy was looking over my application and everything was going good, and then he got to where it showed a gap... so he was like, “What is this big gap? Why was there such a big gap?” and I was like, “Well, I was incarcerated” and he was like, “All right,” and his whole mood completely changed and he was like, “All right, well, it was nice meeting you and all. If I need you I’ll give you a call.” Like wow; I’m not going to hear from him.”</p>
Effect on other participants	<p>After this statement, the researcher tried to probe for other experiences, but the room became quiet and no one else wanted to share. To help get the conversation started again, the researcher had to shift to another topic.</p>

Men, Repeat categorized

Effect of criminal history during employment search	
Intensity	<p>Man 1: “This past year – in May I turned 39 and I stepped back and I thought about it and I was like, “Wow, I completely threw away 20 years of my life; 20 years.” Incarcerated on and off because I’ve been here about 20 years and it’s saddened me. It saddened me to the point where I think I’ve laid in a bed for like two days straight; I didn’t want to eat or nothing, I was just – you know what I mean? I didn’t like myself. I just wasted 20 years.”</p>
Effect on other participants	<p>The room became quieter after this participant completed his full statement. After this comment the moderator had to interject and ask the question again if the participant was currently employed.</p>

Women, First-time categorized

Effectiveness of work release program	
Extensiveness / Repetition	<p><i>Researcher: What percentage of people of the whole total work release program is employed?</i></p> <p>Woman 1: Two.</p> <p>Woman 2: We’ve got two bag lunches going out.</p> <p>Woman 3: Like not 2 percent; two people, okay.</p> <p><i>[Additional discussion...]</i></p> <p>Woman 4: Two people have a job right now.</p> <p>Woman 5: There are a lot – like there could be so many more employed...</p>